

QUAKER ARTS NETWORK Annual Report 2013-2014

Since our first AGM in May 2013 we have achieved an enormous amount:

1. The 2014 QAN calendar.

This was the initiative of Linda Murgatroyd, supported by a group who trawled through the archives and selected images to go with the theme “Meetings for Worship” – ranging from historic paintings, contemporary paintings to more abstract work. Explanatory text, Poems & quotes were also included and Mary-Jane Thornton’s did a splendid design job putting it all together. We’ve had really positive feedback from people all round the world who have enjoyed using the calendar.

In all, over 800 copies were sold, so that we not only covered the £ 3600 costs, but also made a healthy surplus. More importantly, it was a piece of outreach, and showed how the visual arts can help spread the Quaker message. It was a huge effort, and many thanks to all concerned including those who helped sell the calendars. We have no immediate plans to produce another one but if anyone would like to help do so in future, please get in touch.

2. QAN website

Since its launch, the website continues to be updated, so we have been able to use it to notify members of upcoming events, including exhibitions involving QAN members, and to recruit still more members. We have to thank our professional web designer Jean Chettle. Many organisations spend a significant amount on websites, and Jean has enabled us to get a splendid site up and running with a minimal spend. We are currently working through plans to make the website more interactive and more robust but progress is necessarily limited by volunteer time.

3. Events

- (a) A second creative weekend at Woodbrooke was, facilitated by Anne McNeill last October. She shared her practice of Prayer Doodles. Amongst the fifteen members who attended, there were a number of poets, and Eve Jackson’s poem about her experience was published in *Quaker Voices*. It’s an interesting example of how the visual arts and poetry can spark off each other.
- (b) In March, there was a QAN Northern meeting at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park organised by Caroline Coode and attended by 16 people, most new to QAN. It had been organised to coincide with an event about Quaker light artist James Turrell. We are keen not to be London centric, and we hope to be able to support QAN members willing to take initiatives in their region.
- (c) For starters, a creative weekend is being planned at Swarthmoor Hall next March. It’ll be a good chance to get to know each other better and be creative together. We hope to see many of you there.

4. Exhibitions

We're really delighted that QAN has organised its first mini exhibition – a retrospective of John Perkin's work, at Friends House. It's on till August 14th – on the second floor corridor outside George Fox room. It has been a huge effort, not least because we had to establish a process of working with FH staff. We'd like to especially thank Jill Green who did so much of the running around (till she broke her leg) and Penny Robbins in our exhibitions group, and Paul Grey from FH who was such an enthusiastic supporter.

We were very conscious of the importance of working to a high professional standard – to lay the ground for future exhibitions at FH- and QAN has invited been asked to organise more exhibitions at FH in future. At the AGM we will be considering the feasibility of this and how it sits in our priorities. It's a question of our own resources, not just cost, but also the time and effort required. We have a very small band of volunteers at the moment, and unless this grows, there's a limit on what QAN can undertake in future.

Last but not least, it's been good to be able to support YMG's aim to include an arts programme. This has been curated by Rebecca Bellamy, and QAN has been able to circulate the various calls for work and steward volunteers, amongst QAN members, and it's really encouraging to see such a strong interest in the arts at this gathering.

5 Financial summary:

Our first year was very healthy financially, with £3,000 in the bank on 31st December 2013. The calendar's surplus accounted for half of this and we are also grateful for donations from several individuals, including a generous one from a member who gave a large proportion of sales from her very successful exhibition. Our expenses were also minimal. This enabled us to undertake further events and pay some internet costs during 2014. We are glad to have a reserve cushion against future needs but will need to continue fundraising in future.

6 Membership and appointments

175 Friends are currently on our email list.

The following have served QAN in various capacities:

<i>Convenor:</i> Fiona Kam Meadley	<i>Secretary:</i>	Linda Murgatroyd
<i>Treasurer:</i> June Buffery	<i>Membership Secretary:</i>	Ingrid Ellis
<i>Other Committee members:</i>	Jill Green, Anne McNeill, Penny Robbins.	
<i>Exhibitions Group:</i>	Fiona Kam Medley, Jill Green, Penny Robbins.	

Fiona Kam Meadley and Linda Murgatroyd
July 2014