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New Book Information

Title: *Live Peace: Joy Balazo and Young Ambassadors for Peace*

Author: Margaret Reeson

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Blurb

‘We can’t change what happened. We can only change what happens next.’

As an experienced worker for human rights in the Asia-Pacific region, Joy Balazo was troubled by the many examples of conflict she was observing. In 2001, while working for the Uniting Church in Australia, she devised a practical model of workshops and networks to sow ‘seeds of peace’ among young people living on opposite sides of conflict. This was named Young Ambassadors for Peace. Joy has used this model in many contexts, including Asian cities and Pacific islands, to help hundreds of people work for peace in their own broken communities.

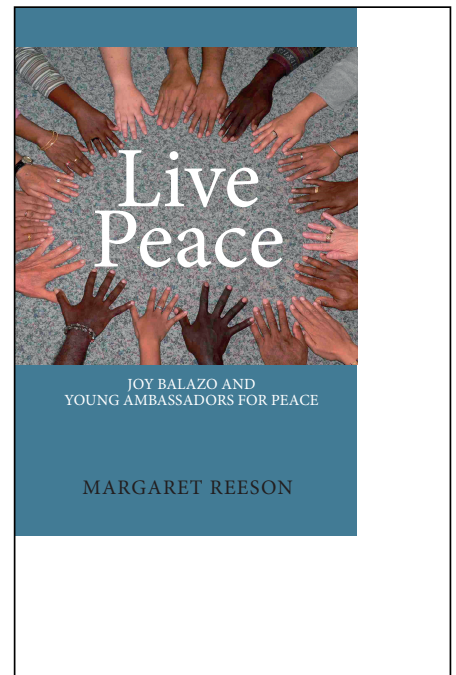
Author biography

Shorter version

Margaret Reeson has been writing for more than forty-five years, with a special interest in the lives of Australian Christian women. She combines her background as mission staff member in Papua New Guinea with continuing love for the stories of hope and struggle of people of faith.

Longer version

Margaret Reeson was born in rural NSW and grew up in Sydney where she trained and worked as a teacher. She served as a missionary teacher and then a Christian Education worker with youth and village women in the Highlands of PNG from 1961 to 1978. Margaret married Ron Reeson, a Methodist/Uniting Church minister, in 1966 and they worked together in PNG until 1978 before moving to Canberra in 1979. She has been a member of successive national boards and committees of the UCA from 1986 to the present and has chaired two of them at different



times, as well as serving as the state Moderator of the UCA in the Synod of NSW & ACT from 2000 to 2002. Her first book was published in 1972. Since then she has written on Australian and Pacific biography in the context of church and social history. This is her tenth book.

Margaret met Joy Balazo through the UCA national committee for World Mission (now *UnitingWorld*) in 1993 and has observed her ministry closely over twenty years. She was among the nervous sceptics when Joy first suggested the YAP concept, but subsequently became an early convert to the vision. In 2001, 2003 and 2005 Margaret was present during YAP workshops in Canberra and in Tari, PNG, and witnessed the unfolding of the process as well as having privileged access to archival documentation of this work. There have been opportunities to meet many of the key players in the YAP story and several of them have been guests in her home.

Commendations

I have spent 25 years mediating and training people in conflict prevention and management. From simply understanding the theory and intent of Young Ambassadors for Peace, Margaret's book has brought it to life. Margaret has captured Joy's life, passion and drive beautifully. Joy's work with Young Ambassadors for Peace transforms and saves lives and probably has avoided wars. She has spent a lifetime building peaceful communities in areas damaged by generations of conflict.

The reader can visualise Joy's fiery determination and strength of faith. We also see a very human Joy, who has learnt to acknowledge mistakes, but never gives up.

'We can't change what happened. We can only change what happens next.' This book provides the peace maker with key messages about respect, trust, faith and perseverance.

Jennifer Scott, mediator and arbitrator

Joy Balazo is one of my heroes – living her faith in practical yet potentially world-changing ways. Margaret Reeson tells her story compellingly, from Joy's traumatic experience in the Philippines' turmoil to her broadened engagement in human rights in many countries. Early encounters pave the pathway to peace-making through Young Ambassadors for Peace – using analysis and mediation skills from her Sydney experience, games from the Philippines, buddy system of protest marches in Manila, drama and symbolism from Thailand, intense painful group work observed in Bougainville and her own passion for justice and human rights that grew out of her Christian faith.

This is not just a 'ripping yarn', but a glimpse into living-memory history through the eyes of one petite person with a huge heart, dauntless determination and a fearless faith – it will keep you rapt.

Jill Tabart, former National President of the Uniting Church in Australia

Additional details

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- EBook will be available for purchase through the following sites:
 - Amazon Kindle
 - Apple's iBookstore
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