



Newsletter
April 2020

Transformation—despite Covid 19

The Peace Centre in Cape Town, South Africa, was for many years known as the Quaker Peace Centre.

Covid 19 is having a devastating effect on communities around the world but the Peace Centre is determined to survive and continue its work.

In recent times, funders have found themselves under pressure from many demands. Now over 20 years since black majority rule, there is a perception that South Africa is a first world country that should be able to solve its own problems. **Consequently, overseas donations have dried up.**

This has meant that the Peace Centre has had to find new ways of working. Instead of employing paid staff to work on a few projects aimed at very specific topics, eg school bullying, it is now a volunteer based organization working in the centre of the communities we aim to reach.

Successful Projects

The Khayelitsha Hub

In April 2018 the Peace Centre opened an information Hub in the township of Khayelitsha. It offered advice, networking and some basic computer training. Despite the fact that this was fulfilling a real need, it was not possible to find sponsorship for the Hub and the landlord proposed increasing the rent. In 2020 The Hub was moved to Mfuleni (another township nearby) where it has been offered free accommodation in a community centre so that it can continue its work.

Election Monitoring

By networking with other non profit organisations and also the American Friends Service Committee, using the Khayelitsha Hub, 500 volunteers were trained to monitor the 2019 South African national elections in Khayelitsha and the Mitchells Plain area. The elections turned out to be the perfect testing ground for mass mobilization, organizational management, peace monitoring and direct intervention. It threw up wonderful youthful talent and energy that impressed the AFSC.

Partnerships

The Peace Centre partners with Paul Hoffman of the SA NGO Accountability Now in legal action against the arms deals and with various organisations regarding children's rights. Both have moved forward positively.

Alternatives to Violence

The PC has supported AVP courses to train up people in Khayelitsha and Mitchells Plain to build up a permanent core of facilitators.

The Peace Centre is returning to the essence of its original ideals, that of building quality relationships between people.

Projects in 2019 showed how this new way of operating can be successful. At the start of this year plans were advanced for future programmes.

Even now, in this difficult time, the Peace Centre board is working on how to move forward effectively.

The new structure of the Peace Centre meant that it should have financial sustainability. It had a modest but secure income from rents from three properties in Mowbray, a residential part of Cape Town. This is sufficient to cover normal running expenses, administration and enable future projects to be organized.

However, Covid 19 could put this security into doubt if tenants find themselves unable to pay their rents.

The Peace Centre has weathered many storms. It won't be defeated by Covid 19

Peace Centre Board

Eight people were elected to the PC Board at the recent annual general meeting on 17 March 2020. Portfolios were allocated at the first meeting of the new board later that evening.

Ghalib Galant	Chair
Rommel Roberts	Deputy chair
Michael Williams	Secretary
Lungiswa James	Treasurer
John Gardner	Property
David Mkize	
Melikaya Ntshingwa	
Bill Sewell	

Annual General Meeting

The latest annual general meeting was held at Quaker House on 17 March 2020. Copies of the minutes and audited financial statements can be provided by e-mail by applying to:-

Michael Williams, secretary,
e-mail: miwill4391@gmail.com