# QUAKERS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

## MAY 2018 EDITORIAL

Welcome to the May 2018 edition of the Quakers in Criminal Justice Newsletter. Many of you will still be feeling the inspirational impact of the recent 2018 conference held in Ammerdown, and to keep that energy going we have an excellent and wide-ranging group of articles for you to read in this issue.

From a film review to news of several prison-based projects. Of course no May edition of the QICJ newsletter would be complete without a report and reflections on our annual conference. We also have an update on Positive Justice Gloucestershire and one contributor poses the question, “is it possible to reform our prison system?”..... and much, much more.

This newsletter is your newsletter and is only possible with your contributions. We’d love to hear from any of you about the criminal justice work you are involved in, the books or movies you have read and seen on the subject, your own experiences of navigating the prison system, inside or following release, really anything you think might fit in to our publication.

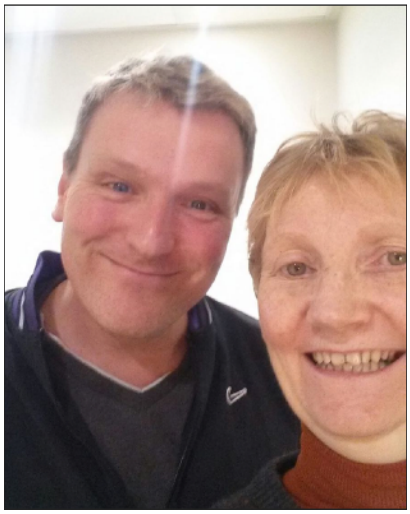
After careful consideration, Carmel has made the decision to step down as editor of the QICJ Newsletter. We therefore need help with editing the newsletter and would especially like to hear from volunteers to join the editing team. If you think you might be able to help, give either myself or Carmel a shout on jonolamb@mac.com or carmelschmid@gmail.com. We would appreciate having you on board.

Thanks as usual to the newsletter team : Greta, Alan and of course the amazing Carmel

Go to page 24 of the newsletter for Carmel’s farewell message.

We hope you find this edition helpful and enjoyable to read.

**Jonathan Lamb**
**Co-Editor**



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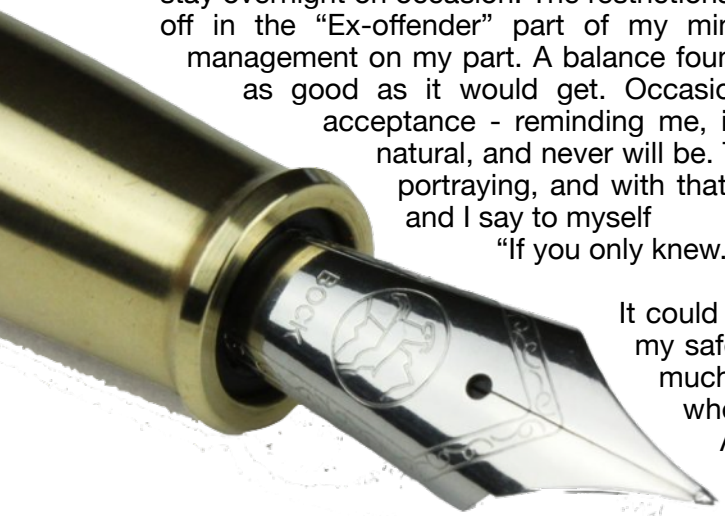
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# IF YOU ONLY KNEW

I soon realised, leaving the walls and fences behind, was just another step on a long journey towards my seemingly unachievable goal of a normal life. Ever since I left prison, I have adopted a disguise and behind that disguise is a voice crying out
“If you only knew..."

To a certain extent, I was ready for that shock and realisation, accepting of it, and understanding why it should be so. I have also been very fortunate in so many ways. Trusted to manage myself appropriately within my neighbourhood, trusted with internet access, trusted to travel away, and stay overnight on occasion. The restrictions I must live under, are barely conscious things locked off in the “Ex-offender” part of my mind, but easily accessible when a situation needs management on my part. A balance found then, and the realisation that this was going to be as good as it would get. Occasionally though, things eat and nibble away at this acceptance - reminding me, in no uncertain terms, that my life is not normal or natural, and never will be. The biggest of these, are the two personas I feel I am portraying, and with that the duplicit life I am living. I think of my colleagues and I say to myself
“If you only knew...”



It could be argued that it is necessary, and I understand that my safety depends on it, but I suppose I struggle with it so much, as it is so opposite to the life I am trying to lead, where truth, integrity, and honesty are my goals. Anything less, is a relapse towards a person I am totally focused upon leaving in the past.

This duplicity began, when booking into the B&B after leaving the probation hostel; my cover story being of a relocation of area and job that had gone awry, along with the marriage going the same way soon afterwards. Such kindness was shown to me there, such empathy for my situation. Even the gift of a sofa bed from the landlady upon leaving, when I was blessed to get a flat of my own. I felt unable to refuse this gift, but I was subsequently overcome with guilt and shame. A voice in my mind, “If you only knew.....”.

Then there were the new neighbours to meet. Everyone so kind, but so many questions to answer, and invitations to get out of. Parents to keep at arm’s length, but carefully, so carefully, as it was imperative I didn’t appear stand offish, unsociable, or to be brutally honest, creepy. As time has passed, things have settled though, and working nights is the perfect cover story. The reason I can’t make that

barbecue or share Christmas celebrations. I often wonder whether they have suspicions. “He never has visitors” or “He avoids the children”. Paranoia? Definitely. And they have all been so welcoming. But again, when social interactions do take place, a kind word uttered, an unrequested but caring favour from a neighbour, or unavoidable contact with a mother and young child is necessary to keep up the pretence, that little voice is back. “If you only knew.....”.
The worst situations are at work, though. Where gossip, idle chatter, or casual conservations are a complete minefield for me. My colleagues speak of places they live, but I can’t acknowledge I have been there. My cover story must be constantly solid, with no slips or adjustments over time. Even now, after two years, I must deflect some questions. As somebody unexpectedly asked me the other day, what the name of the place was I worked at before. It is so easy to slip up, especially in seemingly benign conversations or enquiries, such as what I am doing on a day off. It would be so easy, natural, and to be honest a relief, to just say, “I have to pop in to

probation.” and I have nearly done so on occasion. Then there is the constant fear of exposure. Working a short distance from my old neighbourhood, the scene of so much damage I inflicted, and knowing some of my closest colleagues live there. The feeling that it is only a matter of time before someone from my past shows up at work, and everything will be gone. Beyond all this, are the muttered words of colleagues, when news of offences such as mine break somewhere. Their understandable voices of anger, disgust, threats, and hate. “If you only knew...".

But I carry on, for what is the alternative? To return to my past ways? Never. To retreat into myself, becoming isolated and remote? That would only enhance suspicions and is never a good place for an ex- offender to be. To give up on life? It is too precious, and second chances such as I have been given are rare. Something to grasp with both hands, a blessing I barely deserve, but am so thankful for.

I will battle self-pity with perspective. Believing that time will move on, and people will too. And slowly, I will leave this duplicit life behind, as much as it is possible to do. Moving forward, with prayers of hope, that my victims can do the same.

Sometimes though, the sun’s rays do break through these clouds of anxiety, fear, and isolation, that plague my mind and my daily existence. I am given a vista of hope, driven by simple care and concern from others. Places where I can be myself, open and honest. Places where I can feel I am nothing more, than a unique, precious, child of God. Such a place is the QICJ Conference, my yearly journey into light and acceptance.

Certain anxieties were still with me, but soon after arrival at the conference those anxieties fled, as kind eyes smiled in greeting. Being put to work, I was able to feel involved and accepted straight away. Sir David Latham arrived, and I felt a little ashamed that he wasn’t what I expected. I had envisioned someone quite serious and maybe somewhat detached. The complete opposite was true, being open, friendly, and jovial. He talked passionately about the work he was doing regarding Mental Health, and my hopes were lifted that progress could be made. This gregarious attitude continued later in the evening, and during the following morning, where he had time for all.

I could write verses of great length and colour, painting with words the invaluable contributions of all the Speakers and Workshop Facilitators, but will leave that to those more eloquent than I. I would like to share, though, the essence of the effect it had on me personally. Like waves building out at sea, each presentation pushed me closer and closer to an undeniable truth. And finally, that truth broke on the shores of my consciousness. The perspective of how fortunate I am. That my self-pity too often blinds me to the plight of others. If I could bottle just this one essence from the weekend, I would, then decant it in difficult times to come.

Martin’s eloquent words at the end of Conference gave me hope, but also served as a reminder that discussion must turn into action. Overall, what I was encouraged by most, was that there are caring, dedicated people out there, willing to work with people that others in society have abandoned, stigmatised and isolated. The outcome of such rejection itself breeds re-offending. I believe educating society of this fact is critical. The more isolation abounds, and stigmatising ex-offenders is the norm, whether with Mental Health problems or not, the less safe everyone is. The more integration there is, with appropriate risk management in place of course, and the better the treatment, the safer everyone is. At the root of all this is the biggest battle of all, educating the media of such truths.

There were so many high points. Reflected from Woodbrooke, was the care, acceptance, love, and friendship, that enabled me to be myself. Returning to my duplicit life, my inner needs had been to some extent fulfilled. Hoping with all my heart, that although I can never take back the hurt, my contribution to society may in some small way, relieve the suffering of the damaged and offenders alike. Just as I hope to return some day, to the gardens of beauty, welcome, silence, and peace that was encompassed by Ammerdown.

**STEVE**

# 10 YEARS OF POSITIVE JUSTICE GLOUCESTERSHIRE

QICJ's conference in 2008 was entitled 'From Faith to Action'. One of the speakers was Juliet Lyon, then of the Prison Reform Trust, who reported speaking with Jack Straw about positive justice. He had said to her, 'That would be an excellent idea, Juliet, but how would it run with the Daily Mail?'

Apparently the government then, as now, thought the views of the Daily Mail represented public opinion. Juliet, however, told us of surveys carried out by the Prison Reform Trust which showed that people are far less vindictive than the Daily Mail.

At the last session of that conference ten years ago we were challenged: what were we going to do about it all? I decided I should start a local group to challenge the views of the Daily Mail, and to offer more positive views of offenders that might help that of God within them to flourish.

I took my concern to my local meeting and then to Gloucestershire Area Meeting, who supported us and funded a meeting, to which we invited representatives from various bodies concerned with the justice system, from Christian denominations and other faith traditions, county councillors, magistrates, and others. A working group was formed and Positive Justice Gloucestershire (PJG) started. Though starting as a Quaker concern, PJG has always been outside religion and party politics. We work with and for those of all faiths and none.

After long discussions about what we wanted the group to do, we produced a list of our objectives, which was later amended to:

Aims:

To encourage the use of restorative and therapeutic practices within the criminal justice system, in order to reduce crime and its impact on victims.

To act as a pressure group: balancing negative representations in the popular press, and raising public awareness of, and support for, positive initiatives within the criminal justice system, particularly alternatives to imprisonment where appropriate.

Objectives:

To organise regular public meetings, and informal discussion forums;

To disseminate accurate and up-to-date information regarding crime and the community;

To cooperate with other community/voluntary groups;

To act as an information point for those who wish to get involved with the voluntary sector; to promote positive policies to the media and to policy makers by writing letters, putting out press releases and through our website.
Our title was suggested by someone from our local prison, governor grade, who was worried, I think, that we might cause trouble for his prison. He stayed on our committee just long enough to be sure that our aims would not be threatening.Our committee has been strengthened from time to time with ex-offenders and ex-prisoners (not the same) who bring their unique inside knowledge to enrich us. We are happy when they move on, but we miss them when they go.

Over the last ten years we have organised public meetings in Prisons Week and informal lunchtime discussion forums on Saturdays with public meetings three times a year - spring, summer and autumn - and a newsletter in the winter.

You can read our latest newsletter at http://www.pjglos.org/wp- content/uploads/2018/01/2017-newsletter-2.pdf. We also have a website: www.pjglos.org.

We have had some prestigious speakers including: Erwin James, Baroness Corston, Professor David Nutt, Ben Gunn, Eric Alison and others.One of our most successful meetings, attracting around eighty people, including school students, was a debate on the motion, 'This house believes that prison works.' Proposed by a prison governor, seconded by an ex-offender,opposed by Juliet Lyon, seconded by a local MP, this was heavily defeated. The chair then suggested an alternative motion, 'Prison could work', which was carried.

We had the Forgiveness Project exhibition in Gloucester Cathedral. We have had meetings on Restorative Justice, the arts in prison, the Alternatives to Violence Project, children in prison, parents in prison, music in prison, the discrimination against ex-offenders looking for work (the only legal form of discrimination), mental health in prisons, faith in prisons, and many more. We have written to many prison ministers and Justice Secretaries, with little response. We have had some success with local newspapers and radio in advertising our meetings. When the newly privatised probation system received a damning report for Gloucestershire, we were actually contacted by two local radio stations asking for our comments. I feel this shows we have had some small success.

We have had many problems over the years, not least having to cancel a recent meeting on sex offenders scheduled for the time that the Worboys case was filling the media, but planned many months before. Our next meeting, in June, will be with Circles of Support and Accountability.

We are now a small and rather elderly committee, and we struggle. I have been the secretary throughout those ten years, and am now in my eighties. At times, I think perhaps we have done all we can, and should fold up, and then someone else comes along to join us with fresh ideas.

Nevertheless, despite the problems, I would urge others to try to start something similar in their areas, to combat the Daily Mail, and to offer the public an alternative view of offenders and of crime and punishment.

**MARY BROWN**

# QUAKERS AND PENAL ABOLITION

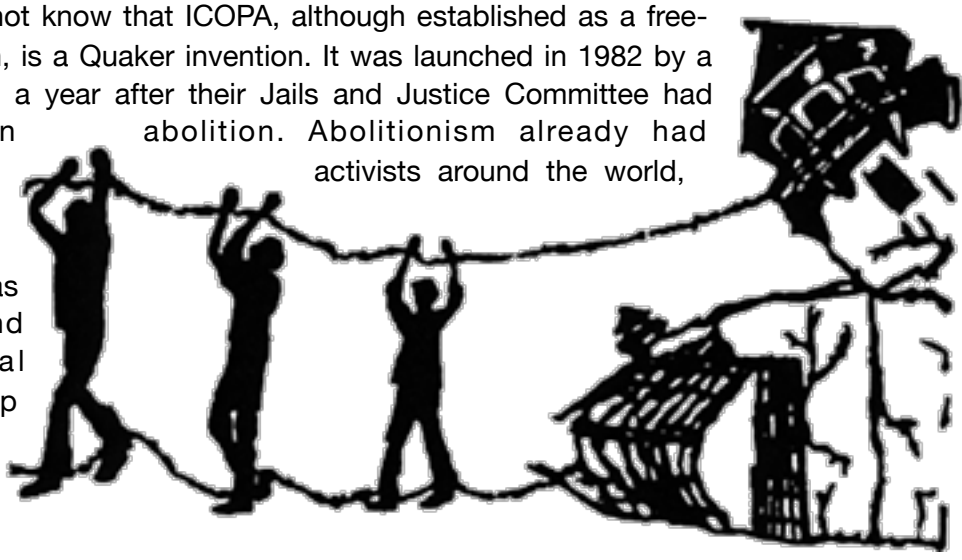
The International Conference on Penal Abolition (ICOPA) will take place in London on 15th-18th June (http://icopa2018.org.). For reasons which will become clear below, this is something in which we British Quakers should take a special interest.

ICOPA is a mobile conference which, since the early 1980s, has moved around various world cities bringing together activists, ex- prisoners and academics to envision and campaign for a reduction in – and, if possible, an end to – the use of punitive criminal justice interventions. Premised on the idea that criminal justice systems are primarily a means of managing inequality and punishing the poor, the conferences insist that only egalitarian and inclusive forms of social justice will create safe communities.

“Penal abolitionists” distinguish themselves, sometimes unhelpfully, from benign and well-intentioned “penal reformers” whose perennial efforts to improve penal institutions often have the effect of consolidating, legitimating and even expanding them without making them any more effective at reducing crime. The abolitionists have always had a better understanding of the oppressive political functions that penal institutions serve in an unjust society, and are better able to explain why lasting humanitarian achievements – particularly reducing the prison population – are so elusive and (as we have seen in Britain is recent years) so easily reversed.

Although hosted this June by the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies, and two academic criminology departments, ICOPA has never been a wholly, or even mainly, academic event. There will be workshops and presentations from, among others, Action for Trans Health, Bent Bars Project, Black Lives Matter UK, Empty Cages Collective, INQUEST, JENGbA, London Campaign Against Police & State Violence, Netpol, Race & Class collective, Reclaim Holloway, Reclaim Justice Network, North London Sisters Uncut, Smash IPP!, Stopwatch, Women in Prison.

British Friends probably do not know that ICOPA, although established as a free-standing secular organisation, is a Quaker invention. It was launched in 1982 by a group of Canadian Quakers, a year after their Jails and Justice Committee had adopted a testimony on prison abolition. Abolitionism already had scattered support among activists around the world, notably in the USA, Scandinavia, and The Netherlands, and the aim was to create, strengthen and expand an international network of people to develop strategies, share practices and build support for the idea that prisons could be done away with.



The first ICOPA event took place in Toronto in 1983, the second (subsequently deemed too academic) in Amsterdam, and the third in Montreal. At this one, the latter part of ICOPA's name was changed from "prison abolition" to "penal abolition", in recognition of the fact that prisons could not be challenged in isolation from the engrained criminal justice processes which fed them, and from the philosophy of punitiveness which underpinned an array of sanctions, not just imprisonment.

In Canada, Quaker Ruth Morris (1933-2001) was crucial to the development of abolitionism, and the creation of ICOPA. She began as a social worker, confident that a national network of community alternatives to prison would be all that was needed to render it obsolete, before realising that the massive political investment in it, and the role it played in managing the poor as well as the dangerous, made this implausible. She realised that by attending only to community alternatives, the prison system remained intact and that even community alternatives had their limits. Whilst always trying to include the needs, rights and interests of crime victims in her practice, she concluded that even restorative justice was not enough: it may achieve meaningful reconciliation between victim and offender but it still left unjust social structures intact.

There was negligible interest among British Quakers at the time in Morris's abolitionist stance, possibly because it seemed too radical, possibly because we were a little jaded after several years of protracted soul-searching on penal matters. The 1979 booklet, Six Quakers Look at Crime and Punishment had promoted the idea that Friends should develop a testimony against punishment, a position long favoured by its lead author David Wills (1903-1981), a pioneer of therapeutic communities for young people. Despite lengthy reflection, Friends could not come to unity on this, and in its aftermath corporate and individual concern about penal matters went on much as before – very focused on softening the hard edges of imprisonment – although the booklet stirred interest in the then new idea of "restorative action" towards crime victims.

While it would be hard to fault the many kind, practical things that Friends have done these past thirty years to help prisoners and to engage with policymakers on this or that reform proposal, it is legitimate to ask whether what Friends have done has been equal to the challenge. Given where we have ended up – rising rates of violence in understaffed prisons, chaos in the privatized probation service, to name but two, can we really say we have used our freedom to speak out as well as we might have done? Or have we taken too many easy, quietist options?

It is, of course, easy to dismiss penal abolitionism as utopian, and unrealizable. One answer to this is that much Quaker social thought has had a utopian element, in the sense of upholding and promoting high ideals for humanity, but always alongside a series of practical and symbolic steps which, if sustained, could lead to their achievement. The abolition of slavery in America and the abolition of capital punishment in Britain – the latter something that John Bellers entertained in the seventeenth century – seemed absurdly utopian to people who could not imagine a desirable social order being maintained without them. The Quaker peace testimony – a commitment to abolishing war, of all things! – is arguably the most utopian of all our social aspirations ... but we have remained clear eyed and sure-footed in our practical opposition to militarism and the arms trade in a way that we have not in relation to imprisonment and punitive measures.

Abolitionism is not a single theory but a spectrum of positions united by the idea that prisons do more harm than good. There are many debates about strategies and tactics within it, not least about the risks of actually using the provocative term “abolition” in public when it can easily be construed as misleading (because there is a “dangerous few”) and derided as unrealistic by opponents. Some supporters favour the terms “downsizing”, or “community justice” as opposed to “criminal justice”, or simply setting “limits to pain”. The terminology is less important than the actions it proposes.
The intellectual validity of “abolitionism” as a term lies in its invitation to imagine what a society without prisons would look like, and to persuade people to act as if this could be achieved.

ICOPA has lasted longer than Ruth Morris ever expected, but it has, as she hoped, attracted voices from the margins of society, all manner of political activists and some academic theorists. I have refrained from saying what the practical steps now favoured by abolitionists are – there is not a consensus on them, and Quakers will find some more congenial than others – but the least we can do in June is check out this event, in the hope that we can learn something – about visions, tactics and alliances – that might revitalize our jaded and deficient penal ministry. I hope especially that Young Friends will engage with it.

**MIKE NELLIS**

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# PENAL ABOLITION: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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In summer 2018, London (UK) will host an international gathering of those working for social justice in place of criminal justice. Over four days there will be opportunities to organise and participate in activities and workshops that seek to build and strengthen local and international movements for social justice and penal abolition.

Friday 15 June: A public evening event.

Saturday 16 & Sunday 17 June: Workshops, presentations, film screenings and other contributions.

Monday 18 June: Symposium for academic papers focused on ‘what can academics do to support movement organising?’

Themes

The conference programme will focus on strategies and solutions for addressing the harms of policing, prisons, immigration, detention and punishment and on addressing the broader systems of oppression that maintain the prison complex.

There will be four conference streams:
QUESTIONING: This stream will provide introductory workshops for those who are new to abolitionist ideas.
RESISTING: This stream will reflect on everyday forms of individual and collective resistance to the prison complex.
DISMANTLING: This stream will discuss and debate concrete strategies and tactics for dismantling criminal justice and undoing social norms that feed systems of captivity and punishment.
BUILDING: This stream will explore social justice alternatives to prisons, police, detention and criminal justice institutions.

We encourage sessions that make links between penal abolition and wider struggles for housing, health, education, and environment; and for economic, racial, gender, sexual and disability justice.

Practical details
The conference will be held at Birkbeck University of London, WC1E 7HX, London (UK) from 15th to 18th June. You can register for updates about the conference by filling out the form on the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies website - www.crimeandjusticestudies.org.uk. If you have any questions email: icopalondon@gmail.com. The conference will be low-cost.

This conference is organised as part of the long-standing International Conference on Penal Abolition (ICOPA), and in 2018 will be hosted by Harm & Evidence Research Collective, The Open University, Department of Criminology, Birkbeck University of London, and the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies.

We are working in partnership with organisations, campaign groups and grassroots networks. This organising group includes representatives from the following participating organisations: Action for Trans Health, Bent Bars Project, Black Lives Matter UK, Empty Cages Collective, INQUEST, JENGbA, London Campaign Against Police & State Violence, Netpol, North London Sisters Uncut, Race & Class collective, Reclaim Holloway, Reclaim Justice Network, Smash IPP!, StopWatch.

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# ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Over forty Friends met from February twenty-third to twenty-fifth at Ammerdown for what proved a very rewarding, if rather breathless, two days' conference. I noted a healthy mix of old acquaintances and people I was meeting for the first time. Our subject was 'Mental Health and the Criminal Justice System'.

Our Friday evening speaker was Sir David Latham, a former High Court Judge and Chairman of the Parole Board. In retirement he has served on a working party, whose recently issued report advises on mental health in the criminal justice system. He told us that as long ago as 1968, a survey revealed that 90% of prisoners had one or more of the five signs of mental disorder. More recent investigations tell us that almost half attempted suicide at some point in their lives, forty-two per cent have been excluded from school, and one hundred and fifty years after elementary education became obligatory in Britain, one third of the people entering prison cannot read. The working party considered the whole question of criminal responsibility in light of mental illness. The police need help in identifying an offender's mental state as they decide what course of action to take.

Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire and the West Midlands are giving a lead here. In Cambridge, MIND runs two safe houses where people exhibiting florid mental health problems can be taken. (In one case known to me, a troubled young man was consigned to prison because there was nowhere else for him to go, and during the night his cellmate murdered him.)People with acute mental health problems should not be held in custody suites: the therapeutic route is usually much better than a criminal trial. In the West Midlands, 'Operation Turning Point' defers not just sentencing but prosecution of low risk offenders, offering instead a programmed intervention.



During Epilogue in the chapel on Friday night, we remembered two long-standing QICJ members, David Binney and David Hoare, who have recently died.

On Saturday morning, Tristan Cox gave an upbeat presentation. He is a music therapist at the Fromeside Secure Unit, Bristol. Its aim is for the unit to act as a 'brick mother', to encourage inmates to take responsibility for their own lives. People suffering from psychosis have had their sense of self shattered. The unit provides both care and control. Music, dance and gym offer a chance of growth. Tristan played a moving recording of himself accompanying an inmate in therapy, which illustrated nurturing mirroring and feedback.

Our next session was in "small groups" to which we were allocated in tens.My group included a Quaker prison chaplain, who as a teenager had been in trouble himself. What better qualification could you have? Another member serves at the prison termed "the worst in Britain" according to the Daily Mail. (And if the Daily Mail says something, it must be true.) Another member of the group gave us the disastrous news that funding for Circles of Support and Accountability is being withdrawn, in spite of the undoubted success of Circles in preventing future crime. Another member was a former IPP prisoner who got parole at a first hearing, which is almost unknown. A fifth member ran a women's centre in Birmingham. We were encouraged to sign up for two workshops out of a choice of four. I chose two which were off my usual spectrum. Julia Horn explored concerns about inequality and mental health, as expressed in popular music. We heard a recording of a black singer, Tracey Chapman, drawing attention to the part frustration and hopelessness lead to violence. (Another seventeen U.S. teenagers had been shot dead in Florida the previous week.) Marian Liebmann's workshop explored the idea of using comic strips as a way of helping people face up to their offending behaviour.

During Saturday afternoon a few intrepid Friends set off through the mud for the monument on a nearby hilltop, while others were content among crocuses and daffodils in the grounds. Melanie Jameson laid on an extra session entitled 'Prison Reform: what's happening behind the scenes'. Though the recommendations of four recent reports have been largely ignored (Caustor, Taylor, Lammy, Coates), there are surreptitious hopeful developments. However, the government requires further huge savings by the Prison Service, and staff have been reduced, though the stress of prison work means that many officers leave anyway.



The first session on Sunday morning was addressed by Kimmett Edgar, Head of Research at the Prison Reform Trust. He told us prisons were not safe places, and idleness is corrosive of mental as well as physical well-being. Lack of resources means less than lack of

vision.Giving prisoners more responsibility, as in becoming Listeners, fends off despair. HMP Dovegate has installed phones in the cells. Offenders are often victims as well, and an unintended consequence of the restorative justice procedures we all favour can be to restore the original injustice society has inflicted on the offender.

Finally, we gathered in the Chapel for an hour's worship introduced by Martin Wright, who gave us a succinct overview of the weekend. I came away stimulated, and sorry I have to wait another year before seeing my QICJ Friends again.

**ADRIAN SMITH**

# END OF CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

We are facing a crisis in criminal justice in general and prisons in particular. We were privileged to have our conference opened by Sir David Latham, former High Court judge and chair of the Parole Board, who recently chaired a JUSTICE working party on mental health in the criminal justice system. He began by describing the depth of the crisis, in particular the number of men and greater proportion of women in prison with mental health needs (15 per cent of men and 25 per cent of women in prison reported symptoms indicative of psychosis, and many received no care from a mental health professional in prison). He stressed the need for criminal justice professionals at all levels to have a greater understanding and training.

**Crisis in our prisons**

However, I would like to congratulate the Ministry of Justice, along with the Prisons Inspectorate and the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, on publishing the statistics, and the Prison Reform Trust on making them more widely known through its Prison Fact File. The appalling conditions at Liverpool, Nottingham and other prisons have made national news, and since the conference it has been reported (on 12 March) that two workers were sacked by Amey, the private company with a contract for maintenance, for expressing their concerns to the prison governor.

It seems obvious that when mentally disturbed people contribute to the overcrowding of prisons, the answer should not be more prisons but more treatment centres, and wherever possible these should be in the community. This was recommended in 1976 in a report by the Howard League (Procedure and resources for mentally abnormal offenders), and repeated by the JUSTICE committee forty years later.

Reports by the chief inspector of prisons repeatedly stress the lack of purposeful activity, which often means 22 to 23 hours a day in a cell, alone or with someone you didn't choose. Almost half of prisons were rated as 'requiring improvement' or 'inadequate' in their overall effectiveness for learning, skills and work (Prison Fact File, Autumn 2017, p.49). It is not surprising if boredom provides an additional incentive to drug taking. How can any Member of Parliament or judge think that subjecting people to these inhuman and degrading conditions makes things better for anyone? Or do they just not stop to think?

**Sentencing**

There should surely be a radical rethink of what sentences are for. At present the Sentencing Council tries to match the wrongness of an offence to an arbitrary length of time. This bears no relation to what is required to persuade and enable the offender to make reparation, to the victim if they want it, or to the community and not to offend again. Such programmes can generally take place in the community, perhaps in day centres. They take away the offender's liberty for a time, although constructively and not totally. Will one or more of the reforming organisations – or indeed Quakers – promote a high-level enquiry into this urgent need?

**Inspiring art therapies**

Alongside this depressing picture, the conference heard of good and inspiring work. Tristran Cox described the caring and creative work of a Medium Secure Unit. It is based on understanding and 'mothering', and among other things attention to the effect of diet on behaviour. For those who have difficulty communicating, music can be used. For 81 beds there is a staff of 3 music therapists, 2 art therapists, 2 drama therapists, in addition to 40 NHS psychotherapists and 400 nurses. It is impressive to learn of the resources committed to people who, in many people's eyes, are problems, although we would rather say that they have problems.

Communication was also tackled by Marian Liebmann, who has practised art therapy for many years, and showed us how people who are not good with words can use strip cartoons, as the ex- prisoner I was paired with did very effectively. The drawings can then serve as a springboard for further conversation.

**Reforms**

It was good to hear, from Melanie Jameson, that the Ministry of Justice has a Practice Development Group, in which civil servants meet to find ways of getting things done. Current topics include women, under-18s, BAME people, education and 'unlocking potential', and overcoming learning difficulties through music, arts and drama. A drama group in a prison context also figures in what Sinead Bailie calls 'Co-production'; the term is rather opaque, but the practice sounds creative. It provides an 'enabling environment', a therapeutic garden, regarding people as assets, promoting reciprocity and showing them that we all need each other. This reminded us of the South African concept of ubuntu – I exist because you exist. Apparently the drama group included a man with Tourette's syndrome, which made us wonder how the performance turned out!



**Inequality**
Julia Horn spoke of exploring concerns about inequality as expressed in popular music and songs. Prison with its rigid routines tends to infantilise people, and we need ways to encourage prisoners to care about others (echoing the idea of reciprocity). But in a prison, programmes like these need the support of staff 'champions'.

**No voice**
Joy Doal works with REDD (Reglating Emotions and Dealing with Distress) at the Anawim Women's Centre in Birmingham. It uses 'in- reach' into prisons as well as trying to keep women out of prison and providing a sanctuary. I see from the internet that Anawim is an Aramaic word meaning the poorest, the outcast, the persecuted – those with no voice. Anawim says that the so-called reforms of the government's 'Transforming rehabilitation' policy have 'had a nefarious effect on women's rehabilitation', for example because 'recalls [to prison] mean that women repeatedly serve two-week sentences ... which results in a chaotic carousel and makes it difficult to establish some stability for rehabilitation'. Despite this, everyone I asked spoke of Joy's resilience, care and empathy.

**Prison harm**
The final plenary session heard from... Kimmett Edgar, a Quaker and head of research at the Prison Reform Trust. In a lively interactive session he stated that prisons can harm emotional well-being, and then led a discussion about what constitutes well-being. Among many suggestions were hope, contact with nature (plants and animals), and being listened to – which links with the ideal of restorative justice.

**Conclusion**
What conclusions can we draw?

Reform won't – can't – happen while prisons are
overcrowded and overstretched.

We need a strategy to relieve overcrowding by creating
mental health facilities.

Quakers in Criminal Justice should actively inform Quakers
and the general public of the serious situation. How many Area Meetings, let alone local meetings, have even heard of the Crime, Community and Justice Subcommittee, or seen any of its publications?

To make a difference, we should educate ourselves about social media; young Quakers may be able to help.

We need a new approach accepting you don't get people to behave well by treating them badly. Most 'hardened criminals' are hardened in prison.

The guiding principles should be:
- do no harm
- reparation and restorative justice
- constructive work
- education and training

no deprivation of civil rights
use of custody only when necessary to protect the public or prevent absconding

Above all, policy should be based on prevention first: social investment, and 'catching them young'.

The public is waking up to ways of living in harmony with the planet; it is time to learn to live in harmony with each other.

**MARTIN WRIGHT**

# IS PRISON REFORM POSSIBLE?

This is by no means a straightforward question and is best tackled by considering a number of issues, enabling us to draw conclusions:

What situation are we starting from in prisons in England and Wales?

What reforms are on the table?

What is holding things together at present?

What needs to be in place to provide a realistic chance of effective reforms?

**The current situation in our prisons**

"The degree of civilisation in a society is revealed by entering its prisons." A quote often misattributed to Churchill (actually made by Dostoyevsky) must lead us to conclude that society is profoundly uncivilised!

Year on year, annual prison inspectorate (HMCIP) reports highlight lack of purposeful activity, availability of drugs, especially synthetic SPICE, violence (both on staff and prisoner on prisoner), self-harm and 'self-inflicted deaths'. All these factors are inter-related and exacerbated by the all-time shortage of Prison Officers.

In February a new provision was activated for the first time: HMP Nottingham was put on 'urgent notification' (special measures) and responsibility passed from governing governor to the Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The squalor is in part due to outsourcing of maintenance, cleaning and supplies services to two private companies – Carillion and Amey – each of whom won £200m contracts in 2015. The MoJ has now been obliged to set up 'in-house services' to tackle the backlog of 38,000 maintenance tasks. Conditions in Wormwood Scrubs are deemed "indecent, not suitable to live in" and HM Liverpool had what the HMCIP called "the worst living conditions... ever seen". I also note that there are often long waits for healthcare

appointments and that contracts for prisons careers services were not renewed at the end of March.

**What reforms?**

Much expertise has been given to reform culminating in major reviews:-

Corston Report (2007)
Corston's 43 recommendations, hailed as "the roadmap for women- specific CJ reform", had cross-party support and has been accepted by three successive administrations but has not been implemented.




Meanwhile, the dismemberment of probation services has disproportionately affected vulnerable women; women's services in the community have been cut while female incarceration rate is on the rise.




Taylor Review of Youth Justice Service (2015)
There has been some success in reducing numbers of under-18s in custody; those in the CJS tend to have complex needs. The government has responded to Taylor, agreeing that education and health should be at the heart of youth custody; establishing a pre-apprenticeship pathway; tackling violence, including gangs and 'empowering' governors.

Coates Review (2015)
Although ostensibly about education, this Review covers so much more. In summary, Coates proposes the 'empowerment' of governors to buy in the services their establishment requires; identification/support of Specific Learning Difficulties & Learning Disabilities; improved education offer to include non-accredited courses, 'soft skills' and 'engagement'; rolling out of IT access.

Lammy Review (2017)
MP David Lammy continues to press for measures to reduce the over-representation of Black and Ethnic Minority (BAME) prisoners. His Three Core Principles comprise fair treatment throughout the CJS, nurturing trust, and measures to extend beyond CJS borders. The government appears to picking this up with measures including a Race Disparity Audit, a Race & Ethnicity Board to monitor progress and a review of the use of restraint.

During our Conference we heard about the Mental Health Review (2017) by JUSTICE (20 years on from the ground-breaking Bradley Review) with 52 recommendations covering the whole CJS, the main point being that mental health issues affect behaviour and impact on the offender's progress through the system.

**Holding things together**

In my opinion, four main groups of people are keeping the prison system from collapse: Dedicated staff and Chaplains; Prisoners helping prisoners (Listeners, Shannon Trust and St Giles Trust); Charities (eg Prison Phoenix Trust, Women in Prison). Finally, civil servants getting on with aspects of agreed reforms (including the group I'm working with in the MoJ), despite frequent Ministerial changes.

**What needs to be in place for reform to succeed**

Now, as then, reform cannot succeed without the political will, backed by realistic funding, rather than the on-going cuts to MoJ budgets (a further £600m in next 2 financial years).

Steps must be taken to reduce prison numbers. Often proposed measures include:

> Stopping and reversing sentence inflation (ie longer sentences despite falling crime rate).
> Rethinking 'recalls for breeches of sentence conditions' – especially in the short-sentenced group, now under supervision post-release.
>
> Focusing on prevention not criminalisation, in particular, better care of excluded schoolchildren and 'looked after children'.
>
> Enabling all remaining IPPs (prisoners with Sentences of Imprisonment for Public Protection) to progress through the system, since this sentence has been cancelled.
>
> Speeding up the effective rollout of Liaison & Diversion Courts and Problem-Solving Courts.




It is essential to restore numbers of Prison Officers and to compensate for high numbers leaving the service, especially in London prisons.

Apart from Liaison & Diversion Courts, none of the above are happening.

Progress requires a fundamental change in culture, from punitive to rehabilitative, with 'buy in' from the whole prison system, from top to bottom. Furthermore, and crucially, the nature of the debate on prisoners has to change: all of us must take every opportunity to challenge punitive tabloid rhetoric.

Our conclusion must therefore be that, at present, there is little chance of prison reform. To achieve anything worthwhile, there must be a radical re-think of:

Who needs to be in prison (and who doesn't – such as the mentally ill)
What should prisoners be doing during their sentence to minimise chances of returning?
What steps are needed to bring all this about?
That is what I would call prison reform.

This article is loosely based on a talk given during our recent QICJ conference

**MELANIE JAMESON**

# MISUSE OF DRUGS

When the Misuse of Drugs Act of 1971 came into force the penalties for cannabis using were harsh.Even adolescents experimenting were fined £120/£130 (average house price in the seventies was £12,000) and, if unable to pay, were sent to prison with a criminal record. For dealers, imprisonment was inevitable. Sentencing policy has steadily relaxed over the years and many police forces now hardly bother to prefer possession charges. The figures for cannabis convictions were halved from 30,000 to 15,000 in the last two years, against a million and a half criminal users. The background to this is that prison and police resources are stretched by austerity and the baby-boomers are much better informed from experience than an earlier generation. Public opinion too has changed and the Liberals and the majority of MPs are in favour of a revision in the law. Letters from the Home Office replying to suggestions about possession revision respond with the same formula: "Great progress has been made in reducing tobacco smoking and there are no plans to change in the future."

We now know from American experience that legalising the cannabis laws allows private enterprise to let rip. Enormous greenhouses produce up to forty different kinds of cannabis, shops appear overnight to display their wares, cannabis using and sales grow handsomely and everyone is delighted, including the tax man. Well, nearly everybody: one county of Colorado was so unhappy that it tried, unsuccessfully, to break away from Colorado to become a separate state.

"PRISON AND POLICE RESOURCES ARE STRETCHED BY AUSTERITY AND THE BABY-BOOMERS ARE MUCH BETTER INFORMED FROM EXPERIENCE THAN AN EARLIER GENERATIONS".

Massive opposition to legalising cannabis has also been vocal in Uruguay, where an interesting experiment is taking place. When an ex-guerilla became president he introduced a law in 2013 which allowed cannabis to be grown by individuals at home and in quite substantial quantities. First, the individuals had to register with the state. His motive was that he "did not want the country to become like Mexico," where 100,000 have been killed as drug gangs fight for territory. He was replaced by a new president, an oncologist, in 2015 who was sceptical and who engaged in extensive consultation painstakingly honing new laws and administrative requirements; this against a scathing background of a public not wanting legislation. So in July 2017 legal trade started. Five official growers of cannabis had been appointed by the government to grow 20 tons, and about 13,000 pharmacists had registered to sell cannabis at a price of about £1 a gram. Price competition, it was thought, would eliminate the profitable illicit trade. The trading margins for the pharmacists are so low that of the 13,000 who registered fewer than 20 continued to sell cannabis.The Guardian has shown us photographs of the massive queues which form daily outside the shops.

What we are now waiting to see is whether the cut price will increase cannabis sales, or whether profitable pushing will be killed off by price competition. We shall have to wait and see. Our Cornish Friends will be watching carefully.

**VERNON FROST**

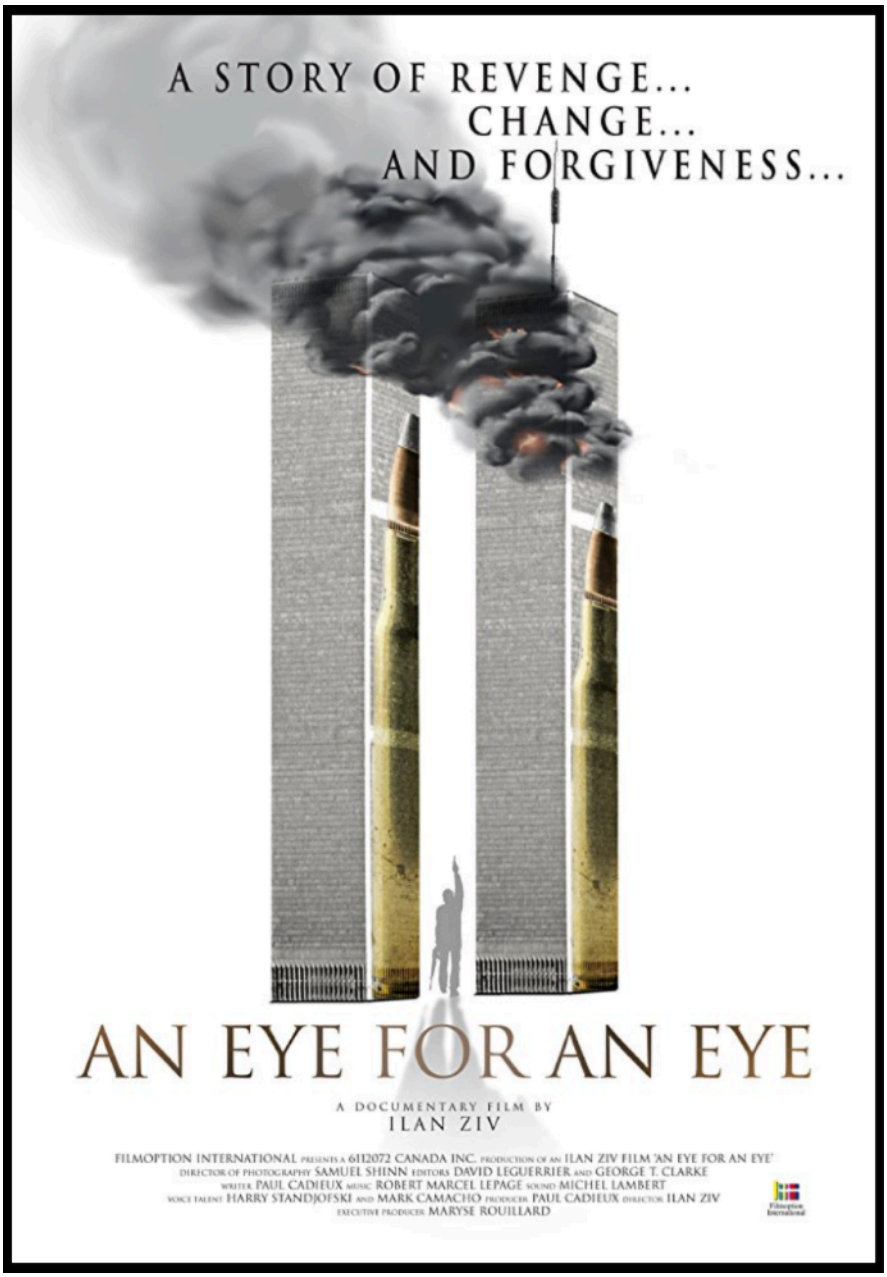
# AN EYE FOR AN EYE: REVIEW

I was deeply moved by the 2017-released film-documentary An eye for an eye. It is a true story of hate, revenge, understanding, remorse and redemption as lived by Mark Stroman, who was executed in Texas 2007 in the presence of faithful friends who loved him dearly.

The story is of a white supremacist who murdered two people and shot a third as a revenge attack for the horrors of 9/11. Strikingly, it was a survivor who took a stand for the accused, and campaigned endlessly to alleviate the sentence of death against him. The producer who initially interviewed him soon after he received the death penalty sentence expected him to be pure evil, but visited him a second time as there appeared to be evidence that he had changed his nature. Thereafter, like many others, he befriended Mark – and thus lost his journalistic credentials and the right to carry a camera on his visits.

Two significant arguments in favour of the death penalty were loudly crushed in the course of the movie. One is the myth that the death penalty is a deterrent for murder. Mark acknowledged that every night on death row, he shuddered at the thought of his impending death in the execution chamber; but that although he was aware of the death penalty, the so-called deterrent had no impact whatsoever on him while murder was in his mind. The second striking point is about the validity of the jury. In Mark's case, the producer had tracked down one member of the jury who had felt bullied into providing a unanimous guilty decision. She had seen Mark's murders as hate-crime but not aggravated by the further felony of armed robbery for which the death penalty is imposed. She appeared on the movie as deeply disturbed following her actions on the jury stating that she felt she had blood on her hands.

The movie follows the fate of this character, who undoubtedly murdered and intended to murder many more (citing one hundred Muslims in a mosque). His life evolved dramatically while on death row: he was befriended, supported, forgiven and loved by so many people who entered his life. These included the victim who survived Mark's gunshots, a UK pen-friend who referred to him as her best friend, the wife of a previously executed death row inmate, a team from Reprieve, the producer, and the murdered victims' family members. As a result of the sustained




commitment of these people, Mark found remorse and forgiveness: his sincerity could not be doubted. Over time, he read about World War Two and the holocaust, and he realised that he had been caught up in a never-ending cycle of hate and revenge. He realised that he had to change, become remorseful, seek forgiveness and forgive himself. He left this world as he had hoped, having healed his soul and recovered from the gaping wound. In his own words, he continued to be "Texas loud and Texas proud." But he would no longer cry out for hate crime, carrying instead the flag for compassion and forgiveness.

The cruelty of the State was on the stand throughout this movie. There was footage of George Bush swearing revenge after 9/11, and a reminder of the war on Afghanistan.When Mark Stroman was being sentenced, his twelve-year-old daughter was called to the stand all alone, where she cried but was not comforted. Her words were poignant – "Please don't kill my daddy" – but she was ignored. In the final run-up to his execution, the legal team tried to get a reprieve, using the victim's right for a meeting with the offender. The decision was put on hold, with the full knowledge that the delay would be certain death for the accused. A team of anti-death penalty campaigners stood vigil with banners over the course of the execution, but they too were ignored by the state of Texas. One of those present for the execution spoke of the violence of state- sanctioned killing in custody. A commentator stated that in Texas, capital punishment was popular; and after all, it was an election year.

The documentary is a good reminder of why the death penalty should be abolished. I hope that it is shown widely and I recommend watching it, although at times it is harrowing. It is currently available on Amazon movies and free with Amazon Prime. I am baffled that the San Francisco Chronicle suggested that it was "the most unpersuasive documentary ever made". I can only imagine that this particular publication is so steeped in righteousness and vengeance that it is totally sceptical of forgiveness and atonement.

**CARMEL SCHMID**

# CHRISTIAN PRISON RESOURCING

While QICJ generally reports on what Quakers do with regard to criminal justice, it is good to hear too about what other faith groups are doing. Christian Prison Resourcing (CPR) is an organisation that I had not heard of until someone sent me a newsletter from a Luton branch ostensibly about three local programmes that this organisation seem to support. One of the programmes is called Courageous Exchange Programme (CEP), which seems to be a self- help supported group that helps people recover from drug addictions. They appear to meet once a week, and due to their success are planning in due course to run a conference. There was little information in the bulletin but I gather that it is multi-denominational and that the programmes are supported generally by church people although they welcome volunteers of all religions or none.

A second programme that the group run is called Azalea. Its purpose is to support women who are involved in sexual exploitation on the streets in Luton. The women learn to break free from the difficulties in their lives and from being manipulated by their pimps. The programme runs a crisis intervention drop-in centre and they also have recovery-styled structured group sessions. The women learn about emotional health as well as physical and emotional safety.

**INMATES WERE FASCINATED BY THE CONCEPT OF SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS AND THE RELEVANCE TO THEIR OWN LIVES**

Thirdly, they run bible groups in prison. The newsletter spoke of inmates' interest in Saul's journey on the road to Damascus and how inmates were fascinated by the concept of spiritual blindness and the relevance to their own lives. However, the bible groups are not always well attended; but clearly there has been significant interest in some institutions.

I have heard of the Sycamore project which has been run in HMPS Woodhill, Milton Keynes as well as many other locations. The Sycamore project uses the biblical story of Zacharias to explain the concept of coming to terms with past misdemeanours. It covers victim awareness and prepares people for restorative justice sessions. There has been no QPC at Woodhill for a number of years now so I am not aware of what programmes are run in the prison.
It is important to embrace the frog in order to find the prince. Society needs boundaries in order to be safe but it is an illusion that prison walls can keep society safe. Only reformed people can make society safe. Reform is the way to the future: New Bridge Foundation and other like-minded organisations are the conduit through which our hope must flow.

**CARMEL SCHMID**



# MINUTES OF AGM - AMMERDOWN 24/02/18

**Present:** Ann Jacob (Clerk), Jo Rado (Minutes), Rodney Mahon (Treasurer) and 26 members
**Apologies:** Deborah Mitchell, Nick McGeorge

1) **Matters arising from previous Minutes**
There were none.

2) **Committee Meetings**
Two Committee Meetings were held during the year.

3) **Treasurer's report**
We have remembered with gratitude and affection our former Treasurer, David Hoare, who died on 26th January 2018.

We welcome Rodney Mahon as our new Treasurer and thank him for his willingness to take on the Treasurership. His report is attached. Our finances are in a stable and positive state. The accounting year has been changed from Feb-Jan to Jan-Dec.

4) **Membership Secretary's report**
Numbers of members are constant (around 137) but many Friends delay in sending their subscriptions. They can now do so by Standing Order, which will help. Ann is especially grateful to Rodney and her report is attached.

5) **Committee appointments**
We are pleased to confirm Rodney's appointment as Treasurer. Simon Ewart and Marian Liebmann are willing to serve for another Triennium. Ann Jacob has completed another Triennium as Clerk and will continue, if necessary, sharing the Clerkship with Jo Rado. Deborah Mitchell and Rita Solanke have resigned. Our Nominations Committee will meet to discern names of new Committee members.

6) **Britain Yearly Meeting May 4th to 7th 2018 to be held at Friends House**
The Special Interest Group will meet on the Sunday either at lunch time or at 5 30pm. We are grateful to Marian Liebmann and Sue Barrance, who have offered to coordinate the session. We ask members to suggest ideas for a workshop session, linked to our theme this weekend (the Criminal Justice system and Mental Health).

7) **Newsletter**
Three issues have been produced, and we thank Carmel for her editorship. Jonathan Lamb produces a digital edition and will continue to do so for another year. We thank him.

8) **Future Conferences**
We have a provisional booking for Hinsley Hall (Leeds) from Feb 22 to 24th 2019. We agree that it should be confirmed. In 2020 we hope to go to Woodbrooke (Feb 21-23) and a provisional booking will be made shortly.

9) **The website**
Peter Hardman has worked on the website and we are happy with it and thank him. Rodney will now "look after" the website and speak to Peter about his expenses. We expect the sum to be about £100, as agreed last year.

10) **Making ourselves better known to Friends**
We are reminded that we share many concerns with the Crime and Community Justice Subcommittee of QPSW. We hope that Area Meetings can be encouraged to take more interest in these concerns and we are all asked to talk to our own AMs and ensure that they have copies of the two leaflets (An introduction to Restorative Justice and its place in the British criminal justice system and Ways to witness: opportunities for engaging with the adult criminal justice system in Britain) and are helping to distribute them.

**Date of next Meeting** – Feb 23rd 2019 at Hinsley Hall.

**Signed as a true record:**
**Ann Jacob (Clerk)**

# MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Since my last update in November, we are pleased to welcome the following new or re-joined members:Rowland Carson, Vernon Frost, Alison Mitchell and Anthony Wilson.Their names and contact details will be included in the next updated Membership List; in the meantime, anyone wishing to contact any of them should do so via myself. All other new/rejoined members during the last year have already been notified in previous Membership Updates.

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that David Hoare, our then Treasurer, died in January this year, having been diagnosed with a terminal condition the previous autumn. Our sympathy and condolences were and are expressed to his partner Julia and members of his family. He had been our very efficient Treasurer for a relatively short time, and in his typically punctilious manner, when unable to continue, he handed over all the Treasurer's paperwork and accounts in exemplary order, ready for whoever would be taking over. David had been a faithful and active member of QICJ since its very early days, and for many years was Quaker prison chaplain at Frankland High Security Prison and active in other Quaker roles, and we are very thankful for his life.

David's role as Treasurer has now been taken over by Rodney Mahon, several times our Treasurer previously, who stepped in and offered to take over the role immediately on hearing of David's illness and inability to continue. We are very grateful to Rodney, who was formally appointed at the AGM in February.

Now a few brief statistics. At the AGM I reported that our numbers remain stable at present, our current numbers (137) being almost the same as last year (138), allowing for new members, the deaths of David Binney and David Hoare, three resignations – Sue Flemons, Penny Lilley and Joyce Crosfield – as well as others no longer subscribing.

The perennial problem of late payments persists, and so far only 82 members have paid for the current year, some 30 of these by standing order, which we encourage. Of the remainder, there are 12 who have not paid since 2016 and are likely to be deleted in the near future, unless they do so soon.

So I have to reiterate: please remember that QICJ is dependent for its income on subscription payments and any small surplus which may be made from conference fees plus any donations we may receive. Timely payment at the beginning of January each year is important.So to those to whom the question of late or absent payments applies – if you value QICJ, please remedy this situation.

In relation to donations, I must express thanks for a very generous donation from a former member of QICJ, now resigned.

On a much more positive note, it was lovely to see and meet all of you who were able to attend our very excellent conference in February, and I hope you all found it as stimulating and informative as I did.

Finally, one joyous piece of news. In 'Mslexia', a rather up-market magazine for women writers, contributors and readers, the most recent issue contained an interview with our member Mary Brown, about her recently published novel I Used To Be, with a lovely photograph of her. She was described in the introduction to the interview with "The veteran peace protester and Quaker Chaplain talks to Danuta Kean about the inspiration for her novel about an alienated teenage girl and a lonely old woman". When I spoke with Mary to confirm she was in agreement with my including this information in the Newsletter, I learned from her that she feels that another book she has written, which is due for publication in May, is a far more important book and is called Undiscovered Country- Conversations About Death, based on interviews she did with elderly people in residential care. I am sure we would all wish to congratulate her, especially on being so productive at the age of 90!

**ANN JACOB**

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# RESIGNATION OF CARMEL FROM EDITORIAL DUTIES

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For the last two weeks, I have been pondering whether to go on producing the newsletter content and I have finally concluded that my day is done. My real interest has been in receiving raw material typically from ex-offenders or prison) and transforming it into something radiant by working with it (or the author) and extracting the authentic. However all of that has been arduous, time-consuming and emotionally demanding - I have considered this work as 'writing therapy'. I have also enjoyed hunting around for varied input from different sources - I have accosted Quakers everywhere but also brought in stuff from outside Quakerism where there has been a common mind-set. I have enjoyed the conferences, meeting other members and being exposed to every aspect of CJ that has been covered in the newsletter since my first edition in May '13. The material has been rich and varied from Adrian Smith's book reviews to conferences from 'Crime and Justice Studies' but it is the personal stories that have appealed to me most. One such was from an IPP prisoner in Littlehey who wrote prolifically to me as editor. I eventually compiled his story and published it anonymously. It told of him being released for a temporary visit home but the system being so stacked up against him that he was immediately hauled back to prison. When I sent him the newsletter bringing his attention to the anonymous article he cried out "Shit, someone else has been through what I have been through!". Although chuffed that I had seen it from his point of view - he would have been happier to have had his name on it and that has been by only regret as a QICJ newsletter editor.

**Carmel Schmid**

Quakers in Criminal Justice are truly grateful for the considerable efforts of Carmel as our Newsletter Editor for the last 5 years. She has worked tirelessly to ensure that members received a varied, informative and timely newsletter each edition . We are currently developing a strategy for moving forward in her absence and would ask that in the meantime that any material for the August edition would be forwarded directly to Jonathan Lamb at either jonolamb@mac.com or at 23 Downview Gardens, Belfast, BT15 4GH, Northern Ireland. We hope to appoint a new editor in the near future. If you would be willing to accept this role, the committee would love to hear from you.

**Jonathan Lamb (Co-Editor)**

Your Committee Members for 2018 are: Simon Ewart, Rodney Mahon (Treasurer), Ann Jacob (Co-Clerk & Membership Sec.), Alice Audsley, Marian Liebmann, Nick McGeorge, Jo Rado (Co-Clerk). Carmel Schmid and Jonathan Lamb are joint newsletter co-editors although Jonathan is not available to attend committee meetings outside of the conference. Jonathan produces the illustrated electronic newsletter.

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**Opinions expressed are those of the writers and do not represent the views of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Quakers in**

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