

Fighting for peace at museum of war

This year's MAW Peace History Conference will be held on Saturday 10 June at the Imperial War Museum London - and will be run in partnership with the museum.

Put this in your diary now and keep an eye on the MAW website for programme details later.

The conference is timed to coincide with a major new exhibition at the museum, *People Power: Fighting for Peace*, which will explore the evolution of anti-war protest from the First World War to the present day. The exhibition opens on 23 March and is set to run for five months.

Opportunities to take local action

20-23 April - Global Days of Action on Military Spending. Set up a stall in your town centre?

<http://demilitarize.org.uk>

15 May - International Conscientious Objectors' Day. The annual ceremony in London will take place at 12 noon in Tavistock Square, but the list of events grows. Time to hold one near you? Plant a tree, or organise a ceremony with speakers, poetry, music and banners?

For electronic versions of this newsletter email Gillian Hurlle, gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk

The next edition of *Abolish War* will be published on May 1.



MAW vice-chair Becky Garnault (left) and MAW Youth member Maddy Ridgely (second right) congratulate Khem Rogaly and Ella Johnson, winners of the MAW essay competition. See their work here - <https://abolishwarnow.wordpress.com/>

MAW Youth set to take its show on the road in 2017

As we face a challenging year, MAW is once again promoting the vital work of its Youth Committee, which has come up with exciting plans for 2017.

The group will build on the success of its first conference on Militarism and Youth, held in London in October last year. They are setting up a "travelling conference" which can head to universities, colleges and community centres around the country to help more young people engage with and question the rise of militarism and ask what future do they want to create for themselves.

If any groups or young people would like to get involved they can email MAWYouth via info@abolishwar.org.uk or contact them via Facebook @MAWYouth

MAW Youth member Jen Harrison says: "People are often encouraged to look towards militarism for safety and security. MAW Youth challenges this perception.

"The Armed Forces can be seen creeping across our education system and promoting 'military ethos'. We will redouble our efforts to combat the rise of militarism."

MAW Youth is also pleased to announce another new committee member - welcome to Ella Johnson.

Conscience tax bill campaign

The Taxes for Peace Bill - calling on the government to extend the definition of conscientious objection for the 21st century - has been rescheduled for a hearing on March 24.

There is no guarantee it will be given parliamentary time, but if enough MPs are contacted and persuaded that this Bill is of significant importance to their constituents there is a chance.

The campaign started last year when Ruth Cadbury MP, with the support of parliamentary colleagues, moved the Taxes for Peace Bill, which would enable citizens who define themselves as conscientious objectors to redirect the military part of their taxes to nonviolent means of ensuring national security.

MAW members are urged to write to their MPs about the Conscience Campaign in support of the Bill. You can find out who your MP is and get their details via www.theyworkforyou.com Send copies of your communications with MPs to the campaign at <http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/contact-us/>

And also sign the e-petition (<http://conscienceonline.us1.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=7a676a09ba79366899f72fb77&id=ee51e10799&e=3e58ade516>)

■ Peace Action Durham reports back on a really good meeting with two Veterans for Peace from Stockton. They had between them the experience of well over 20 years in Iraq, Afghanistan, Ireland and Yemen.

Peace Action and MAW member Heather Speight says: "Their stories were vivid and moving. It was a privilege to listen and share their passionate commitment to nonviolence and working with young people."

Remembering Robert Hinde, 1923-2016

On our last visit, as it turned out, to Robert last November he was lying in bed enjoying the view and the wide range of birds flocking to the bird-feeders in his garden. Robert knew them all. Only when I looked up his biography did I realise how wide his interests were, with research ranging from animal behaviour to human development, all rooted in his background in Ethology.

He was the author of at least 30 books, a former Master of St

John's College, Cambridge and a senior figure in Pugwash, the international scientists' peace movement.

It was his wartime experience in the RAF, the tragic loss of his brother and, later, his childhood friend, that made world peace and the elimination of war and its cruelties his abiding interest (eg, <http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk>).

He succeeded Professor Joseph Rotblat as MAW President.



Robert (front centre) in his RAF days

Remembrance events in November should not just focus on military courage but on the abolition of war itself. In recent years he published several pamphlets and books on this theme as his sense of urgency increased. Challenging the popular view of war as heroic, inevitable, or a solution to disputes, was a vital strategy for peace.

His major problem was, of course, his modesty. I wonder if he really ever knew how much he did for the cause he believed in and how much more effective we were because of him - always a friend and wise counsellor.

To me he was like an elder brother. I think most of us in MAW felt the same way. He was also a lucky man. He was surrounded by his loving family and had the non-stop care and support of Joan his wife - also an academic and also modest. Robert died peacefully on 23 December and he will be greatly missed.



Robert Hinde

Robert was a very hands-on president, attending meetings, sharing enthusiasm and good ideas. It would have been enough if he had just lent his name but he did so much more. Never a pacifist, Robert was particularly concerned that

Bruce Kent



Healthy message: (l-r) Becky Garnault, vice-chair of MAW, Vickie Hawkins, executive director of Medecins Sans Frontieres and Tim Devereux, chair of MAW, at the successful MAW Remembrance Day lecture in November held at the Imperial War Museum in London.

New faces - and old friends - join to help strengthen Team MAW!

At the MAW AGM, we welcomed three new members to the executive, and said cheerio (for now) to Barbara Mayhew, long-term campaigner for peace issues, whose four-year term was completed. Gillian Hurle (Membership Secretary) and Helen Riley (*Abolish War* Editor) also came to the end of their stints, but have cheerfully offered to continue with their vital roles, from outside the executive. Our enthusiastic Vice-Chair, Heather Speight, stood down from that post but remains on the committee. I am pleased to welcome as the new Vice-chair, Becky Garnault, who upholds the Quaker values of equality, peace, simplicity, integrity and sustainability. She is looking forward to furthering MAW's work with young people.

John Hills is entirely new to the committee - he is a semi-retired

psychotherapist who continues to be astounded by the recurrence of wartime recollections of the Blitz of many of his patients and their impact on mental health in later life. He has very clear views about the way forward into a nuclear-free world.

We welcome back two previous MAW Chairs - Will Pritchard and Sue Gilmurray. Will has recently returned from training young people in Gaza to create and shape their own future, while Sue as a keen singer and songwriter, has arranged MAW's collection of anti-war songs for choirs. She is also interested in the on-going problem, around Remembrance, of separating respect for "the fallen" from respect for war itself. This year will have its particular challenges, but I look forward to working with the executive towards our goal - No More War!

Tim Devereux

Landmark visit to a hero's birthplace

MAW committee member John Hills has written an account of his "landmark moment" visit to the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi - his hero since teenage years - in Porbandar, India.

John says: "Gandhi was one of the world's 'great awakeners', articulating deep aspirations in all of us for a better world. Through MAW we seek to join that invisible procession. It's a big ask!"

You can read the full account of John's visit on the MAW website - <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/uploads/1/6/6/2/16622106/gandhi.pdf>

I do not believe in the doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number. It means in its nakedness that in order to achieve the supposed good of fifty-one percent, the interest of forty nine percent, may be, or rather should be sacrificed. It is a heartless doctrine and has done harm to humanity. The only real dignified human doctrine is the greatest good of all.

"The greatest good of all" - Gandhi's words from Ahmedabad Ashram

● MAW is a supporting organisation for a parliamentary lobby called by CND for Wednesday, March 1 (12 - 6pm) to coincide with the start of talks in New York on the Global Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty. The British Government voted against the Ban Treaty at the United Nations, even though it claims to back multi-lateral disarmament. The lobby will press the Government to take part.

Help spread the word!

MAW is encouraging members and supporters to write to their local newspaper, magazine or church newsletter to raise issues about the need for peace.

An example of a good topic would be the United Nations negotiations due to start in 2017 on a treaty outlawing nuclear weapons.

Talks are planned from March 27 on a "legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination".

The International Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) will help keep you up to date -

<http://www.icanw.org/>

Other publicity options are putting up posters in libraries, wearing a badge and never letting a development agency talk about poverty without mentioning war.

Get more help with our PR guide - <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/maw-pr-guide.html>

Sue puts new musical offering on the road inspired by Gandhi

MAW member Sue Gilmurray has added a new song to our growing collection. *Road to Peace* written by Sue is a simple arrangement. Hear it at www.soundcloud.com/mightierpen. The first verse says:

We will put one foot in front of the other on the road to peace, and together we shall arrive.

Another line says:

We will meet old foes and greet them as neighbours on the road to peace.

Sue wrote the song some years ago for the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship as part of an act of witness to the Lambeth Conference, and it was first sung as people walked into Canterbury and to the cathedral. Sue says: "Gandhi famously said: 'There is no road to(wards)

peace; peace is the road.' He's right of course, in that changing direction from an attitude of conflict to one of peacemaking is the crucial step; but it's also crucial to keep on, one step at a time, building peace together with others."

■ In other harmonious news, Musicians for Peace and Disarmament (MPD) will hold a Concert for Peace on Thursday, 2 March, from 7pm, at Hinde Street Methodist Church, 19 Thayer Street, London W1U 2QJ, with all proceeds to peace organisations. The concert will feature music by Schubert, Nielsen and Haydn.

Tickets are £15 (£10 conc) from wegottickets.com/event/386634 or on the door.

The Movement for the Abolition of War – join us, or renew your membership

We aim to create a world where war is no longer seen as a way to solve a problem; where it has ceased to be an option; where conflict resolution means resolution. Working through education and dialogue, nationally and locally, we have the tools, skills and laws that we need, but we also need you - ordinary people can help us realise our goal, the abolition of war.

To join MAW or renew your membership, complete this form or download the membership and standing order forms from our website at <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/join.html>.

Send the completed form (and cheque if applicable) to: Movement for the Abolition of War, 308 Walton Road, KT8 2HY

Membership application / renewal

Name

Address

..... Postcode

Tel no.

Email

Type of membership (please tick):

Life £100 Individual £15 Unwaged £5

Household (2 or more at same address) £20 Group or organisation £25

I enclose: Membership £

Donation £

Total £

Please make cheque payable to Movement for the Abolition of War

OR Please send me a standing order form

Play shows anger over Afghan war

Pink Mist - detailing stories of war in Afghanistan - will be shown at the Oxford Playhouse from 14-18 February. In 2014, Owen Sheers interviewed some 30 servicemen who had just returned from duty in Afghanistan.

Wounded, traumatised and angry as they were, he helped them put their stories into words. This verse drama is what emerged.

Buy tickets for *Pink Mist* from £11.50 to £28 on 01865 305305.

Membership subscriptions: If you received this newsletter by post the label on the envelope shows your membership status: the date to which you are paid up, eg 2017; 'Life', if you are a life member; 'SO' if you pay by standing order or 'Comp' if you receive a complimentary copy.

To join or renew your membership complete the form in this newsletter or download the forms from our website at <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/join.html>. If you would like to receive email notification of the newsletter availability, instead of a hard copy, please email gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk

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