

# THE YOUNG QUAKER

*For Young Friends Everywhere*

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## "IF WE STOPPED JUST ONE ARMS DEAL, IT WAS WORTH IT."

By SYMON HILL

**S**uperglue protesters avoid jail" declared a headline on ITN this week. As one of the protesters in question, I'm pleased to report that we didn't only avoid jail. We were acquitted.

I was one of seven Christians who blocked an entrance to the London arms fair (known euphemistically as Defence & Security Equipment International, or DSEi) last September. We did so by kneeling to pray and sing hymns. We delayed arms dealers for nearly an hour.

The judge declared all five of us "Not Guilty" to the charge of aggravated trespass. I really want to take this opportunity to thank the hundreds of people who have sustained us with encouragement and support. I also want to give my

best wishes to other peaceful protesters arrested at the arms fair, who will be on trial in the same court later this month.

Five of us – James Clayton, Chloe Skinner, Chris Wood, Dan Woodhouse and me – were arrested and held in cells for most of the day in a police station near King's Cross, before being charged and released on bail. The other two – Alison Parker and Angela Ditchfield – played an important role in the protest but left before the arrests took place. Others had also been very involved, standing nearby to support us, join us in prayer and help us to negotiate with the police.

Over the last few months, and particularly the last week or two, we have received hundreds of messages of support. Many have come from Christians, of different sorts. There

have been several from people of other faiths.

I know that those praying for us on the day the trial began included a Muslim in Birmingham and a Pagan in Oxford, as well as lots of Christians.

A good many of the messages came from people of no religion, or who did not mention religion, but who shared a common human disgust with the sale of arms, particularly to oppressive regimes.

I have no doubt that the trial, stressful though it was, would have been many, many times harder without all this support and encouragement, from both friends and strangers. I thank God for everyone involved.

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Protestors outside the  
London Arms Fair  
(Photo: Michael Sandford)



*"All bloody Principles and Practices we ... do utterly deny, with all outward Wars, and Strife, and Fightings with outward Weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever; and this is our Testimony to the whole World"*

**A Declaration from the Harmless and Innocent  
People of God called Quakers (1661)**

## "If We Stopped Just One Arms Deal, It Was Worth It"

(continued from page 1)

There was a reminder of the foul reality of the London arms fair on the very day that we were arrested. Two companies were removed from the fair for selling illegal torture equipment. This happened only after their presence was raised in Parliament.

This is the sixth consecutive occasion on which dealers in illegal weaponry have been removed from the London arms fair (always when revealed in public, never proactively). Despite this, not a single prosecution has been brought against any of the companies involved. It is peaceful protesters who end up in the dock.

A significant moment in the trial came when a Ministry of Defence policeman gave evidence for the prosecution. I won't give his name, as he came off rather badly and I don't want to humiliate him. He was the officer who arrested me and I can honestly say that I couldn't hope to be arrested by a nicer person.

There was an amusing moment when he testified that while being arrested, I was "shouting loudly throughout in a religious manner". Or as I would call it, "praying".

More importantly, the officer admitted under cross-examination that the police on duty at DSEi had been briefed about possible activity by protesters but been told nothing about possible illegal behaviour by arms dealers. This is despite the removal of illegal weaponry on the previous five occasions.

This is clear evidence that, however decent the motivations of individual police officers, the police are deployed at DSEi for the benefit of the arms dealers rather than the impartial enforcement of the law.

This is yet another reminder that the authorities in the UK are in bed with the arms industry.

After a trial lasting a day and a half, the judge acquitted us on the grounds that we had reasonable grounds not to understand a police

warning, which the Detective Constable in charge of the case admitted should have been delivered differently.

I am delighted with the outcome of this case. However, I will be happier when people who sell torture equipment on the streets of London are standing in the dock that we recently left.

Nonetheless, I am aware that we held up the arms and torture dealers for nearly an hour. Trains were backed up at Custom House station. I cannot tell who was stopped getting in, or what meetings were prevented, because of our action. But I can say this: If we stopped one arms deal, it was worth it.

*This article originally appeared on Symon's blog at*

[www.symonhill.wordpress.com](http://www.symonhill.wordpress.com)

*Symon is a left-wing Christian writer, activist and trainer, who has written for Ekklesia, the Guardian, and The Friend.*

## BOOK NOW FOR EMEYF SPRING GATHERING IN MACEDONIA

Fancy a trip to Macedonia? This year's EMEYF Spring Gathering, a chance to meet young adult Friends from across Europe and the Middle East, will be held on the shores of Macedonia's beautiful Lake Ohrid.

Running from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of April, the gathering will be focusing on the theme of 'Borders', inspired by the setting in a country and a region which has been through conflict and changing borders. The event will explore both personal and geographical borders, and the effect that they have on our sense of identity and belonging, in both positive and negative ways.

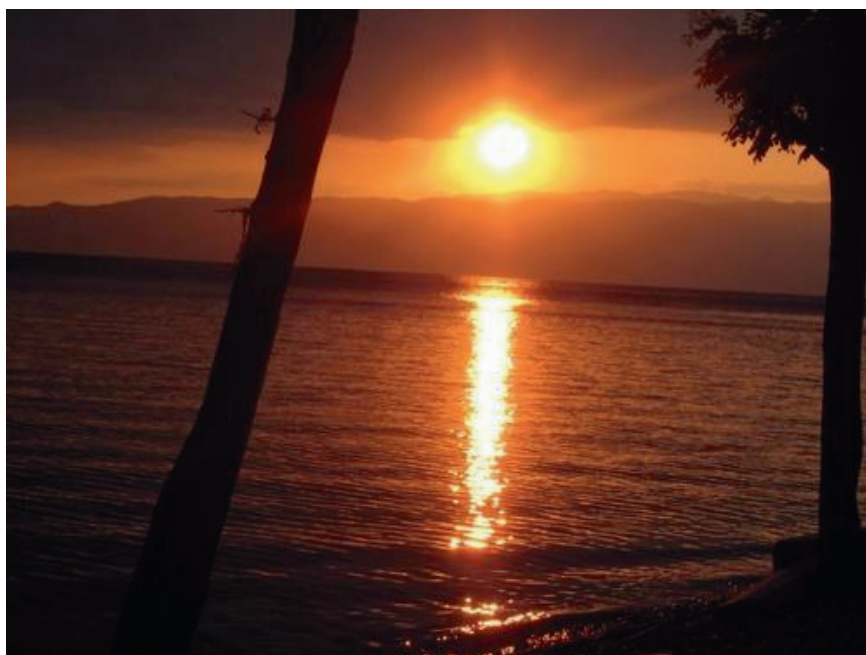
The organisers promise a gathering full of games, discussions, and workshops, exploring how we use our bodies to communicate, cross barriers, deepen our spirituality, and develop our

relationships with each other. There'll also be opportunities to reflect, worship together, meet new people and explore the area around Lake Ohrid.

Sound interesting? The deadline for booking is March 14<sup>th</sup>, and more information is available from

[www.emeyf.org/spring-gathering](http://www.emeyf.org/spring-gathering)

Lake Ohrid



# MY YOUNG ADULT LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME, 2012-2013

By JENNY MCCARTHY

I took part in the Young Adult Leadership Programme last year at Woodbrooke, from summer 2012 to summer 2013. With a ten-day residential at the start, one weekend in February and a week at the end it bounded the whole year, but it feels as though it is still ongoing. Being part of the first group to take part is a unique experience that I feel has allowed us to bond together into a community that will last a long time.

There were seven in our group, with ages spanning a decade – the youngest you are able to start YALP is 18. We had some very confident and outgoing people, as well as some who are quieter. By the end of the first ten days we had come to know and understand one another in ways that made it easy to pick up the acquaintance again in February.

Woodbrooke soon felt like home to us; we were all staying in the same building separate from the main house, and for much of the time we were the only Quakers on courses there. Our base was the beautiful Quiet Room, overlooking the garden, and we were outside a lot in the long sunny summer days.

One day that I particularly valued was spent working in the grounds, making hay and topiary hedges. The physical activity and the feeling of doing something that had an immediate and ongoing effect in this lovely place was something that I tried to bring back with me and recreate when I left Woodbrooke.

I for one felt shy when we began

our first ten-day residential at Woodbrooke. I had met a couple of the people in the group before but it was nice to encounter young Friends who I had not come across in years of young Quaker events and YFGM.

It gave me a sense of a community of young Friends that stretched across the country and that was much larger than I had previously assumed.

It was heartening to hear people's stories of their Quaker journey, what their Quaker life was like at the moment, and what had prompted them to take part in YALP. One of our group was part of a clerking team in her meeting; a few of us had been involved in Quakers for most of our lives; one was new to Quakers and the only young person in her rural meeting. All of us wished to deepen our understanding of the Society of Friends and of the part our faith played in our lives.

We were also learning about leadership. This became a theme that ran through the whole course, beginning with sessions on leadership in Quakers – both historically and currently – and also different kinds of leadership in the Bible. We continued with a workshop on teamwork and leadership, which became useful in the residential of summer 2013 when we led sessions for the second year's group.

During this second period at Woodbrooke, we reflected on our skills and ambitions and thought about Quakerism in our professional

(or university) lives. We did a practical workshop on public speaking, which helped us to inhabit our bodies and develop confidence in our public personas.

We also led the Quiet Day, which brought back memories of the one we had participated in the year before. Time spent alone and together in labyrinth-walking, mindful looking, eating lunch and other quiet activities both gave us space and led us to realise how we were knitted into a community, able to communicate without speaking.

I applied for YALP because of a dichotomy in my life. On the one hand, I was inhabiting positions of leadership both in my Quaker activities and at university, and I wanted to explore this new aspect of my life and character. However, at the same time I was feeling uncertain about the future – what I wanted, how to be happy, the best path to take. I had responsibilities in my life, but I wasn't sure of the best way to take responsibility for my life.

A year and a half after starting the course, I am in much the same position of uncertainty. But I feel better about it – more trusting of myself and of my faith. I think this is partly down to the continuity of the Young Adult Leadership Programme. We came full circle in our year, beginning and ending at Woodbrooke and passing on our experiences to the next year's group. But further than that, we have a connection with each other and with our tutors that is still a source of strength.

## Young Adult Leadership Programme



Facebook: Young Adults at Woodbrooke  
Twitter: YAFsWoodbrooke



2014-2015

**A 12-month programme for 19 to 28-year-olds that will reflect on what it means to be a Quaker today.**

To find out more speak to Michael Eccles.  
Phone: 0121 415 6760  
Email: michael.eccles@woodbrooke.org.uk  
Web: www.woodbrooke.org.uk/youngadults



**Woodbrooke**  
Quaker Study Centre



## SKINT! – HOW QUAKERS HELP YOUNG PEOPLE MANAGE MONEY

By JEZ SMITH

At a school in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, an unusual lesson has just taken place. A class of teenagers have just finished a session using a new resource to help young people develop good money skills and prevent them from sinking into debt. The resource at hand is *Skint!*, a thought-provoking graphic novel that harnesses the power of stories based on real life experiences to bring money management to life. It is currently targeted at the adult learning sector in England, having already successfully been delivered in Scotland, to help tutors support 16-26 year olds, with a particular focus on young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs).

Help for young people to understand the issues around money management are urgently required. Just this month a Populus poll of 1,775 adults revealed that more than half of those aged 18 to 24 say their debts have increased over the past five years and 45% of people in that age bracket have debts of over £2,000.

The training for facilitators to use the *Skint!* materials is provided across England by London-based charity Quaker Social Action. Set up in the late 1860s by Friends who were tackling poverty in London's East End, today QSA has stayed

closely connected to people on low incomes in the area, while working with a mandate to share learning and good practice nationally whenever opportunities arise.



*Skint!* is one such opportunity as QSA is collaborating with three other organisations to deliver the project. The English publication and launch are funded by Standard Life Charitable Trust, which aims to help those who are experiencing difficulty and disadvantage to make sustainable changes their lives. It is also being supported by Groundwork UK, who are promoting the adult tutor training courses, co-ordinating venues and delivering the books directly to, among others, youth support organisations, Citizen Advice Bureau, local authorities and libraries.

In preparing the materials for facilitators and providing their

training, QSA draws on almost ten years of experience of running its award-winning Made of Money course, which has also included developing resources and training people to be facilitators of the course in their own neighbourhoods and communities. Made of Money began training people nationally within the last five years and already over 400 partners from over 200 organisations have been trained. The connections continue to grow – a participant on a *Skint!* training course reveals that she attended the Made of Money national training a few years ago and declares that it was the best money she ever spent on a course.

Back in Stevenage, Daniel Marshall, a project coordinator at Stevenage CAB, was one of the first to be trained to use *Skint!* in his work. “The CAB is known for helping people with their day to day problems, but we also aim to help people avoid problems in the first place,” he explains. “*Skint!* enables us to reach a younger audience and try to prevent them getting in to the difficult situations we see daily. We have already used *Skint!* with a local senior school and found that the students could immediately relate to the characters and their stories. We also found that the exercises developed for the programme perfectly complemented the book, providing a seamless approach to the financial capability lesson we were giving. It worked really well and we

## YOUTH CAMP AT SARAJEVO PEACE EVENT 2014

A century ago, Gavrilo Princip killed Franz Ferdinand von Habsburg in Sarajevo, and started a chain of events that culminated in the First World War and the deaths of millions of people around the world. More recently, Sarajevo was at the heart of the bloody wars that accompanied the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

This June, Sarajevo will be host to a very different kind of event, celebrating the possibility of a future of peace, non-violence and justice; an international Peace Event, which

will include a Youth Camp, bringing together young activists and advocates for peace from the Balkans, Europe, and all over the world.

It's an amazing opportunity, not just to meet lots of people but to take part in an event that is anticipated to attract hundreds of thousands of people. In addition to taking part in all the activities of the main event, there'll be specific youth camp activities including seminars, workshops, and creative and cultural activities.

If this sounds like something that would interest you, you can get more information at

[www.p2014.eu/youth-camp.html](http://www.p2014.eu/youth-camp.html)

The Movement for the Abolition of War ([www.abolishwar.org.uk](http://www.abolishwar.org.uk)) are trying to encourage young people to attend, and there is a possibility of bursary funding for a young adult Friend if you move fast; contact Judith Butler at [j.fopma@virgin.net](mailto:j.fopma@virgin.net) for more information.

## Skint! – Helping Young People Manage Money

now plan to use Skint! with other schools in our area.”

The Skint! novel, uses a comic-strip style of storytelling to explore real-life financial situations. Readers are offered a choice of endings which engage them in financial decision making and help them to develop their literacy, numeracy and financial capability skills.

“Skint! uses the power of language and drama to engage young people in financial decision-making, enabling them to develop some of the fundamental skills and understanding they need to help them keep track of their finances, to plan ahead and think through the impact of financial decisions,” explains the Scottish Book Trust’s chief executive, Marc Lambert. “The aim is to help young adults, in particular reluctant readers, to develop their literacy, numeracy and financial capability, in the hope that this will help them on the way to a future unburdened by money worries.”

While the latest figures show that there has been a slight decrease in the number of unemployed 18-24 year olds in the UK over the past year, the number unemployed for 24 months or more has increased and stood at 107,000 at the end of November 2013. Without work, budgets are likely to be very tight and good money management

becomes even more important. In developing this key life skill, young people are also improving their employment prospects and Skint! works well when used alongside work experience programmes.

Judith Moran, Director of Quaker Social Action, concludes: “QSA is absolutely delighted to be part of the plan to get Skint! to an English audience. Our core mission at QSA is to enable people to seek their own solutions to the issues that affect their lives. This is the real beauty of Skint! It describes everyday situations that ordinary young people could find themselves in – and helps them to think through the choices they would make, in those situations, building their confidence as well as their competence.”

To find out more, sign up for copies of the novel or to attend a tutors training course visit [www.skintbook.org.uk](http://www.skintbook.org.uk) where you can also download a pdf of Skint! and view case studies, illustrations from the novel and information about the impact of the programme.

To learn more about Quaker Social Action visit:

[www.quakersocialaction.com](http://www.quakersocialaction.com)

Follow them on Twitter @QSA

Or find them on Facebook:  
[www.fb.me/quakersocialaction](http://www.fb.me/quakersocialaction)

## RECIPE

Tim Searle-Barnes offers up this delicious recipe for tacos!

### Ingredients:

- 4 sausages/12 onion rings
- ½ spring greens
- Sesame seeds
- Pumpkin seeds
- Red onion
- Dash of balsamic vinegar
- 1/3 cucumber
- 1 tomato
- 1 spring onion
- 4 wraps
- Salsa

Serves 2

Put your sausages on to cook. I ran out of sausages on this round so I used onion rings – was not disappointed. That’s a matter of taste though.

When there’s 10 minutes left on the timer, super heat some oil in a frying pan. Add the spring greens, seeds, and red onion. If you like them crispy like me, leave them on a mid-high heat whilst you turn your attention to the rest, otherwise a low heat will leave them with some gewyness.

Now slice and dice the rest of the veg whichever way you like. I prefer sticks of cucumber and slices of tomato, and my spring onions nicely thinned.

Turn your attention back to the frying pan and add a dash of balsamic vinegar. Take the tray from the over and arrange your stodge filling into the wraps. Layer the salad over, and scoop your spring greens on to the top. Your wraps should be close to over-flowing, so finish off the dish with a generous portion of salsa draped all over.

What starts off as a finger food job will definitely require a fork to collect up all the filling that escapes!

**Fancypants tip:** I ran out of balsamic vinegar the other day so mixed a little harrisa paste into the spring greens mix – boosted kick to your lunch!



Mmm...  
looks great.  
And the veggie  
version is easy,  
too; just pick  
your favourite  
meat-free  
sausages.

## THE YOUNG QUAKER NEEDS YOUR HELP!

This is the fourth issue of *The Young Quaker* since the co-editors put on our robes, sacrificed a vegan goat-substitute, and invoked the appropriate dark rituals to bring this historic magazine back from the grave. That makes it a year since we put the finishing touches to the first issue, and offered it up to our readers at the Brighton YFGM.

It's been a good year, in many ways - TYQ has been warmly received by pretty much everyone who has seen it, and the magazine has included lots of different, interesting, and exciting articles, from stories about what what young Friends are up to, to news of interesting things going on in the world, to comment and poetry and suchlike. One of the ones I'm most proud of was our article in the last issue which exposed the use of zero-hours contracts at Friends House.

But - and you knew there was a but coming, didn't you? - TYQ needs your support to grow. If you've ever made the mistake of allowing yourself to be cornered by a TYQ editor at a YFGM or Planning Weekend, you'll know that we have lots of ideas for the future. TYQ has a lot of potential to extend beyond the YFGM community and serve as an important part of our outreach.

We'd like to get TYQ to the stage where we can offer a subscription to local meeting houses. Not only would this help members of local meetings have more of an idea about what young Friends are up to, it

would also be another way for potential YFGMers to hear about our community.

We also want to reach out to Quakers under 18. They might not be able to come to YFGM events, but they certainly count as young Quakers. We'd like to make TYQ available by post and at events like JYM and Senior Conference, so that younger Friends can read and hopefully contribute to the magazine.

Now, when I said we needed your support, you probably thought I was going to ask for money. But I'm not - we intend to keep TYQ free online, and available in paper form either free or at no more than the cost of producing it.

What we need is your contributions. We need people to contribute things to TYQ - your stories, your news articles, your poetry, your recipes. Whatever is going on in your life that makes you want to write, let us know. Right now, we barely have enough articles to fill eight pages (why do you think this is taking up the whole back page?) but we want to have so many articles we can't print them all - in which case, we'll have to limit ourselves to publishing them on the website.

So if you have something you want to share with the other young Friends (and come on, you know you do) then get in touch with us by emailing the Co-Editors at [theyoungquaker@gmail.com](mailto:theyoungquaker@gmail.com)

Even better, if you'd like to write for us regularly, we'd really like to recruit one or two columnists, either to write regularly on a specific topic or just to say whatever comes into your head. Finally, we're always on the lookout for potential co-editors to share the task of putting all this lovely content together.

So please, help us out; send us your ideas and lots of submissions for the May edition. (Preferably by mid-April so that we have time to put them all together).

*The Young Quaker* got off to a great start in 2013, let's keep the ball rolling and make it even better in 2014 and beyond.



Scan this QR code with your phone to experience the digital edition of TYQ

If you've been inspired, you can submit articles or ideas to *The Young Quaker* by emailing us at [theyoungquaker@gmail.com](mailto:theyoungquaker@gmail.com)

Or by talking to the editors at YFGM!

Don't forget to visit the website at [www.tyq.org.uk](http://www.tyq.org.uk) to read the latest articles or to download the digital edition.

*The Co-Editors would like to thank all those who have contributed to this edition.*

*For general enquiries, to obtain additional copies of TYQ, or for a digital/access copy, please contact the TYQ team by email at:*

[theyoungquaker@gmail.com](mailto:theyoungquaker@gmail.com)

*Please get in touch if you would like to contribute to the next issue, due out in time for the next YFGM, taking place between 2<sup>ND</sup>-5<sup>TH</sup> May 2014*

*The Young Quaker can be found online at*

[www.theyoungquaker.org.uk](http://www.theyoungquaker.org.uk)

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Young Friends General Meeting  
Friends House  
173 Euston Road  
London  
NW1 2BJ