PEACE RESEARCH & EDUCATION TRUST

Annual Report 2023-2024

THIS YEAR was again dominated by war - war in Europe with the continuing defence of Ukraine against the Russian invasion, and war in the Middle East after the devastating attack on Israel by Hamas on October 7 2023 led to the overwhelming military retaliation from Israel in Gaza and elsewhere, which is ongoing. The continuing deaths of thousands of civilians haunt the world.

Other wars in Sudan, Myanmar and elsewhere receive less coverage but are leading to devastating famine and suffering. The Peace Pledge Union has been actively involved in providing opportunities for learning about the situation in Israel and Gaza in particular from those working for peace on both sides, with inspiring speakers at their events in Tavistock Square for International Conscientious Objectors Day on May 15, and Remembrance Sunday.

In the circumstances, education for peace is even more imperative. The Trust has continued to support this where possible, with limited resources currently available. This year has been a continuation of support for the educational work of the Peace Pledge Union, which is currently carried out by volunteers, and for the Men Who Said No project which seeks to tell the stories of those who resisted World War 1 and whose example continues to inspire and interest their families and researchers. Their stories provide inspiration for educators for peace today.

Projects supported by PRET this year

STAFF

The year saw a change of Secretary to the Trust which has meant some delays in administration but we were pleased to welcome Amy Corcoran to the role in the autumn, who has helped to bring our administration up to date. We would also like to thank Geoff Tibbs, the PPU staff member who helped carry out work over the summer before Amy was appointed. Our Trustee, Ed Evans, has been helping to catch up with the book-keeping, and we are most grateful to him for his hard work.

PPU ARCHIVES

At the end of 2023 the Trustees were saddened by the death of the PPU's long-standing honorary archivist, Bill Hetherington. At the centre of pacifist activism in the UK for more than half a century, he had also worked voluntarily for years to collect the archives of PPU history. He delighted in supporting students of all ages who enquired about PPU and peace movement history. In later years he started to highlight the work of conscientious objectors to war by collecting names of these objectors from WW1 onwards on the PPU database years before any others had done so.

Bill had also helped to set up our Trust by liaising with the Charity Commission in the 1990s to get us registered. We were surprised and pleased when it became clear that he had left a generous legacy to the Trust which it is hoped will be received later in 2024.

PRET also continues to support the maintenance of the archives at the PPU office, which include the history of the PPU both written and visual, and the resources on conscientious objection with particular emphasis on material from WW1 which is constantly being updated. PRET Trustees will be holding discussions with the PPU about plans for further organisation and imaginative ways to increase use of the material for educational purposes.

EDUCATION

The PPU does not currently have an Education Services Manager, but they hope to be able, in the near future, to appoint a new person to this post. In the mean time, PPU members and staff are ensuring that the PPU's educational work continues, with the support of PRET.

The PPU has maintained its representation on the Peace Education Network to enable continued contribution to discussions with other membership organisations at its thrice yearly meetings. They were glad to contribute to the recently released Teach Peace Secondary, which offers over 50 cross-curricular lessons on topics including challenging racism, conflict transformation and the arms trade.

Members of the PPU have been staffing a stall at the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and now the National Education Union (NEU) Conferences since 2017, building up a significant number of contacts for its informal network of teachers. In April 2023 they ran a stand at the conference of the NEU conference in Harrogate, building their peace education network and raising awareness about the increasing involvement of

the military in UK schools and the expansion of cadet corps.

The PPU reports that it values its link with the Institute of Education and continues to attend meetings as part of the UCL Peace Education Special Interest group. In November 2023 they facilitated a session on peace education for trainee Citizenship teachers and prepared an article on peace education in schools for the UCL Peace Education blog.

The PPU also developed a useful liaison with the Woodcraft Folk, producing educational material about remembrance and peace.

MEN WHO SAID NO projects

The project continues to work on its primary task of documenting the life stories of some 20,000 World War I conscientious objectors. We continue to research local archives and contemporary newspapers and are greatly helped by relatives of COs, who can supply us with information, documents, and photographs. More often, people contact us for information about their relative CO. Sometimes we can provide them with surprising and unexpected information.

The project continues to add material that gives a more rounded and nuanced picture of conscientious objection and is in the process of expanding its 'Resistance Map'.

PRET gave a grant for the digitisation of The Tribunal, the newspaper of the No Conscription Fellowship in WW1, to enable easier research access to this vital archive.

More posters and other teaching material here: bit.ly/4tH6Lby

The objects of the Trust are:

The advancement of 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;
The conduct of research into the causes and effects of war and violence in society and into the history of peace-making, and the publication of the results of such research.

Trustees

Albert Beale (representative Trustee nominated by the PPU), Lucy Beck, Ed Evans, John Morris and Gordon Thomas continued to serve as Trustees throughout the year. John Morris served as Chair and Lucy Beck as Treasurer. The Trustees are actively seeking to find new Trustees.

Administration

The Trustees record their continuing appreciation for the resources and facilities provided to them by the Peace Pledge Union. The Trustees pay an annual sum for their essential administrative work. We are grateful to Jan Melichar who designed the PRET Annual Review for 2022-23

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT - year ended 31 March 2024

	General Fund	Restricted Fund	TOTAL FUNDS	Year ended 31.3.24
RECEIPTS				
Legacies	0	0	0	0
Donations - general	3345	0	3345	2463
Tax reclaims on donations	0	0	0	0
Bank interest	36	0	36	43
TOTAL RECEIPTS	3381	0	3381	2506
PAYMENTS				
Direct charitable expenditure				
Grants - Peace Pledge Union	0	0	0	0
Grants - Others	0	0	0	0
Grants - Peace Pledge Union annual	5500	0	5500	6000
Annual Review costs	488	0	488	0
Trustee Expenses	106	0	106	0
Other expenses	2394	0	2394	16
Subtotal	8488	0	8488	6016
Management & administration of charity				
Secretarial expenses	2500	0	2500	0
Independent Examiner's fee	540	0	540	420
Subtotal	3040	0	3040	420
TOTAL PAYMENTS	11528	0	11528	6436
Net Income to Funds	-8147	0	-8147	-3930
Total Funds Brought Forward	25580	0	25580	29510
Total Funds Carried Forward	17433	0	17433	25580

Please note these are draft figures.

DONATIONS TO PRET CAN BE MADE ONLINE AT PRET.ORG.UK