



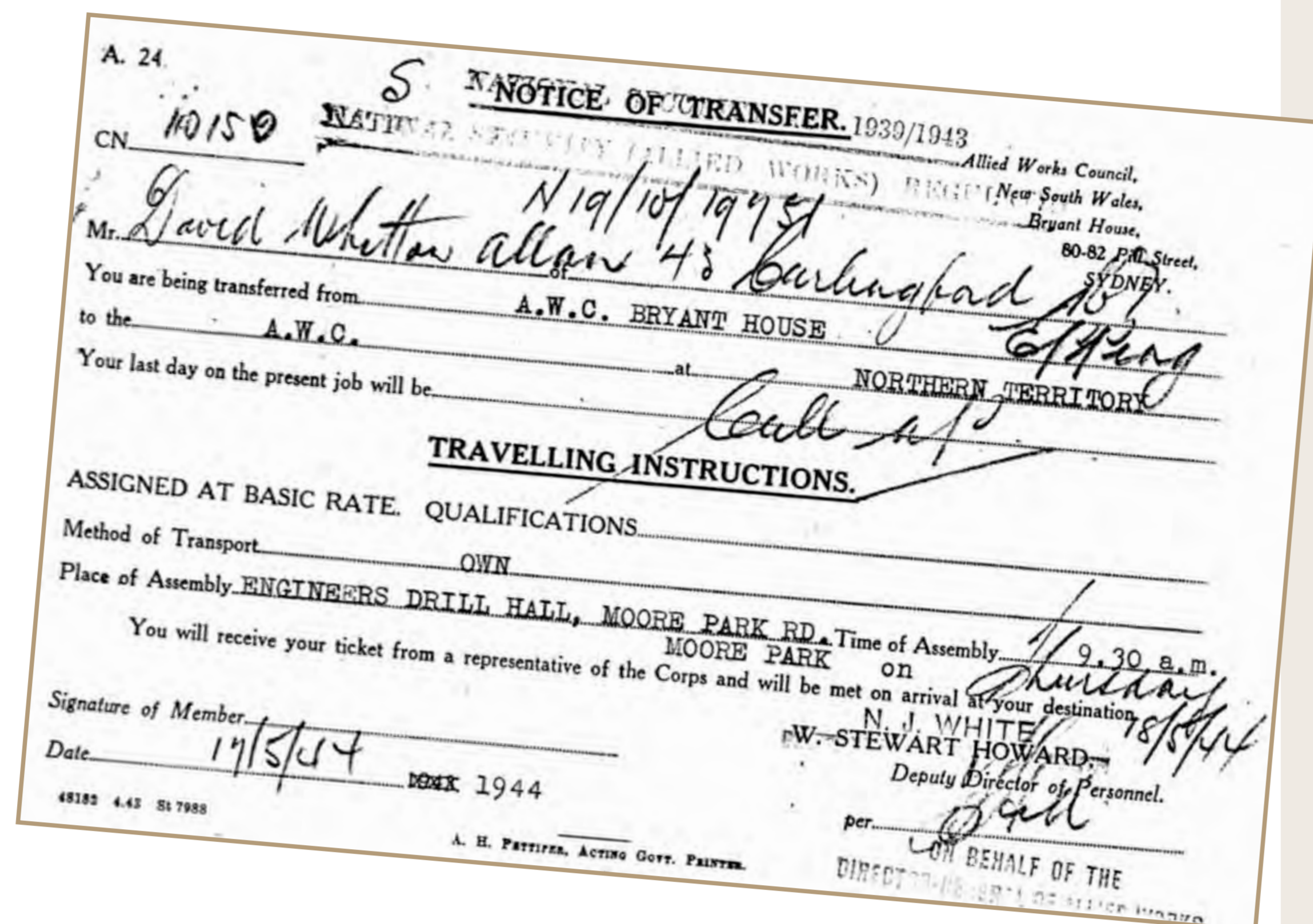
# Continuing Witness for peace and non-violence

## World War 2

During WW2 conscription was introduced in Australia and 2,800 men, including Quakers, registered as conscientious objectors (COs).

Some COs accepted non-combatant service and were assigned to forestry and other work. Others served six months or more in gaol.

COs were supported by Quakers, the Peace Pledge Union, and Conscientious Objectors' groups.



Allied Works Council notice for David Allen, after release from six months in prison as a CO.

“Fair and honest relationships, respect and peace-making need to be the basis of our relations with other nations.”

Australia Yearly Meeting response to WW1 centenary 2014

## Support for victims of war

Quakers in Australia assisted refugees, helping many to flee Europe prior to WW2. Some were able to find a home in Australia. Interned “aliens” at the Hay (NSW) and Tatura (Victoria) internment camps were also supported.

Once again, Australian Quakers contributed to the relief work carried out in Europe by British and American Quakers.

In 1947, the Nobel Peace Prize was jointly awarded to the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Service Council (a successor to the Friends War Victims Relief Committee in Britain), representing Quakers worldwide.

The presentation speech spoke of:

‘that rich expression of the sympathy between all men, regardless of nationality or race, which, transformed into deeds, must form the basis for lasting peace’.



Nobel Peace Prize 1947.



Vigil at ADF Headquarters Joint Operations Command, Canberra 2013.

## Disarmament and demilitarisation

Quakers have joined with others in calling for nuclear disarmament, an end to the arms trade, an end to the use of weapons targeting civilians, and the removal of US bases in Australia, such as Pine Gap.

Quaker concerns were espoused in the Senate by Jo Vallentine, following her election in 1985 as a representative of the Nuclear Disarmament Party in Western Australia.

The Australian Quaker Peace Committee set up a stall at Australia's International Defence Equipment Exhibition (AIDEX) in Canberra in 1989, contributing to protests that brought about a cessation of the exhibitions for many years.

## International diplomacy

Quakers were granted consultative status at the United Nations in 1948.

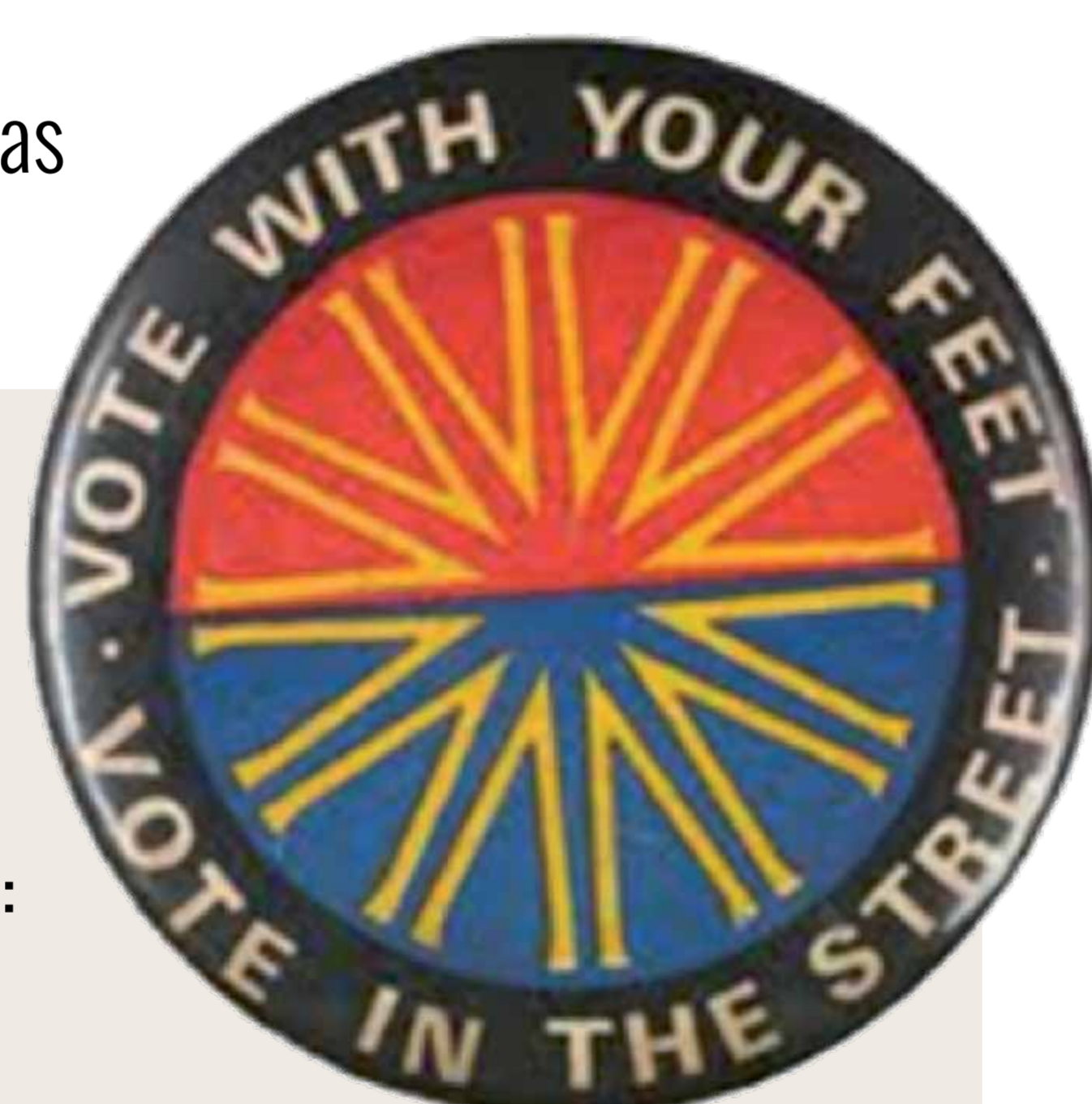
The Quaker United Nations Offices (QUONO) in Geneva and New York represent Friends' concerns for global peace and justice to the international community. QUONO projects include:

- ◆ justice and prisons
- ◆ peacebuilding and prevention of violent conflict
- ◆ human impacts of climate change
- ◆ food and sustainability
- ◆ human rights and refugees.

A number of Australian Quakers have worked at QUONO as programme assistants or attended Summer Schools.



QUONO New York – reconciliation and dialogue.



Vietnam Moratorium badge.

## Vietnam War 1954-1975

Australian Quakers responded in many ways, including:

- ◆ holding silent vigils
- ◆ offering practical and legal support to conscientious objectors
- ◆ participating in the broader anti-Vietnam war movement
- ◆ sending humanitarian aid to both North and South Vietnam.

It is now known that ASIO and state Special Branch police were assiduous in their surveillance of anti-war activists, and some activists at the time were fearful of consequences for their jobs.

