



October
2012

❖ Contents ❖

Scottish Friend

What are our spiritual needs?	Avis Swarbrick - 3
Friends' World Conference	Peter Cheer - 8
Isaac Penington Co-Housing	Kate Arnot - 12
Meeting for Sufferings	Jane Pearn - 13
Letter to Ed Davey from Meeting for Sufferings' Clerk	15
Scottish Quaker Treasurers' Meeting	Peter Kennedy - 16
Experiment with Light	Roger Quinn - 18
September General Meeting Report	Pat and Phil Lucas - 20
Notice of November GM	22
Directions to Cosmos Centre for November GM	23
Peace-making Visions at November GM	Robin Waterston - 24




Seaman's Hall, Nairn
where September GM was held

MP

Please send material for next *Scottish Friend* by 25 January to Margaret Peacock, 16 Drumlin Drive, Milngavie, G62 6LN, or nmjpeacock@yahoo.co.uk.

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What Are Our Spiritual Needs? Avis Swarbrick - April 2001

(This article appeared in Scottish Friend in 2001. It is still relevant today, so I have chosen to reprint it, with Avis' permission.) MP

"...modern research is showing that spiritual awareness is natural to the human species. Critics of religion who claim that it is nothing but a human invention have got things the wrong way round. It is actually the social construction of human secularism that has suppressed or even repressed the spiritual awareness that underlies religious belief"

*(From a research report: Understanding the Spirituality of People who don't go to Church by David Hay and Kate Hunt, University of Nottingham 2000 *)*

As your representative on the ACTS Commission on Mission, Evangelism and Education I have heard a lot of passing references to spiritual needs. But when I asked if anyone had worked out a list of such needs it was indicated that I'd better do something about it myself. It's now a year later, and I've written a draft list to stimulate thinking on the subject. Might it also lead to a paper that we can send to ACTS as our contribution to the MEE Commission? While church attendance has fallen by 20% in the last decade, Hay and Hunt's poll shows that 76% of the British population have had a spiritual experience. Probably this is not because people are having more spiritual experiences today, but because it is now becoming more socially acceptable to admit to having such experiences. Standing outside the churches, people are less afraid of talking about them or being rejected as a heretic. These experiences may range from such things as flashes of insight, out-of-the-body-experiences, seances, feelings of love inspired by

a sunset or a stranger in the bus, and what the charismatics call "words of knowledge" and "prophecy", as well as the deeper and usually transient but often life-changing experience of absorption of self into the absolute (usually called a "mystic" experience).

1. Therefore I suggest that our first and most important spiritual need is the recognition that there is a spiritual dimension to our lives.
2. The second need is for an understanding and handling of the positive and negative energies in life. A glimpse - usually totally unexpected - of this 'world beyond' is often enough to send us on a search to recapture it and explore it, providing that we feel safe enough to do so, because most people find such experiences life-enhancing.

But there are also spiritual experiences that are not benign. Merete Demant Jakobsen has written a survey of Negative Spiritual Experiences - Encounters with Evil that she has found in the records of the Religious Experience Research Centre. I feel this aspect of spirituality should also be included here. Comparatively few of those sending accounts of 'religious' experiences to this centre reported on negative experiences; I surmise that they did not consider experiences of darkness to be "religious". These experiences came in a variety of forms often apparently at random (reactions to places, encounters with Satan, sudden deep depression, an evil smell, etc) but Jakobsen also noted that the only reported "protection against the horror of the darkness of the soul" seemed to be religious rituals such as the sign of the Cross or the Lord's Prayer. I speculate that this sense of protection was what gave people the courage to report negative experiences to the Society (but what about those who had no such protection?).

It is also true that, like scientific knowledge, spiritual powers can, deliberately or mistakenly, be used for evil as well as good. The early Quakers, after James Nayler's excesses, set up structures to check that the leading was from the Spirit and not from the human ego. Thus most religious groups stress the importance of discipline and training for their followers, because groups, like individuals, have to understand and reconcile the positive and negative energies within them.

3. I would suggest that the third of our spiritual needs is a safe place in which to explore our spirituality and the freedom to do so. Usually spirituality is taken to refer to our individual relationship to God. This is best explored one-to-one or in open-minded small groups. We need to have our personal experiences accepted and valued before we can move forward. This means that those listening really believe in and trust what the Hebrews called Wisdom or the Greeks Sophia, and what John's Gospel calls "the true Light that gives light to every man". It is innate in all of us and is there to lead us into all truth, if we open ourselves to it.

4. The fourth need is time - time to pray, meditate, reflect, to be ourselves. This calls for a shift from doing to being - popular advice in religious circles, but difficult to put into practice in modern society. This will involve a certain amount of solitude.

5. Some needs such as 3 and 4 are personal and individual. However, the fifth of our spiritual needs, I would suggest, is to belong to a group that offers us spiritual roots and support on our journey through life'. Most religions (Christian, Buddhist, etc) have their roots in the past, and a wealth of wisdom in their traditions, otherwise they would have faded away. All religious

movements, as far as I can tell, aim to take people safely into the mystery that lies beyond our everyday lives. They teach about and celebrate the good and joyous side of life, and also teach their understanding of death, suffering, wrongdoing and downright evil, and how its manifestations can be tackled. We worship in groups, and groups develop a dynamic that is more powerful than that of separate individuals and exerts pressures on them. Tensions can develop. We join groups because they answer our needs and leave them if they don't. In the past traditional evangelism focused on persuading people to join a particular religious group.

But I wonder whether today's focus should not be much more on answering the individual spiritual needs listed above. Our needs shift their emphasis as our experience deepens, and we all have different backgrounds. Some need to shake off the trammels of a 'religious' upbringing, stand outside it and re-evaluate it; others need to seek for one (as they did on pilgrimages to India from the sixties onward) and to try out all sorts of disciplines en route; some give up, and call themselves agnostics or atheists, while others may feel their needs met by the certainty and security offered by closed sects (which may or may not offer them the freedom referred to above); some see the need to go deeper into their own tradition, and follow it through to personal fulfilment; some feel led to start their own movement because they want to renew the dynamic of their tradition - many Christian reformers have tried to revive what they saw as the real message of Jesus that had been obscured by the established churches.

Religious groups, while standing firm in their own truth, are beginning to realise that their particular way is not necessarily for all. They also have a responsibility, as our understanding of the world changes with each generation, to relate their own tradition

to the current model of the universe so that they answer the needs of successive generations - a great and glorious challenge. Most great souls have reached deep into their own tradition, and many, such as Thomas Merton and Thich Nhat Hanh, have passed beyond it to recognise each other as 'brothers in the Spirit' and learn from other religions. On the other hand, a few people I know and respect do not attach themselves formally to any religious group. You recognise them by their warmth and kindness, their wisdom, and the peace they bring with them into any room they enter. Their role-models are the great souls of all the ages; their teaching is the Wisdom at the heart of life; their support comes from a loose network of like-minded people.

This list of needs could, I hope, be applied universally, and I offer it to General Meeting for consideration. Whenever we venture into the spiritual world, we need to take off our shoes in honour and respect for other people's spiritual journeys, for the ground they are standing on is Holy Ground.



Goat's Beard

MP

FWCC World Conference at Kabarak University, Kenya.

Peter Cheer

With the generous support of the John Wigham Enjoyment Trust, the William Gunn Charitable Trust and Perth Meeting, I was able to attend the World Conference of Friends 2012 at Kabarak University near Nakuru in Kenya from April 17th to April 25th whose theme was 'Being Salt and Light: Friends living the kingdom of God in a broken world'. World conferences do not happen frequently and in one of the theme workshops which I went to it was described as 'a once in a generation opportunity'.

At the moment I am living in Addis Ababa, on a two-year Voluntary Service Overseas Placement with the city HIV / AIDS Prevention Office. One regular task at WCF was explaining that, despite my conference badge saying I was a member of Britain Yearly Meeting, I am living in Ethiopia. However, this was a definite advantage when it came to travel, my easy two-hour flight being in sharp contrast to the stamina demanded from other people who had come further.

East Africa holds the greatest concentration of Quakers in the world with active communities in Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania and Uganda who follow the programmed tradition. Naturally, there was a strong African representation at the conference, with the bulk of the rest coming from the English-speaking world, plus smaller contingents from Europe, India, Indonesia, Southern Africa, and South and Central America. Despite the array of unfamiliar faces and new Friends to meet for me, it was also good to see some old friends from the time I spent working in Nairobi during 2009/10, and even a few from Scotland. Those present from the programmed and unprogrammed Quaker traditions showed both our diversity and what unites us as Friends.

Central Kenya was looking very green and pleasant as they were experiencing one of the two annual rainy seasons and Kabarak University has a rural campus, near Nakuru, around four or five hours' drive from Nairobi.

The conference theme using the metaphors of being salt and light in a broken world could be interpreted in a wide variety of ways, most of which came down to variations on one of my favourite Advices where Friends are urged to 'Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them'.

In the first half of the conference, our time was split between worship sessions lead by the different FWCC sections, home groups and theme workshops. The worship sessions were both affirming and challenging. In some ways, the conference theme embraces what Quakers have always done and part of what defines our faith... being active, bringing our spiritual insights to the world and attempting to change it for the better. At the same time, we were asked and encouraged to ask ourselves difficult and searching questions such as 'what has God called you to do, why are you here?' and reminded of the important distinction between working zealously and working faithfully which are not always the same thing.

A common dilemma that I have at conferences is choosing which workshops to go to, choosing between topics that I know about already because I may be able to contribute something, or going along to one I know nothing about and be confident of learning something new. While the conference programme offered a wide selection to pick from, many of which interested me, in truth my own choices were made on simple grounds. At tea break on the first morning there was a large crowd in front of the sign-up sheets and I made the simple decision of picking the two that I could reach most easily!

As it turns out my two workshop themes covered both ends of the spectrum from the very local to the international. The work of the Quaker United Nations Offices (QUNO) in New York and Geneva in influencing and facilitating discussions and policy at the United Nations seems to be very far removed from what most of us could contemplate doing to 'live the kingdom of God in a broken world'. The truth is that the two Quaker United Nations Offices exist because of us, and work for us in what they do. In some of the ways that they work they show that elements of answering that of God in every person are no different at the personal, local and

international levels. One element of what QUNO does is to bring people together and to facilitate meetings between diplomats and officials which would not happen otherwise or could not be publicly seen to be happening. In such meetings people will say things that they would not say on the record; they will meet and discuss with others whom they do not usually meet. Part of what makes this work is the atmosphere in Quaker House Geneva and Quaker House New York that is deliberately kept more like that of a home than the business-like offices familiar to diplomats. Keeping a welcoming home that provides hospitality to visitors is something that we can all do.

My second workshop on building communities featured inspiring examples of building and strengthening communities in Kenya, Jamaica and New York, with a strong emphasis on working with young Friends who are the future of Quakers and will carry the light into a world that will surely need it. So my workshop choices covered the spectrum from grass roots community action to seeking truth with power. The fact that we were in the same workshop sessions for three afternoons gave us a chance to explore issues with a depth and thoroughness that can be hard to achieve in shorter conferences.

The richness, depth and range of the theme sessions meant that the team clerking the plenary sessions had an impossible task. Despite the heroic efforts of the clerks, I have to say that for me the plenary sessions were not a great success, but this was not the fault of anyone on the clerking team.

In my head I knew that Quakerism was a world wide faith, but until now I had not seen it. Each day one section of FWCC led the worship session and this encompassed both spoken ministry and singing in the programmed and unprogrammed traditions. Some of the ministry and experiences from these sessions will stay with me for a long time - in particular some of the experiences of Friends from Burundi and Rwanda who lived through the 1994 genocide, and their subsequent work to foster community-building, healing and reconciliation. This work is ongoing and particularly important now, as many people serving prison terms for their part in the genocide are coming up for release.

As well as living in a broken world, Friends also live in a broken church. For many our diversity is a source of joy and strength; for others the issues that divide us on human sexuality and the centrality of biblical teaching run very deep. Some of this surfaced at the Gathering and caused some grief but gaining strength from our diversity and love for one another cannot be done by refusing to acknowledge that these divisions exist.

Unfortunately broken is a term that could also be used to describe the finances of the Friends World Committee for Consultation who organised this conference. Over recent years, because of the global financial climate, income has fallen below expenditure and the reserves of FWCC have fallen alarmingly. In the business sessions we heard about this and welcomed the incoming FWCC team - they face formidable challenges and deserve our support.

Quakers from East Africa were warm and generous hosts. After the last Kenyan elections there was a considerable amount of intercommunal violence and Kenya is due to have another election next year. Over the last four years a new constitution has been passed and there have been strong efforts to heal the divisions but much remains to be done. The FWCC gathering was in April, I am updating this report now, in October. Kenya is very tense at the moment, particularly in the coastal areas around Mombasa and in the northern areas bordering on Somalia, politicians are manouvering in advance of the elections. Quakers in Kenya need our prayerful support at this time.

All this has hopefully given you a flavour of what we did, yes... but what was it like? Well, words that I could use to sum up the FWCC World Conference include:- affirming, challenging, diverse, inspiring, moving, supportive and transforming. Such gatherings take place once in twenty years and people who go to one come back changed. Now I know why. The FWCC Gathering was a great success and this owes much to the hard work of the organisers; the translation teams; the staff at Kabarak University; the speakers; and all the participants, and they have my thanks.

Isaac Penington Co-Housing (Scotland)

Kate Arnot

Friends may have been wondering what has happened to Quaker Housing Association Scotland. This has been laid down and a new organisation, "Isaac Penington Co-Housing Scotland" is being formed. We took this decision as probably all the houses will be for sale so we could no longer have charitable status. There have been multiple complicated legal and financial hurdles to be resolved: this is a first for this form of housing in Scotland, There are other co-housing groups trying to set up in Scotland, but none that we are aware of has a spiritual basis. An expert in Scottish housing law is working through these issues but there are still outstanding issues to be resolved, although we're nearly there! Triodos Bank has recently become involved and is advising us as well. They are interested in being involved.

Co-housing is a group of people who know one another and share some meals and some space (as well as having their own flats). For us, the Co-Housing has a spiritual basis and will develop our spiritual life. The management of the project is by the residents who are "good neighbours". There will be no warden: it is not a residential care home.

We retain the original vision of Quaker Housing Association Scotland of:- a) a community for over 55s; b) environmentally friendly; c) near a train station

As soon as we know what the legal structure of the Company will be, we will be sending out a letter with more details.

If you would like to be kept informed, with no commitment at this state, please contact Ann MacInnes:
amacinnes96@googlemail.com or 01236 750752

Meeting for Sufferings at Friends House 6th October 2012
Jane Pearn

Meeting for Sufferings is starting to settle into its new shape, but I felt there was still limited opportunity and time to reflect in sufficient depth. When minutes, received from Area Meetings or elsewhere, are referred on to other committees, or other bodies, or the future, it can make it feel like a clearing house, and induce a longing for something substantive to consider.

The concern from Swarthmoor Area Meeting was one such: plans to bury high-level nuclear waste in West Cumbria make neither scientific nor ethical sense. It appears from impartial evidence that the proposed site is geologically unsuitable and therefore poses a significant risk. Decisions seem to have been taken on political grounds in defiance of scientific evidence and the long-term safety implications. A query was raised about whether this matter was a Yearly Meeting priority, but subsequent ministry gave clear direction. Local Friends, with their Churches Together group, have done what they can, and this is matter of much more than local concern. It reflects our commitment to respect for all creation, and it is right to support local Friends in their witness.

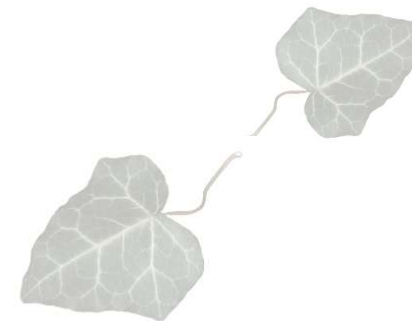
Our clerk, Christine Cannon, will write to the government expressing concern not only about this specific proposal, but about the way that central government is absolving itself of responsibility for these difficult decisions, by delegating them to local councils.

Northamptonshire Friends have a raised a query about Registering Officers covering more than one Area Meeting, to save on the costs of training, resolve the uneven spread of marriages, and to address the difficulties of finding willing Friends in every Meeting.

We were reminded that that we must be careful not to have 'experts' conducting marriages and of the need for support for the couple within their worshipping community. [Our Registering Officers in Scotland tell me there have been two and four marriages in each of our AMs in the past five years, so our own distribution seems quite even].

We began to explore ways in which we might contribute to the commemoration of the start of World War 1 in 2014. We need to work with others where we can, while trying to present another facet to the story, and try to ensure that events to commemorate the 'war to end all wars' include reflection on where we are now – including Britain's current military engagement, and its role in the arms trade.

Also in 2014, A Framework for Action will come to the end of its life. We heard very varied reports on its reception by Friends in their Meetings – from 'very positive', 'used as a study guide', to 'little used', 'politely received, but not relevant to us in our Meetings'. But we agreed that the process was as important as the product, and if there were to be a future document it should arise from the engagement and involvement of Friends throughout Britain Yearly Meeting.



Below is the text of Christine Cannon's letter

Ed Davey,
Secretary of State
DECC
3 Whitehall Place
London SW1A 2AW
17 October 2012

Dear Ed Davey,

I am writing on behalf of Meeting for Sufferings, the standing consultative committee of Quakers in Britain, to express our deep unease over the proposed planning process for siting nuclear storage in Cumbria. We ask for your assurance that any planning enquiry will meet the highest standards of integrity and transparency.

We are concerned that by focusing on local political support rather than geological suitability current planning processes may be putting the public at risk. When the national nuclear industry body, NIREX, previously sought planning permission for a disposal of nuclear waste in Cumbria, the inspector considering the application turned it down, on the basis that the site "is not suitable for the proposed repository" and that "safety was not treated as the most important discriminative factor."

We would ask for your assurance that any planning process will be conducted in an objective and methodical manner; that the issue of public safety will be paramount; and that geological suitability rather than local support will be determinative in considering where and whether waste is to be stored. We would ask also that there will be adequate opportunity for considering all reasoned objections.

Christine Cannon

Scottish Quaker Treasurers Gather in Glasgow

Peter Kennedy

Twenty-one Friends from across Scotland, from Orkney in the north east to Wigtown in the south west, from Tobermory in the west to Aberdeen in the East, gathered together in the basement of Glasgow Quaker Meeting House on Saturday 6 October 2012 to consider what it's like to give financial service to Friends.

The Friends present were an assortment of Treasurers and former Treasurers from Local Meetings, Area Meetings, General Meeting, and Northern Friends Youth Events Trust, together with Katie Frost, the Community Fundraising Officer from Quaker Communication and Service. Many there wore several other Quaker hats, serving also as an AM or GM Trustee.

Friends are getting slightly better at taking responsibility for the oversight of their finances and those we appoint to act as custodians of our finances. But perhaps only slightly! There is a Local Meeting in our Yearly Meeting where a Friend served as Local Meeting Treasurer for nearly 50 years continuously – only escaping that service when they moved house! There are other examples of Friends giving very long service. Whilst convenient for nominating groups, this simply is not financially healthy or wise.

In the first session we looked at what Friends expect of their "financial servant of the Meeting". Why do Friends give, or, rather, not give to the work of our local, area meetings or the centrally managed work of our Society? If we don't fund it, how can we expect others to?

Friends have many excuses -- yes, excuses -- for not contributing financially, but these can often be exposed – for example in a Quaker Meeting (not necessarily in Scotland!) the treasurer reported that 70% of the financial contributions came from just 7 Friends. When challenged that Friends gave in other ways, the Treasurer responded that the 7

Friends who contributed financially also held most of the offices in the Meeting!

When challenged again that Friends might contribute using the collection bowls, rather than donating directly, the Treasurer replied, "YES - that will account for the average of 33p per week contributed by Friends in that way"!

Friends also make it difficult for their Treasurers in giving them either no, or else very unhelpful instructions – "use it where you think best"! That leaves the onus on the Treasurer to decide where to spend the money, but then leaves them faced with criticism if their choice is not in accordance with Friends' wishes.

The only sensible time to make a request in terms of general funds, etc, is when leaving a legacy! And that is only because legacies that are earmarked become restricted funds which are then difficult to administer if the specified work is "laid down" in the future.

Friends often forget that money given for a specific purpose can only be used for that purpose. So when an enthusiastic Friend suggests that the Meeting makes a donation, that can usually only come from Special Collections, rather than the Meeting's own funds.

Many Friends are very parochial in their views: they consider their own local meeting as their principal activity, even though the basic membership and charitable unit is the Area Meeting. Many Friends are very disparaging about "centrally managed work" seeing it as a waste of time and money – a cursory glance of the letters pages of *The Friend* will show you that all is "not well in the state of Britain Yearly Meeting" – well, as far as some Friends are concerned anyway.

We 21 gathered solace that we were not seen as "lonely" or "unloved" Friends, but we were seen as a necessary part of our Society's structures. We rejoiced and there was plenty of hilarity as we considered the various

parts to our work – Treasurership is a joyful ministry, but it can only be so if Friends respect their Treasurer and nurture good and helpful

practices – such as giving plain and clear instructions as to what contributions should be used for, e.g. Local Meeting, Area Meeting, or the work of the Yearly Meeting. Contributions to other Quaker bodies are best and most usefully received directly by the respective body.

We all survived the day and it is to be hoped that this may become a frequent gathering to inspire Friends who serve in this capacity, and to share good practice and the joys of the financial and stewardship "servants of the Meeting". Thanks must go to the event's organisers, John Phillips, GM Treasurer, Kate Gulliver from Quaker Stewardship Committee and the various Friends who facilitated and took part in the event.

But why are Friends scared of finance?



Experiment with Light

John and Diana Lampen brought their Experiment with Light to North Scotland at its annual residential meeting at Pluscarden Abbey, Morayshire. Roger Quinn was there and has some observations to make.

In her recent series on the history of the home, Lucy Worsley spoke of the closet in the Elizabethan home. She described it as a small

room, whither one might go to escape the hustle and bustle of what was then modern life. This was a time when privacy was at a premium. Even in the bedroom where everybody slept together the only protection for Ma and Pa from the eyes of Peeping Toms were the curtains of the four-poster bed. One went into one's closet when one needed to meditate, pray or just sit quietly to let the storms of life blow over.

It is this room that the Authorised Version of the Bible refers to in the Sermon on the Mount - somewhere where one can go to pray in secret and alone. Alone yet not alone, for it is there that it is easier to hear the "still small voice of God".

This same "still voice" is the Light of which St. John's gospel speaks in every Anglican church on Christmas day - the Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the World, as the majestic language of the King James Bible has it.

Nowadays we are so familiar with that language, that we forget that back in 1652 it was only forty years old. For without the KJB and the fact it was appointed to be read in every church through the land: whence could George Fox have gained his inspiration? How indeed could all those people who flocked to hear this itinerant preacher have begun to comprehend his simple message, if they themselves were not familiar with the Bible in the vernacular?

This "Light which shineth in the darkness" is in all mankind, as is "the darkness which comprehendeth it not". The great legacy of the early Friends is the discovery that one needs no priest or other intermediary to gain access to that Light. And that the "still small voice" is available to all who seek it, wherever they may be.

General Meeting for Scotland 8th September 2012

Pat and Phil Lucas

The Meeting was held in the Seaman's Hall in Nairn's Fishertown. We welcomed two visitors, an ecumenical representative from the Church of Scotland and Sandra Berry, the Director of Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre.



Jane Pearn shared her impressions of the now smaller Meeting for Sufferings, on which she is our new representative. She commented on the changes to Friends House resulting from the current refurbishment programme and found the meeting focused well, with the Clerk being both reassuring and welcoming. She found the time spent in small groups was also helpful.

We accepted the remit for the new Parliamentary Liaison Function Group and were told of ongoing consultation with the Recording Clerk's Office to ensure close co-operation in our advocacy work with Westminster and Holyrood. Jane Dawson has been appointed as the Yearly Meeting's new Advocacy Officer.

Phil Lucas reported on our part in Holyrood's consultation process regarding marriage equality. Alex Neil MSP has just been appointed as minister responsible for taking forward this issue and we expect to be invited to contribute further as the Government moves towards new legislation. Phil mentioned in particular the support we have received from the Scottish Equality Network.

Leslie Stevenson, reporting on the future of ACTS, likened it to a tanker captained by a committee, each member of which takes orders by radio from their own HQ on shore. He regretted that, in his experience, opportunities rarely occur for engagement with deeper issues of a religious or ethical nature, though others present gave a more positive view and told us that contexts are provided in which such engagement does take place. There is concern that Scottish Churches House is not yet sold, though there may be potential purchasers interested.

We made a number of appointments, including membership of the new Parliamentary Liaison Function Group, which Elizabeth Allen will convene and of which Alastair Reid, whom we appointed to the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office Advisory Group, will be a member. Duncan Wallace was appointed as GM Assistant Treasurer.

In the afternoon Sandra Berry, a self-confessed technophile who previously worked for BT and has for two years been Director of Woodbrooke, told us about Woodbrooke's work and how this is developing under her leadership. The new 'Becoming Friends'

course has really taken off, with more than 450 registered to do the course on line. The Study Centre's work in Europe, directed by Julia Ryberg, is very dependent on this technology and makes material available in nine languages.

Many Scottish Friends are familiar with Woodbrooke On the Road. Some of our Meetings are too small and scattered to host this but Sandra described a programme they are running in collaboration with Friends in Wales, involving a series of linked sessions over a three year period, something we might consider in Scotland. We also discussed ways in which the new communication technologies can be used to overcome the barriers of distance and cost and wondered whether the system of training tutors to deliver courses in Scotland could be developed. Sandra is very open to developing this dialogue.

We were handsomely hosted by local Friends (the packed lunches some of us had brought proving to be superfluous) and it was a lively and interesting day.

General Meeting for Scotland

Residential Meeting - 17-18 November 2012
Cosmos Centre, Abbey Walk, St Andrews KY16 9LB

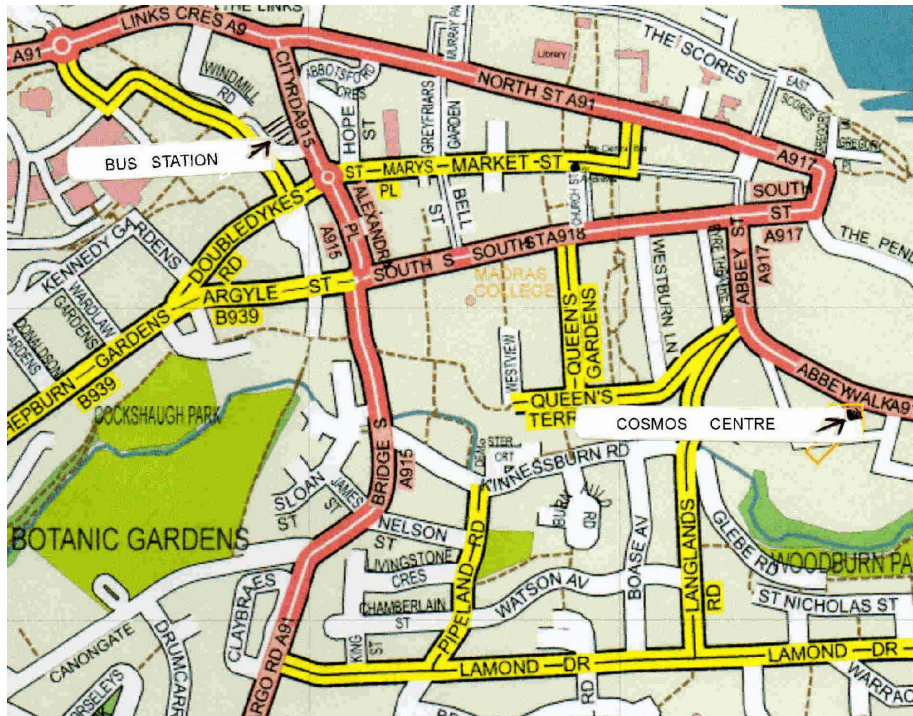
General Meeting will begin at 11.00am on Saturday 17th
(coffee and tea available from 10.30am)
with our usual Meeting for Worship for Business.

Directions to Cosmos Centre,
Abbey Walk, St Andrews KY16 9LB



By Car: The approach on the A91 from Cupar continues straight into North Street, which at its far end has a U-curve past the Cathedral turning into South Street. Abbey Walk is the first turning on the left. The Cosmos Centre is the white building on the right after the curve. There is ample parking space.

From the bus station: About a 15 minute walk through the town. Exit right into City Road and continue over the next junction, cross the road and take the next left through the West Port into South Street. Walk to the far end. Abbey Walk is the last turning on the right past the school and Queen's Gardens. Bridal shop on the corner. The Cosmos centre is the white building on the right after the curve.



"Peace-making: Visions for the Future"

Our Saturday afternoon sessions will focus on peace. What will Scotland look like in ten years' time? And what contribution might Scotland be making to peace-making from what may be a very different political landscape, but one which, in other respects, is likely to be substantially unchanged - still attached to England, still on the margin of Europe, still close to the North Atlantic and to the Arctic, and still an exciting and challenging rainbow of different ethnic groups. We shall be joined by Philip Austin of Northern Friends' Peace Board and by our Friends Janet Fenton and Mary Alice Mansell of Scotland's for Peace, who will together lead us in an exploration of issues including sustainable security, promoting dialogue and building peace in a diverse Britain.

On Saturday evening we will have a presentation on the World Conference of Friends held earlier this year. Then on Sunday morning we will continue our theme of peace as we hear about the Turning the Tide programme.

Please join us in St Andrews to hear about the work Friends are doing in the fields of peace-building and conflict-resolution, and to share worship and fellowship with Friends from across Scotland.

"Our shared experience of waiting for God's guidance in our meetings for worship and for church affairs, together with careful listening and gentleness of heart, forms the basis on which we can live out a life of love with and for each other and for those outside our community."

QFP 10.03

Robin Waterston, Clerk