

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS TO MILITARY SERVICE

ALL OVER THE WORLD & IN EVERY AGE

TO COMMEMORATE MEN & WOMEN

TO ALL
THOSE WHO HAVE
ESTABLISHED AND
ARE MAINTAINING
THE RIGHT TO
REFUSE TO KILL

Their foresight and
courage give us hope

THIS STONE WAS DEDICATED ON 15 MAY 1994
INTERNATIONAL CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS DAY

PEACE
RESEARCH &
EDUCATION
TRUST

Annual Report 2016-2017



ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

The Peace Research and Education Trust (PRET) has continued to support peace education and research by making grants for a variety of educational projects, many associated with the First World War (WW1). The Trustees are increasingly aware of the growing militarisation of our society, in particular in education, from the encouraging of the expansion of school cadet forces to the schemes to recruit and fast-track ex-forces personnel into the teaching profession. PRET aims to provide peace educators with tools to build a culture of peace in which war and the violent resolution of conflict become unthinkable. Our expectation is that schools will examine the causes and effects of war and violence and foster the growth of a peaceful society based on freedom, justice and understanding among people.

The WW1 project and the Conscientious Objection Resource Centre

The Objecting to War project officer, Ben Copey, completed his contract of two years (funded by a Heritage Lottery Fund) and five months (funded by a grant from PRET) at the end of June 2016. He has submitted a detailed report to PRET. The main aims of the project have been achieved and in some cases surpassed. A significant aim of the project was to expand the volume and quality of information about the lives and expe-



CO Project exhibition. Bruce Castle, Haringay.

“War discourse ... operates as a strategy that partitions, separates and compartmentalises knowledge, offering a highly seductive, militarised grid through which to interpret the world.”

V Deer. The Ends Of War



We search for CO documents high and low around the country. Can you help?

riences of WW1 Conscientious Objectors (COs) and to store this in a readily accessible manner. The aim was achieved largely through the outreach work of the Project Officer who trained volunteers in research techniques and supervised their investigations. Some volunteers came as individuals but most as groups from Local History Societies, Local Studies Centres, Museums, Libraries and U3A so a very large number of people across London were involved. Many people were alerted to the possibilities by attending one of the many stimulating lectures on Conscientious Objection and Conscientious Objectors which Ben gave across the wider London area, each lecture being tailored to the specific area. The research continues and now covers the whole country. It is directed and much of it undertaken by the WW1 Project Co-ordinator, Jan Melichar. An impressive website, Remembering The Men who Said No, Conscientious Objection 1916-1919, is the public face of the project.

The facilities at the Conscientious Objection Resource Centre continue to be expanded. The number of enquiries from the general public and researchers has greatly increased and the Centre is known internationally.

The Education for Peace project

The part-time Education for Peace project officer, Peter Glasgow, completed his contract at the end of July 2016 having made a very significant contribution to peace education countrywide. He established contact with a wide range of schools and Universities, visiting many and developing specific materials and sessions. The Education Section of the Peace Pledge Union (PPU) website has been greatly enhanced by Peter who has contributed lesson plans consisting of PowerPoint presentations with

“This conscription is very bad. Was it absolutely necessary? My feeling is that a man has no right to demand everything. There is much that is higher and better and grander than this. It is not on this account despair.”

presenter notes on a variety of topics. He has developed a new addition to the Education section, Assemblies, which contains materials and activities suitable for assemblies and classrooms.

The Peace Education officer submitted written evidence on behalf of the PPU to the Purpose and Quality of Education in England Inquiry organised by the House of Commons Education Select Committee. The submission emphasised the particular concerns the PPU has about the creeping militarisation of the State Education System. An adapted version of the submission was published in the bi-monthly journal *The Post-16 Educator*. Although Peter ceased to be the PRET sponsored Education for Peace project officer for PPU at the end of July 2017 he has continued to help PPU with peace education work on a voluntary basis, visiting schools and contributing to Peace Education Network meetings. The Education for Peace project officer has submitted a detailed report on his work to PRET.

Publications

Dissemination of the work of the Education for Peace project officer and the Objecting to War project officer has largely been through the PPU websites. The well-established and popular study pack *Remembering War – Searching for Peace* has been extensively updated and reprinted.

Peace Education Network

The Education for Peace project officer, Peter Glasgow, has made a considerable contribution to the activities of the Peace Education Network and found it a very worthwhile

Remembering War sample pages



PRET approved grants totalling £9156.50 during the year as follows:

1. £2,000 to PPU as its annual contribution to the running of the CO Resource Centre and PRET agreed that this should be increased to £3,000 per annum from April 2017.
2. £2,000 to PPU as its annual contribution to the cost of the on-going work on the archives and PRET agreed that this should be increased to £3,000 per annum from April 2017.
3. £2,479 to PPU to cover salary increases for the Peace Education Project Officer, Peter Glasgow, and the WW1 Project Co-ordinator, Jan Melichar.
4. £900 to PPU for the updating and printing of the booklet Remembering War.
5. £150 to Bill Hetherington, the PPU Honorary Archivist, to refund expenses he incurred in attending the WW1 Conscientious Objection Conference in Leeds in March 2016 and the 10th Peace History Conference in Leeds in October 2016.
6. £693.50 to PPU for Symon Hill, the PPU Co-ordinator to travel to and have accommodation at the NUT Conference in Cardiff in April 2017 and to fund the printing of a new leaflet on Peace Education to be issued at the Conference.
7. £277 to PPU to cover the annual cost of the Remembering the Men Who Said No website.
8. £107 to PPU for Jan Melichar, the WW1 Project Co-ordinator, to carry out CO research at the Hull Archives Centre.
9. £50 to PPU for the hosting of pret.org.uk.
10. £500 to War Resisters' International to assist with the mounting of an educational seminar in London on 'Stopping the War Business'. This will be paid in the next financial year.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT - year ended 31 March 2017

	General Fund £	Restricted Fund £	TOTAL FUNDS £	Year ended 31.3.16 £
RECEIPTS				
Legacies	0	0	0	15,240
Donations - general	5354		5354	4175
Tax reclaim on donations	0	0	0	0
Bank interest	1140	0	1140	783
TOTAL RECEIPTS	6494	0	6494	20,198
PAYMENTS				
Direct charitable expenditure				
Grants - Peace Pledge Union	4506	0	4506	60,239
Grants - Individuals 150	150	0	0	0
Peace Pledge Union - Annual	4,000	0	4,000	4,000
Annual Review costs	0	0	0	485
Trustee expenses	150	0	150	56
Publicity and advertising	0	0	0	0
Other expenses	0	0	0	0
Sub total	8,806	0	8,806	64,295
Management & administration of charity				
Secretarial expenses	300	0	300	1,590
Independent Examiner's fee	360	0	360	340
Sub total	660	0	660	1,930
TOTAL PAYMENTS	9,466	0	9,466	66,225
Net income to funds	-2,972	0	-2,972	-46,027
Total funds brought forward	104,692	0	104,692	150,719
Total funds carried forward	101,720	0	101,720	104,69

“Mere praise of peace is easy, but ineffective. What is needed is active participation in the fight against war and everything that leads to it.”

Albert Einstein.

Future work

The WW1 Project Co-ordinator, Jan Melichar, will continue research, design and development of the Remembering the Men Who Said No website and associated material such as an interactive map. A key expansion of the site will be the development of related teaching resources to enable students, and indeed anyone, to explore the multiplicity of objections to war – objections as relevant today as then. Central to this will be soliciting material about COs from around the country and integrating this into the site as well as forging links with people and groups who are researching COs in their locality.

The objects of the Trust are:

- 1. the advancement of the education for the public benefit by the provision of advice and information on the causes and effects of war and violence and their peaceful resolution;**
- 2. the conduct of research into the causes and effects of war and violence in society and into the history of peacemaking, and the publication of the result of such research.**

Trustees

Trustees: Florence Assie, Albert Beale (representative Trustee nominated by the PPU), Lucy Beck, Jeff Bolam, Ed Evans and John Morris continued to serve as Trustees throughout the year. John Morris served as Chair and Lucy Beck as Treasurer.

Administration

The Trustees wish to record their continuing appreciation for the resources and facilities provided for them by the PPU staff. Annie Bebington handles the administrative work, including donations, tax reclaims, mailings and meetings. Jan Melichar updates the website and designs the PRET leaflet and Annual Review. For this essential administrative work the Trustees pay PPU, as well as for the occasional use of an office and meeting room.

...vice Act included conscientious objection. Even that COs would not be subjected to the death penalty but were to had been rejected by the Tribunal and sent to the Army as insincere in their mean that they were subject to Army regulations, which prescribed death by ment for disobedience on active service?

...lying had no effect on the COs the army did what armies do. reduction of conscription rumours about COs being sent to France to be shot - 'If they disobey orders of course they will be shot, and quite right too!' said Lord Recruiting as 17 men in Langford Fort were released from their shackles to May ain to France.

...he Prime Minister immediately despatched a message to the front forbidding any but the knowledge of the cabinet or sending any further COs to France, but the Army. As the government was denying that COs had been sent to France to be shot, regard of the elected civil authorities the Army despatched a further batch of men that they were being sent to France to be shot and were marched to the train to the military band playing 'Death March'.

...shipped could intimidate them and could continue to disobey and shoot the COs who continued to disobey and face the death penalty.

After weeks of painful punishments and constant abuse, the Frenchmen were marched out in groups formally told: Continue to disobey and face the death penalty.

By June, the Army was running out of patience. The Frenchmen were marched out in groups outside Boulogne within sight of the cliffs of Dover and told for a final time to obey orders. When they refused, their sentence was read out.

'I was number three on the list, and as I stepped forward I caught a glimpse of my paper as it was handed to the Adjutant. Printed at the top in large red letters, and doubly underlined, was the word 'Death'. I can hardly analyse the feeling that flashed through my mind as I caught sight of the word,' remembered Hubert Peet.

'The sentence of the court is to suffer death by being shot,' said the Adjutant. 'This sentence has been confirmed by the Commander in Chief'

There was a long pause

'And commuted to ten years penal servitude.'

All were given the same long sentence, but they had escaped the death penalty. Prison meant going back to Britain and to civilian prisons. At the last moment, political pressure and frantic work at home by their supporters had saved their lives. The resolve and determination of the threatened COs became a rallying point for those in Britain and made it clear that their cause would not be broken by Military means.



John Hut

Can you help?

Do you have or know someone who has a WW1 conscientious objector relative?
Might you be able to help with research in your locality?
If so please go to bit.ly/cointouch

Stone from the 'conchie wall' [bit.ly/COWALL] in Dartmoor at the PRET sponsored exhibition. Details and visits see bit.ly/COEXHIBITION