Friends World News
The Bulletin of the Friends World Committee for Consultation
Anticipation is something I associate with discovery. The anticipation of the Triennial is growing as the date is close upon us. There’s an excitement about bringing so many of us together – we know we’ll be welcomed, informed, stretched, challenged, joyful, lonely, exhausted and excited all in one 10-day period. We are a diverse people and at King’s Hospital School, all those facets will be reflected.

At the Africa Section Triennial, at the Section of the Americas Annual Meeting, and at the Europe & Middle East Section Annual Meeting, I’ve met with groups to share the excitement and information about what to expect. Underlying all the details of travel and visas is our purpose, our theme: Finding the Prophetic Voice for our Time. What do we as Friends have to say to each other and to the world? This is what we hope to discover – worthy of great anticipation!

Please pray and hold in the Light those who rely upon getting visas to enter Ireland and transit countries along the way. Most of the applications are in the hands of the Irish government now and we pray that all the hard work in laying the groundwork there will come to happy fruition. There are many issues of great concern to Friends on the agenda and it’s important to hear our many voices.

Cover photo: Brigit Butt, Change Agents for Peace Programme, and Cecile Nyiramana from Rwanda, Director of Women in Dialogue, at the Africa Section Triennial in Uganda.

Joyful hymns of praise at the Africa Section Triennial, Kampala, Uganda.
Section Reports

Section of the Americas
Annual Meeting 2007 at historic Friends School

Under the watchful eyes of Lucretia Mott, in the form of a marble bust on the piano, and former Quaker heads of school high up on the walls of Alumni Hall, over 150 Friends attended all or part of the 2007 FWCC Annual Meeting at the Moses Brown School in Providence, RI. It was a special treat this year to conduct the annual meeting at the historic school. In addition to attending to business, participants met in small worship groups, regional meetings or workshops on ‘Convergent Friends’ or ‘Militarism in the Americas.’ Keynote speaker Dr. Bernard LaFayette recalled his experiences at the height of the civil rights movement in the South. Local Friends provided an insightful glimpse into the early history of Friends in New England. “I was energized to more enthusiastically support FWCC in my monthly (and yearly) meeting” commented one participant. During the Capital Campaign report, El Salvador YM was recognized for its contribution to the campaign.

Friends Retirement Communities host information sessions

Executive Secretary Margaret Fraser spoke at Friends House Sandy Spring, MD, recently about the work of FWCC. Many of those present had been at FWCC international meetings, including one who was at the founding conference in 1937. Last fall, Friends in the Medford Leas, NJ retirement community hosted Margaret for an informational tea and conversation in conjunction with the campaign. Many Friends attending were delighted to learn about FWCC’s work, as well as recall their involvement in earlier years. Plans are being made to visit other retirement communities this year.

Tenth Hispanic Friends Conference meets in Philadelphia

This annual conference, organized independently by local congregations in coordination with the Coalition for Hispanic Ministries, took place last fall for the first time in the city where two Hispanic Friends churches have developed and flourished in the past five years. Over 500 participants attended evening services and teaching, which were broadcast over the internet. This was one of the group’s largest-attended conferences. FWCC assisted by planning an excursion to William Penn’s summer home on the Delaware River and the 4th and Arch St. Meetinghouse in Philadelphia, the largest Friends meetinghouse in the world. It was a joyous occasion for Hispanic Friends, many of whom are second- and third-generation Friends, to learn about early Friends’ heritage in Philadelphia. Since this meeting, a new organization, AMANA (Alianza Ministerial Amigos Norte América—Ministerial Alliance of Friends in North America) has been set up, and future annual gatherings will be guided by this group.

Come celebrate FWCC’s 70th anniversary!

On September 14–15, 2007, FWCC will mark 70 years of work to connect Friends. The celebration begins on the Friday evening with a reception at Haverford College. Thomas Hamm, author of *The Quakers in America* and *The Transformation of American Quakerism*, will be the introductory speaker at Saturday’s celebration at Swarthmore Friends Meeting. Details, including lodging information, will be posted on our website. FWCC was founded at a World Conference in 1937 hosted by Swarthmore and Haverford Colleges in Pennsylvania.

Africa Section

The main event in the Africa Section was the Triennial, held in Kampala, Uganda, at the beginning of the year. Please see the full report beginning on page 8.
Asia West Pacific Section

There are big changes in Asia West Pacific Section of FWCC. We have just been given a grant from the Chace Foundation in the United States to upgrade the section’s web page in order to function more professionally, and be more effective.

The Executive Secretary, Kenneth Co Ching Po, has been offered a teaching/administration job from a private international school in Shanghai. He will assume his new duty early August, 2007. Thus he will miss the Dublin Triennial. Fortunately, the slack will be taken up by the Associate Secretary, Valerie Joy.

Inter-visitation

For inter-visitation work, right now Valerie is visiting the Africa Section to explore ways the two sections can work together, especially after the Triennial in Dublin.

Also, Sachiko Yamamoto, the Clerk of the Japan Yearly Meeting, has been invited by Australia Yearly Meeting to participate in their annual gathering next January.

Australia Yearly Meeting and Aotearoa/New Zealand Yearly Meeting have new leadership, and Seoul MM also has just got a new Clerk. Her name is Boon Yi Kwak.

The section is actively engaged in legal registration. We want to register as a Religious Association in the State of South Australia. And we also want to register in Hong Kong as a branch of that Religious Association. This way, we as a section will be on more solid ground legally.

Europe and Middle East Section

The new Ministry and Outreach programme is well underway - exploring how best we can connect with new enquirers and small groups at a distance from any Yearly Meeting. The most recent visits under this programme - to Siberia and Georgia - have both also included visits to people seeking International Membership. Planning is in hand for a gathering in September for Friends travelling in the ministry.

Julia Ryberg, the Coordinator, is also working with a group of Friends to establish an on-line study programme which will be facilitated by those Friends in several different European languages.

The Amari Play Centre

The Amari Play Centre in Ramallah, which is under the care of FWCC-EMES, is holding a summer play camp in July. European Friends have raised funds to assist with the additional local costs and to be able to send three young volunteers, from Norway, the Netherlands and Britain, to add an international dimension.

New Publication

EMES has a new publication, Friendly Advice on Quaker Ways, which looks at Quaker life and organisation and is relevant for both long-standing and newly-emerging groups in Europe.
QUNO Geneva

Human Rights & Refugees
In 2007 QUNO published two new papers as part of its ‘women in prison’ series: one on *Pre-Trial Detention of Women* and the other on the *Impact of Parental Imprisonment on Children*. QUNO worked with others to ensure a successful outcome to the institution-building negotiations of the Human Rights Council and also participated in and organised two well-received side events at the March session of the Council – one on the human rights of prisoners, the other on conscientious objection, where QUNO highlighted a recent decision by the UN Human Rights Committee stating unequivocally that conscientious objection is a right under international law.

Global Economic Issues
In February QUNO organised a three-day seminar on intellectual property and bilateral trade negotiations for 35 delegates from African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. To support newcomers to the technicalities of world trade, QUNO has also begun working on a user-friendly manual of World Trade Organisation terms, to allow trade representatives in Geneva and beyond to get a handle on the issues. QUNO and AFSC were involved in a study tour for ten African trade negotiators to meet with officials in Washington DC to discuss issues around trade in services and development.

Disarmament & Peace
In furthering its work on small arms and light weapons, QUNO has been much involved in a new ‘Geneva Process’ to support governments in implementing a UN Programme of Action to regulate the illicit trade in small arms. QUNO hosted an expert group in January to look at ‘next steps in the comprehensive approach to small-arms control’. QUNO Geneva and QUNO New York have been working closely together on activities related to the new UN Peacebuilding Commission, including ‘mapping’ Friends’ peacebuilding work in Burundi and elsewhere in the Great Lakes Region.

QUNO New York

The Quaker UN Office in New York continues its focus on peace and security issues at the United Nations. This has included expanded attention to conflicts in central Africa as well as the Middle East. Also, QUNO has developed program work around the newly created UN Peacebuilding Commission.

In central Africa, focus has expanded from work on northern Uganda to include new work on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in particular the dire need for civilian protection in eastern Congo. QUNO staff visited local Friends in North Kivu on the border with Rwanda to get a better sense of the deadly challenges facing people in this region of DRC. QUNO was also able to participate in the Quaker Peace Network – Africa held in Rwanda.

Back in New York, recent events at Quaker House have highlighted the humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and Iraq. On both of these issues, QUNO staff have met with members of the UN Security Council at Quaker House to raise concern about the plight of civilians.

Finally, QUNO New York and Geneva have been looking collaboratively at ways to work with the newly-formed UN Peacebuilding Commission. This new UN body was created during 2006 with the aim of engaging and supporting countries emerging from war. Quakers have a keen interest in seeing this new body off to a successful start.
A Visit to Ramallah

It's not everyday I get to travel over 10,000 miles to attend a biology lab. As a chemistry major in college, I enjoyed watching these articulate, English-speaking eleventh graders design an experiment with yeast and attempt to actually make the process work. These young people from the Friends School in Ramallah will almost surely all head on to universities – in Palestine, in Europe or in the US after completing their International Baccalaureate diploma. Their science building and library are new and the damage to their main auditorium is repaired after being hit by Israeli weapons during the last Intifada. Several people told me about the 23 days of no school during an Israeli-imposed curfew which kept people indoors around the clock except for brief periods every third day when they could buy groceries or see a doctor.

Students taught nonviolence
The students are taught nonviolence in various forms, including peer-conflict resolution and studying examples of intractable political problems solved by nonviolent means. We were told of the experience of a student from Gaza when Israeli soldiers moved into his home. The student was shot and wounded while standing in his own driveway greeting a UN worker; yet he has been able to forgive the soldier. Nonviolence is hard to teach in the atmosphere of fear, but the lessons are desperately needed.

Another day I sat in on a 5th-grade science class and heard an explanation in Arabic of how tornados form. (At least the pictures and arm gestures made sense.) Several girls from the class came up to me during recess. One started with an innocent-sounding question, “How do you like Ramallah?” Before I could reply with something innocuous, she went on with her question, which was about living with soldiers and gunfire and fear.
Joyce Al Jhouny, the Head of Ramallah Friends School, and one of the few Quakers remaining in Palestine, spoke to us at length about the school and some of the exciting things happening there. The school is 70% Muslim and 30% Christian and the 1,100 students mingle well. They have been innovative in introducing special education programs which are virtually unknown in the region and are proud of the high level of acceptance of their students at places like Harvard as well as Quaker colleges. We also were given a preliminary screening of a new movie about the youth orchestras, founded by Daniel Barenboem and Edward Said, bringing together Arabs and Israelis. The Friends School was the center for the foundation of this program in the Middle East and was featured in the movie. In contrast, Al Jhouny reflected on the grim realities of their situation. The teachers and administrators know that no one is immune from the violence around them and everyone experiences shortages of water, electricity and phone service. The teachers mourn that they cannot protect the children from the violence around them, although they can develop strong relationships, build self-confidence and provide a stable atmosphere, a place of shelter and hope.

Amari Day Care Center
Not far from the Friends Schools is the Amari Day Care Center, which serves the large refugee camp on the edge of Ramallah. Approximately 10,000 Palestinians have been in the camp since losing their homes in Israel in 1948. Each year, 45 children come to the Day Care Center to play games, learn the alphabet (in Arabic and English), as well as to learn ways of interacting in community. Another place of respite.

During this trip I was hit hard emotionally, despite having read a lot and thinking I knew a reasonable amount about what it is like to be in Jerusalem and Palestine. I was shaken by the reality of the daily humiliations people face and the stories of the occupation. Retha McCutcheon led a group of 15 – mostly Quakers – for two and a half weeks in Israel and Palestine. Her years of being head of the Ramallah Friends School uniquely qualified her to lead this group, and also gave us the opportunity to spend time at the school and four days living with families of students there.

This visit to the Friends Schools was set in the midst of time meeting with numerous peace groups who were seeking ways of building relationships between Israelis and Palestinians, and advocating for justice. We also had the opportunity of walking the streets of Hebron with members of the Christian Peacemakers Team there and witnessing a nonviolent demonstration by B’ilin villagers who attempted unsuccessfully to plant olive trees on their own land on the far side of the “Separation Barrier” from their homes. Retha also led us to many of the Christian holy sites and to the peaceful refuge of the headwaters of the Hermon Stream near the Lebanese border.

In all this mix were reasons for hope and for despair. We were fortunate to have been able to be there.
Africa Section Triennial

This is the group that attended from Rwanda, posing with Nancy Irving. From left to right: Habimana Jonathan, Thaciene Lryanyawera, Baselya Nicodeme, Simparinka Augustin, Samvura Antoine, Nancy Irving, Hamenyimana Bonaventure, Nsengiyumva Fidele, Sizeri Marcellin.

Nancy Irving, FWCC General Secretary

Take 125 people from seven countries and put them together in Kampala, Uganda, and you’ve got the Africa Section Triennial held 31 January – 4 February this year. Held outdoors under a tent at a Catholic conference centre, it was a time of developing relationships and listening deeply to one another.

The theme of the gathering was Exodus 19:5: Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine.

This message from God to Moses on Mount Sinai was woven throughout the various talks and preaching and prayers. And there was a lot of gifted preaching and witnessing. Bridget Butt of Change Agents for Peace Programme talked about how early Friends kept God’s covenant through their call to peacemaking. Her message of the radical Gospel message, the call to integrity, the search for authentic expression of Christianity, provided a great deal of information about our Quaker heritage.

In addition to messages from pastors from Nairobi and Uganda, the local Anglican bishop, Bishop David Zach Niringiyi, challenged the gathering with the question, what’s the difference between a church group and a club? He examined all sorts of measures and concluded that the answer depends upon the evidence. Children of God live in peace and are peacemakers, loving Jesus Christ as Lord. He was
worried that peace may have been supplanted by churches that have become tribes united by a paranoia of superiority, a belief that they are better than others or a fear that they are not. He called upon churches to tackle instances of corruption and greed and to be a reconciled people, to be true to God’s purpose of peacemaking.

The Triennial provided occasion for input to the Executive Committee as participants joined smaller discussion groups on the subjects of an FWCC Day all around the Section and concerns about young Friends. Many ideas surfaced in both areas and reps were asked to take the discussion back to their yearly meetings.

Each yearly meeting gave a report and the vitality within Friends was quite evident. The recent escalation of armed violence and dislocation of families in the Mount Elgon region of Kenya, in an area of three yearly meetings, was identified as an opportunity for Friends to practice peacemaking on several different levels, from humanitarian support of dislocated people to working at the governmental level.

Their constitution was amended so that related organisations can be affiliated: United Society of Friends Women-Kenya and Young Quaker Christian Association. YQCA is recently-formed, supported by the Section, and has already had its first international gathering in Central Africa, bringing together young Friends from primarily East and Central Africa.

Distances within the huge continent of Africa are great and transportation by air very expensive. So there was disappointment that the smallest yearly meetings and isolated meetings and worship groups could not be present. Nonetheless, the leader of the newest Friends church was there from southern Tanzania – one seeker found the Section on the internet and has been guided and nurtured by the Section so now there are three village churches!
More than 300 Friends will gather at the King’s Hospital School in Dublin this August for the 22nd FWCC Triennial, coming to Ireland from 76 yearly meetings from around the world. Each of the four traditions of Friends – programmed, unprogrammed, evangelical and conservative – will be represented, with the oldest participant being 84 years old and the youngest being 18 years old. The three official languages of English, French and Spanish will hopefully serve to communicate all that will take place in the packed nine days of worship, business meetings, interest groups, concerns and working groups that make up the Triennial, although many other languages will doubtless be spoken in the small groups queueing for lunch each day or rehearsing songs for the improvised and celebratory entertainment evening which usually takes place towards the end of the gathering.

But why are so many Friends making their way to Ireland this summer? The Triennial is the world business meeting of FWCC, whose new mission statement, formally adopted by its Central Executive Committee in 2006, states: ‘Answering God’s call to universal love, FWCC brings Friends of varying traditions and cultural experiences together in worship, communications, and consultation, to express our common heritage and our Quaker message to the world’. Representatives nominated by their yearly meetings will gather to review what has been done in the name of FWCC and of Friends and to consider future tasks and programmes. In addition there is a range of ‘observers’ who are full participants, and whose presence will complement the balance of traditions, geographical spread, age and gender. Duduzile Mtshazo of Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting, the Clerk of FWCC, will clerk the business sessions during the Triennial.

The theme for the Triennial is ‘Finding the Prophetic Voice for Our Time’ and each day’s business will be underpinned by extensive periods of worship in all the traditions: our Irish hosts will lead semi-programmed worship; Liz Roe from Britain YM will be responsible for unprogrammed worship; Bill Medlin of Indiana YM will lead programmed worship in the North American FUM tradition and Stephen Wamboka of Uganda YM will lead it in the African tradition; Ken Comfort of Northwest will introduce many to the worship practised by North American Evangelicals and Maria Armenia Y Reyna of Cuba YM will lead worship in the tradition of Latin American Friends. Twenty-seven worship & sharing groups made up of Friends from a variety of different countries and Quaker traditions will meet each day to share their insights and experience in worship.

Six areas of concern have come forward from yearly meetings and will be prayerfully examined by the participants at the Triennial. It will be interesting to see how the Triennial finds its ‘prophetic voice’ in the light of these concerns - HIV/Aids; Young Friends; violence; environment; outreach/mission; and the erosion of civil liberties. Each of the working groups will meet at least once, and perhaps as many as four times, and will be invited to bring a brief summary report of their findings to a plenary session. Also addressing a plenary session at the Triennial will be the British Friend, Marion McNaughton, who will give an “Orientation to Prophecy” on the first full day.

The last Triennial in 2004 in Aotearoa/New Zealand suffered through the absence of many Friends who were beset by complications arising with their visas. For the Dublin Triennial, therefore, considerable care has been taken by all those involved in organising the Triennial to try to avoid a recurrence of that experience; and it is hoped that this time the whole family of Friends will be able to come to Ireland for the Triennial and the pre- and post-Triennial events happening in the north and south of Ireland and in England.
Prophets in the New Testament church functioned in the following ways. (a) They were Spirit-filled proclaimers and interpreters of the word, called by God to warn, exhort, comfort and edify. (b) Like the Old Testament prophets, the New Testament prophets were called to expose sin, proclaim righteousness, warn of judgement to come, and combat worldliness and lukewarmness among God’s people (Luke 1: 14-17). Bainito Wamalwa, East Africa North YM

We must be attentive to hear the voice of God and share it. Our prophetic mission is not something to be represented in silence nor to be proclaimed only in sermons. The power of the Word of God is most effective when we “gossip the gospel (the ‘good news’) to our neighbour” as something which we live out within our specific group, not as external spectators; that is what it means to be committed. Ramón González-Longoria Escalona, Cuba YM

Don’t take upon yourself to judge whether the divine is shining through your words when you minister. Don’t pay attention to those who show off and suppose that they themselves are feeling a divine command. Turn instead to those who are frightened to speak in meeting at all and thus stumble and tremble while speaking spiritually, like the early Quakers quaking. No one knows at the time to whom this piece of devout ministry is directed and who will be touched by it. Konrad Tempel, German YM

People with a deep spiritual concern – not only among Friends – normally feel they have to obey their inner voice, follow the Light that gives us energy to strive for love in action, not proclaiming solutions to world problems, although in the process they may contribute to improving society. Franco Perna, International Member, Italy

The loving voice is that of the God of Creation, and the Word of prophecy is Jesus Christ, because statistics show that most of our wars, big and small, are fought in the defence of the ones that we love. But Jesus says, “Love your enemies as well.” Bridget Butt, Burundi YM

The “spiritual gifts” are the silver cord of love: by entering deeply into that connectedness where we merge into the divine we cannot but help proclaim the message of the Mystery, as our testimony, without thought of reward, immersed in the present moment. Jan Arriens, Britain YM

Are you prepared to be a harvester and in obedience say, “Here am I, send me”? So what is the call to the Triennial on its 70th Birthday? Charles G.Lamb, Ireland YM

The Biblical prophets speak of sin, punishment, and repentance; does this hard message deny our God-given capacity for good? I believe that repentance involves goodness. If we have done wrong, or profited from past wrongs, we have an inner sickness. Ignored, it poisons us. By working to right the wrongdoing we become healthy. Elizabeth Duke, Aotearoa/New Zealand YM

There is a sense that God is calling us to carry something into the world that can speak to the condition of the world at this time. Our question seems to be, “What is it”? The first sentence of the passage from 1 Corinthians 14 answers our question. Friends, the prophetic message of God has not changed through the years. The message that Christ came to teach his people himself is Love. The unasked question today is, “How do we take the message of Love into our particular time?” Deborah Fisch, Iowa Yearly Meeting

“Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy!” As differ-
I have just booked my tickets for the Triennial in Dublin in August. This will be my fourth Triennial, and I am looking forward to it immensely, because this one will be different in so many ways.

I attended the previous three Triennials – in Birmingham UK, New Hampshire USA, and Auckland Aotearoa/New Zealand – as editor of the UK weekly magazine, *The Friend*. My job was to report on the event for people who were not there, as well as taking an active role as a participant. This year, I will be in Dublin as an FWCC staff member, producing the daily bulletin, helping with translations, and any other odd jobs that can be found for me.

I have enjoyed the three Triennials that I have attended so far, although I was very unsure about attending my first one. It was in Birmingham, very local to me, and I was thrown in at the deep end. I had just been appointed editor of *The Friend*, and the trustees felt an FWCC Triennial would be a good initiation for me. They were right, of course, but I wasn’t sure at the time. It just seemed so daunting.

I have always been an “international Friend”. My first experience of Meeting for Worship was in Geneva, Switzerland, as a child. I attended Meeting in Canada, and then in the UK when I moved here. I try to visit meetings in my travels. I went to a Quaker school that held a programmed meeting on Sunday evening, and I attended the local unprogrammed meeting in the morning. So meeting and worshipping with Friends from a variety of backgrounds and traditions was not new to me. But having never experienced a Triennial before, I wasn’t sure how such a large gathering of varied Friends could work.

Well of course it did work, and I have had some of my deepest spiritual experiences at that Triennial and the ones I have attended since.

The Birmingham Triennial concluded with a poem which included the words:

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Triennial –
a rainbow of people
the whole spectrum of
colouredness of the world.
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Triennials are a rainbow of people. They are a rainbow of experience, of ideas, of worship styles, of everything it means to be a Quaker come together in one place. I will never forget the Friend from Peru who, during the closing worship at the New Hampshire Triennial, fell to his knees and offered up a heartfelt prayer in Spanish. I didn’t understand more than a few words of what he said, but I didn’t need to. The Spirit was alive in that Friend, and we all could share in that.

One of the other joys of a Triennial is the work that gets done, not just during the meeting, but also afterwards. The FWCC is, as its name suggests, a consultative committee. It has no mandate to direct the work of its constituent yearly meetings and other groups. It cannot impose its will. But what it can do is plant seeds through its discussions. It can bring people together in a common cause, and inspire. Many international initiatives can trace their roots back to a Triennial, where even a casual discussion in a hallway or over a meal can lead to amazing things.

Of course some issues keep cropping up again and again, and that can sometimes lead to a sense of frustration. For example, Britain Yearly Meeting brought a concern on climate change to the Birmingham Triennial in 1997. Ten years later, that concern is still very much on the agenda, with Netherlands Yearly Meeting bringing two proposals on this issue to the Working Group on the Environment that will meet in Dublin, including ideas to offset the impact of travel to the Triennial. While it appears that we may have wasted 10 years, it is true that Friends were discussing and taking action on this concern before it became a “mainstream” issue, and indeed, helped to ensure that it was taken seriously by those in power. Much has happened in 10 years, but more still needs to be done, and I am sure some useful initiatives on this and other topics will come out of Dublin.

Which brings me neatly to the theme for this Triennial: Finding the Prophetic Voice for our Time. This is taken from 1 Corinthians 14: Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.

What is the Quaker prophetic voice? Indeed, are we still called to be prophets? These are questions that I grappled with during my time as editor of The Friend, and it will be interesting to hear what Friends from other traditions and cultures think about the issue of prophecy, especially as a spiritual gift. British Friends often speak of the spiritual gift of ministry, but ministry is not necessarily prophecy. Friends in other traditions are much clearer that they have a prophetic and even an evangelical voice. But many seekers are not receptive to a more overt prophetic approach. I am excited about what we can learn from each other in Dublin. Already the study booklet, which is available on the Triennial website (www.fwccworld.org/triennial), has given me much to think about.

I hope that those who are not physically with us in Dublin will hold the Triennial in the Light. There will be opportunities to follow the Triennial on the internet, for those who have access, and there will be reports in the next issue of Friends World News.
## Some Yearly Meetings in 2007

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### Friends World Committee for Consultation

Friends World Committee for Consultation was established in 1937 to be a channel of communication between Friends, helping us to explore and nurture our identity as Quakers so that we can discover and be faithful to our true place in the world as a people of God.

FWCC is a consultative, committee-run, organisation enabling Friends and their yearly meetings to work cooperatively. Yearly meetings and other Quaker bodies affiliate to FWCC through its four sections, **Africa** (with its office in Nairobi, Kenya); **the Americas** (Philadelphia, USA); **Asia-West Pacific** (Hong Kong); **Europe & Middle East** (Edinburgh, UK). FWCC meets as a world body every three years when the representatives of the affiliated yearly meetings gather for a Triennial meeting which is organized by an International Planning Committee and the World Office in London, UK. FWCC activities and programmes are decided by the Triennial and Section meetings.

Further information about FWCC and its activities can be obtained from the World Office or the Section Offices, whose addresses are on the inside back cover of *Friends World News*. Contributions to the work of FWCC are always welcome and can be sent to any of the offices.

### Friends World News

*Friends World News*, the bulletin of FWCC, is published twice each year. If you wish to receive a personal copy, please contact the World Office (or the Section of the Americas if you live in North America). There is no set subscription fee, but a donation to cover the cost would be welcome.

Please send to the World Office anything you would like considered for publication in *Friends World News* – articles, letters, news, photographs and other illustrations, about the activities and religious witness of Friends. All materials received will be acknowledged although the editor cannot make any commitment to publish. Please say if you wish photographs or other materials to be returned.
**FWCC Publications**

2. *21st Triennial Talks* - (set of 3) (£6/$9)
3. & 4. *World Gathering of Young Friends Study Book Quaker Faith & Practice Around the World* £6 ($9) each, or £10 ($16) for both
4. *Friends World News* (twice yearly by request)
5. *Triennial T-shirts* (£9, £6, £11) plus postage
6. *Triennial Mugs* (£20, £14 plus postage)
   - Triennial items available from Alan C. Pim - email alan@clonfadda.com for details
7. *Cheerfully over the World, a handbook for isolated Friends* (£5/$8)

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*Friends World Committee for Consultation* relies on contributions in order to carry out its ministry. To contribute to the work of FWCC please fill in the form below, indicating the amount of the contribution and your method of payment.

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Does your yearly meeting’s Epistle, over which you laboured lovingly during your gathering, simply sit and gather dust once it is approved? Or does it go forward joyfully to inspire and encourage others, and let the wider world know of the life of your yearly meeting or group? And what do you do with those that are sent to you?

If Southeastern Yearly Meeting is typical, your Epistle will be well-received. “We do appreciate receiving epistles from your Yearly Meetings,” writes Lyn Cope. “Those that are sent electronically are forwarded immediately to all our meetings, committee clerks, and representatives to Friends’ organizations; they are also printed and join those received by post in a notebook available to all at the following yearly meeting.”

Britain Yearly Meeting collects all the Epistles it receives and publishes them in a volume as part of the Documents in Advance for yearly meeting. Excerpts are then read during the meeting.

If your yearly meeting’s Epistle, over which you laboured lovingly during your gathering, simply sit and gather dust once it is approved? Or does it go forward joyfully to inspire and encourage others, and let the wider world know of the life of your yearly meeting or group? And what do you do with those that are sent to you?

Many other yearly meetings have a similar procedure, but they need to receive your Epistle in the first place. And they need to be able to understand the message. In France YM, Ali Reid, a Scottish Friend living at the Quaker village of Congenies, prepares a synthesis of all epistles received for France YM. Do other yearly meetings have someone to provide this service, and are you mindful of the need to make your Epistles available to those who speak different languages?

Of course the internet has made Epistles much more widely available in the past 10 years or so, but we need to be mindful of those who don’t have access to this technology, and ensure that our Epistles reach all who might be blessed by them.

The World Office is available to give help and advice to Meetings. This includes a database with up to date contact details for each yearly meeting to help ensure that your Epistle goes to the right place. At the Triennial, there will be a survey taken by the reps from Britain YM about epistles and their use.

A blog is a form of shared online journal, a web page which can be updated easily, making it ideal to report on an event as it unfolds. Photos and videos can be added alongside text.

A blog has been set up for the FWCC Triennial, at: www.fwccworld.blogspot.com. There is also a link to the blog from the main FWCC website, www.fwccworld.org

Some Triennial participants have already begun posting to the blog. Why not have a look and join the conversation? Anyone can comment on existing posts.

At the Triennial itself, FWCC communications volunteers will be on hand to help you make posts to the blog. In the meantime, if you’d like to make a new post, please email John Fitzgerald (johnf.uk@gmail.com) to get access.

Please note that although the aim of the blog is to provide a space for personal reflections on the Triennial, FWCC reserve the right to remove objectionable content from the blog.

Already a blogger?

If you’re posting to your own blog about the FWCC Triennial, you can make your posts on the Triennial appear on an aggregated feed at www.quakerquaker.org. All you have to do is add the tag: <quaker.fwcc> to your post.