



Scottish Friend

October 2016



The yacht that our CalMac ferry hooted at.

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A PILGRIMAGE TO IONA**Eleanor Fairclough, Inverness Meeting**

Members and Attenders at Inverness Meeting have supported local interfaith events recently. As a member of Inverness Interfaith Group, one weekend this spring I went with 18 others on our organised pilgrimage to the island of Iona. It was the first time we had attempted such an event; a grant from the Claremont Trust helped to defray expenses. 5 faiths were represented: Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Judaism and it was like a modern Chaucer's Canterbury Tales as we shared stories and got to know each other.

We stayed in the self-catering hostel on Iona or in B and B and met up, ate and socialised in the comfortable hostel. For a number of us, it was our first experience of the ecumenical informality of Iona Abbey and Community and we felt welcomed and accepted, whether at the Introduction Service at the Abbey, the talk about the Iona Community itself or the tour of the Abbey and its surroundings. We were free to explore Iona, spend time in the Museum, learn more about the Irish monk Columba who founded Iona or just relax and benefit from a chance to acknowledge the importance of spirituality in our lives. At the end of the weekend, the guiding principles and ambience of Iona had made a profound impact on many of us and the influence will be long remembered as we return to daily routines.

**CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD****Caird Hall, Dundee, 3 September 2016****Pamala McDougall, Dundee Meeting**

'We are Bold, We are Strong, We are the Guild'. So proclaims the literature announcing the Annual Gathering along with the advice to 'Go in Joy'.

Having previously attended this joyous gathering I knew to take my singing voice along. The worship was indeed uplifting with rousing hymns, heartfelt prayers and the Heart and Soul Swing Band. The band led the participants to hand clapping along with the music - and some even took to their feet in dance mode! There were 2,000 members and special guests, and I was one of

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them. This was not what I remembered in the days of my youth of the more sombre atmosphere of the MacIntosh Memorial church services in Fort William, so it appears that there is a change in Church of Scotland worship practice over the years.

I was excited to learn that Sally Magnusson was to be a guest speaker - the journalist, TV and radio broadcaster and writer - as I have long been an admirer of her talents. Sally founded 'Playlist for Life' in 2013 after being impressed by the effect of personally meaningful music on her late mother's dementia. Her book 'Where Memories Go' calls for the restoration of human rights and dignity for those suffering from dementia. There was a queue later for her book and I was pleased to meet her and obtain a signed copy.

The other speaker was the Moderator of the General Assembly, the Rev. Dr Russell Barr, who has been the minister of Edinburgh Cramond Kirk since 1993. He founded 'Fresh Start' which has helped 2,000 people get back on their feet in the last year and is hoping to raise awareness of food poverty during his year as Moderator. The charity provides food and offers cookery classes, lessons in budgeting and in growing fruit and vegetables. It is supported by more than 80 congregations in Edinburgh and employs 18 people. It was inspiring to hear what has been achieved. On this occasion the Moderator demonstrated his skills in amusing anecdotes about his life in the ministry which were so funny that he could have a second career in stand up comedy if needed! So refreshing and uplifting - the ministry of laughter!

In between the presentations, the hymns, the prayers and the swing band we heard from the heads of the Councils and Committees of the work they are called to do. A novel way of presenting this was in the speakers' just 3 minutes each while a reminder of the time ticking away ran on the screen and a 'Time Up' gong was sounded. Is this a method to ponder for our business meetings?

It was good to see Alison Burnley who was representing the Quaker Tapestry and Margaret Roy who is on the Scottish Committee of the World Day of Prayer. Invitations to share ecumenically in worship and fellowship are a special and valuable experience, and as Advices and Queries No. 6 puts it -

' Do you work gladly with other religious groups in pursuit of common goals? While remaining faithful to Quaker insights, try to enter imaginatively into the life and witness of other communities of faith, creating together the bonds of friendship'

John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust and the GalGael Trust's visit to Iona

Alastair McIntosh (Glasgow Meeting)



Setting off from Govan

The John Wigham Trust is a small Quaker fund that was set up to give groups and individuals associated with Quakers experience that is enjoyable.

In March this year, a group of 23 people

from the GalGael Trust in Govan led by me went for a weekend on Iona for precisely such enjoyment and supported, in considerable part, by a grant from the trust.

We set off on a Friday night in two minibuses, and had been given exclusive use of Iona Hostel by the proprietor at a very helpful off-season rate. We had met at various stages in the planning, and the agreed purpose of the visit was:

To experience this ancient holy place, the island, the abbey and all its history. To use that to help us explore what spirituality might be, and what it might mean in our lives. Spirituality is not necessarily the same as religion. This weekend is about helping each other to find our own paths. It is not about telling folks what they should believe.

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Did that happen? It happened most wonderfully, but not always predictably. Spirituality was a new concept for some of our people and a well-worn glove for others. What most spoke to people was the sheer power of the landscape and the holy places - the chapels and the ancient stones – that have been part of Scotland’s spiritual heritage for some fifteen hundred years.

“It was all there. The outdoors, the historical stuff, everybody back there at the hostel. I went to be liberated from the city.”

People spoke of seeing clear water for the first time in their lives, even being on a boat for the first time in their lives. We had wonderful discussions around the kitchen table in the hostel.



Mealtime at Iona Hostel

“I was going to Iona to try and find myself again, who we were, what we are about, what GalGael is about. I think I found that out. There are a lot of really deep people around me in GalGael. That weekend away was special.”

We saw round the Abbey and the stones in the museum – Historic Scotland let us in free as an educational group. In quiet moments, there were tears and hugs.



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“This is Scotland. We need to know God in a Scottish way. The landscape of Scotland speaks in its own way.”

On top of the world - the summit of Dun I

More organised religion, such as the Abbey service that some of us attended, did not work for the group. On the night that we went, it lacked connection points to grassroots Scottish culture. Singing songs like “What a friend we have in Jesus” didn’t work for those who were not at that particular place on their journeys.

“For me the time on Iona was a spiritual experience, but not in the church service. It was about going out seeing Iona, the stones, the art, getting to know people.”

We therefore had much discussion about where spirituality today sits with religion. These discussions might apply to some aspects of Quakerism as much to the Iona Community. They also made us aware of our own shortcomings at times in GalGael.

“We came into the House of God, and so need to be humble. Who the hell are we? Do we think we could do it better?”

Part of the tension was between old forms or religious expression, and today’s needs.

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“We’re often muddling up religion and spirituality. For me it was a spiritual experience because we were in a beautiful place and we were together. The feeling of togetherness meant we didn’t feel alone, though there was enough space so that we could be alone, and people were able to tap into tough stuff when they wanted to.”

Considerable depth, and hope, came out of such discussions.

“Pain is the touchstone of spirituality. That’s what speaks to me. In the darkest spaces of my life I know there’s somebody with me. I never went looking for that in Iona, but on Iona you could feel the life you were created for. I felt alive, looking at the stars, you could touch them. That’s in a nutshell, spirituality. If you don’t go within, you go without.”

Iona Abbey was rebuilt in the 1930s partly by unemployed craftsmen going from Govan. Our people were deeply aware of this history, therefore:

“GalGael has planted a seed on Iona – a bud. Govan’s connections with Iona goes back, and GalGael made that connection.”

These are just a few of many comments collected, and we are very grateful to the trustees of the John Wigham (Enjoyment) Fund for helping to make it possible, as well as to a special collection from Glasgow Area Meeting, to which a separate short report will be made.

The trip cost £2,000, and support was also provided by the Govan & Linthouse Parish Church, United Congregational Church in Seattle, a house concert put on by Brian McGlynn, and individual donations. If money comes to us again, we would love to repeat the experience next year.

Researching Sanitation in Northern Greek Refugee Camps <9> Abby Boulton, Edinburgh, September 2016

Diavata refugee camp is about half an hour by taxi from the centre of Thessaloniki in Northern Greece. It was set up in February 2016 by the Greek authorities, the UNHCR and other refugee support agencies, to accommodate Syrian, Afghani and Iraqi refugees fleeing from conflicts in their home countries. Many of these refugees had previously been at the Idomeni camp on the Macedonian border, which became notorious for damp, muddy and unsanitary conditions.

I visited Diavata in July this year to assist a friend who was researching sanitation in this camp and others in the area as part of his Master's dissertation on Water and Waste Management at WEDC in Loughborough. He was researching whether two systems of waterless toilet technology currently in use at music festivals in the UK could feasibly be adapted for use in refugee camps and other emergency situations. To do this, he had established links with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) who manage the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities in the camp. The IRC were very supportive of the project, and the people we met from the organisation during our time there were admirable for their hard work, dedication and sense of humanity in challenging conditions.

During the five days when I was in Northern Greece (a flying visit due to work constraints), we visited two refugee camps in the Thessaloniki area: Diavata and Alexandria. The camps are open and the inhabitants are free to come and go, though most have few resources or inclination to spend much time outside the camp. They are provided with shelter by the UNHCR, in the form of tents or modules, and are given basic meals. As well as shelter and food, adequate sanitation is a priority for many.

At the time we were there, most of the toilets were 'Portaloos' of a style similar to those used at many UK festivals. These were cleaned by hose at least twice daily and emptied by tanker. However with 30+ degree heat and being used by hundreds of people every day, these toilets can quickly become unsanitary, with a risk of the spread of diseases such as diarrhoea and dysentery. This style of pedestal toilet is also not so suitable for those used to squat toilets, and are difficult for children to use.

Another style of toilet had recently been introduced into Diavata camp at the time we were there. It was a squat style toilet in cubicles in a portacabin, and was plumbed into the mains. This meant that people were more comfortable

<10> using these toilets, and they were easier to keep clean.

The research that we were doing involved speaking to camp residents and finding out whether they were satisfied with the current toilet facilities, and whether and how these could be improved. It was necessary to determine specific details about the reasons behind people's comments, in order to better inform any possible improvements or developments. Details included the inclusion of handwashing facilities; the method of anal cleansing; the prevalence of open defecation; the provision of disposal of women's sanitary products; the use of the toilets by children; and the perception of safety when using the toilets.

Due to the sensitive nature of the research, we were careful to clarify with people the reasons for the questioning, and what we would hope could be improved as a result. I was involved in gathering data from women, through speaking to individuals and conducting a focus group in the women's safe space run by the IRC.

It was interesting to be in the camps to do the research, and to gain more of an understanding into how they are being organised and what the conditions are like. Generally, we found them to be positive, and that the refugees staying there were hopeful as well as displaying an extraordinary patience. The work being done by various global aid agencies is remarkable in its efficiency and vision, and provides not just the necessities, but educational and personal development opportunities for all. There were many children, and it was heartening to see the care and attention that adults and the staff from the agencies showed to them.

However, we only had a brief glimpse into two of the camps; it was suggested that other camps had experienced more difficulties in terms of unrest and tensions, and it is of course difficult to gain an accurate picture in such a short time. The work being done by the NGOs, other agencies and volunteers including many from the local Greek communities, is truly inspiring, essential and compassionate and there is much hard work being done in order to improve lives and opportunities for the refugees. It is of course hard to know what will happen next, and those in the camps face another winter and an uncertain future. Meanwhile, it seems likely that the camps we visited will continue to operate, and continue to provide shelter and security as long as is necessary.

To support the work of the IRC, please visit www.rescue.org.

Copies of 'Sanitation Technology Transfer', the MSc dissertation by Thomas McManmon can be made available.

"Poacher's Pilgrimage - an Island Journey", by Alastair McIntosh**(2016: Birlinn, Edinburgh, ISBN 978 178027 361 7)****Sheila Peacock, August 2016**

For me, a poacher is someone who unscrupulously kills rare and beautiful animals to sell their body parts to rich, misguided people for dubious cures. I'm sour on pilgrimage, too, after reading of the processing factory for the Hajj. But - must not judge a book by its title, and Alastair probably means the Robin Hood, rob-the-rich-landowner-to-feed-the-landless-peasant type of poacher. Also I reviewed his 2013 book, "Island Spirituality", for this magazine so I know it's more likely he's thinking about historical and mythical pilgrimages. So here goes..

Well, the title came to him while he was queueing in a Glasgow shop to have a bespoke map printed for his 12-day journey in the Outer Hebrides in May 2009, on foot from Rodal at the southern tip of Harris northward to the Butt of Lewis. His Scottish father moved Alastair, aged four, from Doncaster to Lewis when he became the local GP, and he was brought up there until leaving to study geology at Aberdeen University. His career since then can be pieced together incompletely from the book, and has somehow got him to his present position of Quaker pacifist committed to lecturing to senior military personnel on the philosophy and psychology of non-violent alternatives to war.

My impression of the book is that there are four books mixed together, and that the reader has to be sufficiently interested in all of them not to find the jumping between them frustrating. They are: 1. A simple travelogue of his journey, the sights seen, places camped, people met, weather; 2. The religious history of Harris and Lewis; 3. His history in and thoughts on peace and environmental activism, particularly his encounters with military personnel and their views on war; 4. His own philosophical and theological musings, barely closely enough linked to personal development to be called "spiritual autobiography".

As an enjoyer of travelogues and history I found the diversions from those to the other two subjects made me impatient. His description of the wild landscape is well framed in metaphor and geology, and includes exhaustive derivations of Gaelic place names, but there is not enough of it to use as a guide book (be warned). He walked over the mountainous part of Harris, <12> wilderness camping for five nights, meeting a mink trapper and some deer, and getting cold and wet (he seems to have escaped the midges by making his journey in a cool May). Back in the more populous parts of Lewis he visited

<12> friends and walked on roads, and had a couple of nights in B&B although his final night was in his tent. He visited a succession of ancient religious sites, many sacred to saint Bridgit, finding them in disrepair caused by neglect, pilfering and wilful damage as religious traditions were supplanted over time. Most distressing was the covering or, in one case, deliberate poisoning, of holy wells, some of which are said to have healing powers. He dug out one overgrown well near Rodel, with the encouragement of local people.

Some of the landmarks on his route featured in his past, in particular Roineabhal, the mountain in south Harris that he helped save from becoming a superquarry by importing Canadian chief Stone Eagle to testify, and the moors of north Lewis where he found his green beliefs split over the siting of a massive wind farm. He did indeed try to poach salmon from the Grimersta river, justifying it on grounds that everyone had done it when he was a child with even the clergy suggesting that it was not a sin. He was unsuccessful, fortunately since he clearly disapproves of the present-day "industrial-scale" poaching on that river. Later he got two small fish out of another river and felt both guilty and upset in the stomach.

The religious-history aspect is not given the thorough treatment that it got in "Island Spirituality", although he elaborates on a conclusion of that book, that the harsh "us-and-them" theology of Calvinistic predestination was a factor in some notorious historical oppressions, including Nazism. In a footnote he draws attention to similarity between Calvinism and Wahhabism, the interpretation of Islam by Saudi Arabian rulers. He also discusses the personal suffering in childhood of people who subsequently become oppressors, including his own ancestor, theologian Thomas Boston of Duns, who saw his father suffer in the 17th Century Civil war and Restoration and went on to write harshly of the fate of the damned (in English but popular in Gaelic translation). Boston did, though, write of God's presence in nature, which appeals to the close- to-nature life of Hebridean islanders.

I found particularly fascinating Alastair's accounts of meeting senior military people on training courses that he addressed on nonviolence. These men challenged him with heart-rending stories of Taliban ruthlessness towards even their loved ones, and he challenged them to encounter their feelings about killing people. There are a few passages of this nature that are not for the squeamish, including his description of an exhibition of cluster bombs. A separate book might be welcomed by those uninterested in the travelogue, giving him an opportunity to make a coherent narrative of these encounters with an account of the material of his lectures. It would be useful for peacemakers, for example at the Quaker United Nations Offices.

He is a well-read theologian, so his spiritual autobiography is a scholarly one, including an exposition on the evolution of views on the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. This has gone from appeasing the Devil (first millennium), to appeasing God (second millennium), and now the third millennium awaits its distinctive interpretation. Alastair suggests that the modern significance of the crucifixion is "the supreme transformative symbol of nonviolence". I am sure he has written a whole book on this, even if it has yet to be printed. He also reflects on the theology of the "just war", including the chapter-and-verse Bible references encoded into the serial numbers of gun sights made by one U.S. arms company owned by an overt Christian. During his walk, after self-searching, he observes the Sabbath and goes to the Free Church service near Callanish, and hears an inspiring sermon despite his discomfort with that church's theology. His musing during a lie-in before this covers his encounter with a general who was sceptical of the Iraq War, into which he had to direct his troops. Alastair suggested that this general had committed a war crime, but clearly sympathised with the man's agony on receiving orders from the democratically elected Prime Minister whose theology had led him to embrace the war with evangelistic fervour.

The book makes frequent references to J. M. ("Peter Pan") Barrie's neglected play "Mary Rose", in the context of the Hebridean belief in fairies. The play, written shortly after the First World War, uses the abduction of a woman by fairies and her husband's war experience as a takeoff point for moral insight into war, and uncannily predicts the Second World War. He does summarise it, but I think I would have appreciated his references to it more if I had been familiar with it at the outset.

The book is not without humour. His bespoke map, inkjet printed, gets wet and the colours run (there is a photo of it in the colour plates in the centre of the book, as well as one of the dug-out well). On finding a "quaking" bog in the Harris wilderness he recounts that the lush green patch in such a bog might be where a sheep was swallowed and its decaying body has fertilised the soil, tempting other sheep to the same fate. He visits the Gents at the Callanish circle visitor centre after his five nights tramping across Harris and is so taken by his wild appearance that he takes a "selfie" to prove it. He passes a golf course and indulges in the currently popular pastime of cocking a snook

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at Donald Trump (whose presbyterian theology he describes in a footnote). He describes his childhood finding of a piece of pitchblende (uranium ore) on the directions of a geology student who visited his school physics lab to borrow the Geiger counter (er - if there are uranium lodes on the path of groundwater to those "healing" holy wells, maybe it is not such a bad thing that they have been covered up...). Hefashioned a lead box for this radioactive rock, melting the lead in his mother's saucepan, and kept it until his student days when he had to choose between it and his girlfriend.

I must gently take him to task for writing that natural strontium is radioactive (this arises in the fairy reference in the etymology of the name "Strontian", the type locality in Argyll of the mineral containing strontium). Naturally occurring strontium is not radioactive: the beta-emitting strontium-90 is among the more deadly artificial isotopes produced by nuclear fission, because it substitutes for its elemental close relative calcium in your bones.

There is, from beginning to end, a lot of interesting material in this book. He admits that it was difficult to write, and mostly came to him in the seven years between his walk and its publication. Whether it will get a loyal following I do not know (although I found copies for sale in a souvenir shop in Benbecula last week). There is rather a small intersection of the four sets of readers whose different interests are served by the four books within. On the other hand, if it entices readers who are naturally interested in one, two or three of the four books to read all four-in-one, they will learn and he will have achieved its end. See what you think, and stick with it for the radiation from the metaphorical pitchblende, the randomly thrown off particles of knowledge that hit centres in the mind.

Meeting for Sufferings at Friends House 1st October 2016**Jane Pearn**

Often at Meeting for Sufferings, we agree to pass minutes we receive to the relevant staff at Friends House, without much discussion. But with General Meeting's minute of concern about the proposed use of Libor fines via the Ministry of Defence to fund cadet forces in Scottish state schools, we did spend a little time teasing out the three strands of the concern. Firstly, the increasing promotion of a 'military ethos' in schools generally, and increased public 'celebrations' of the military. This is a widely held concern across our yearly meeting. Secondly the way in which this funding has been allocated, which bypasses Holyrood and does not allow the peace movement in Scotland to make the case for an equivalent amount to be spent on peace education. Thirdly, the issue about accountability – that money derived from fines for wrongdoing by banks has been allocated to projects and departments such as the MoD without any scrutiny by the Westminster parliament. This is a slightly separate issue, and if it is of concern to us, we should be equally exercised if the UK government had allocated it all to peace education without asking parliament! Over lunch, I made a useful connection with a member of the Quaker Values in Education group, who was interested to hear more about our work in this area.

There were several items of the agenda that were of particular interest to me. Paul Parker (Recording Clerk) and Deborah Rowlands (Yearly Meeting Clerk) gave an infectiously enthusiastic account of their recent trip to two Yearly Meetings in the USA – Baltimore and Philadelphia. The meetings have many similar challenges to ours, and are using imaginatively different ways to meet them. For example, rather than being tied to central standing committees, 'sprints' and 'collaboratives' encourage Friends with a common concern across the YM to work together on projects and time-limited tasks. Paul and Deborah told us that they felt like 'living minutes' sent from Meeting for Sufferings, and as well as learning from American Friends were able to share some examples of where they felt we do things well.

We met the four new 'Vibrancy workers' and their coordinator, Rachel Matthews: this is a pilot project to support Friends in their meetings in whatever ways they need. It was emphasised that it wasn't about meetings becoming busier – 'depth and richness are important' and 'not all meetings can do everything.' Their aims are to respond to requests for information; to help meetings explore options when they have a new set of circumstances or a decision to make; to connect meetings with each other and with Friends

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House; and to promote two way communication so that gifts and skills recognised locally are brought to the attention of Friends House and Woodbrooke. At present the project covers part of Wales, and three regions of England. If it is successful it is hoped to roll out the project across the yearly meeting.

We heard the QPSW CC [Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee] annual report, presented by its clerk, Charlotte Seymour-Smith. As a member of one of its subcommittees (Peace Education, Campaigning and Networking – known as PECaN) I am very aware of the huge amount of work done on our behalf, and alongside us. QPSW emphasise that they see their work as done in partnership with Friends in their local meetings. If your meeting has a QPSW correspondent, I encourage you to talk to them to find out more.

We considered our role in discerning priorities for the centrally managed work, and concluded that our important role in testing and discernment needs to be balanced by trust in staff and trustees to manage the detail.



GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND,

Aberdeen, 10.9.2016

Robin Davis, Dunblane Meeting

How can we harness the power of the group? Scottish Friends, meeting in Aberdeen, heard a provocative address from Glasgow Friend Michael Hutchinson challenging us to help renew once again our Religious Society. Do Friends truly understand and engage with the discipline of listening and discerning? How many members have truly experienced a gathered Meeting for Worship? Do our structures serve us, reflect the people we are, and the community we wish to be? Michael reflected on Margaret Fell's declaration, quoted in Quaker Faith and Practice 19.46, that "we are a people that follow after those things that make for peace, love and unity". We as a community actively journey together, and our testimony derives from what we discern as we worship. He urged us to be transformed - realise our potential as a community, recognise ourselves as acting under divine guidance. and be a renewed Yearly Meeting.

One Friend had experienced that sense of a renewal in a recent Area Meeting. Others spoke of the way we need each other, and of the bedrock that is the Local Meeting.

We considered the results of a questionnaire on the best way forward for the General Meeting (GM). Many Friends find themselves unable to attend weekend meetings for reasons of family commitments and the time involved. Geography and scattered membership means that for some attending Area or General Meeting can involve the best part of three days. The demands of other Quaker service were also a factor. We agreed to maintain the present pattern of meetings while encouraging our central committee to arrange sessions with connected themes and to allow more time for deep worship when we meet together. We were reminded of our role as acting on behalf the Yearly Meeting in relation to Action for Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS) and to the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government.

Our agenda included a full report from our Parliamentary Liaison Function Group (PLFG). We learnt that our Parliamentary Engagement Officer was about to introduce to the Holyrood's Petitions Committee the recent campaign, led by Friends and Forces Watch, on the involvement of the military in Scottish schools. Friends have also organised a seminar on economic justice, sustainability and peace to take place as part of the Edinburgh Independent and Radical Book Fair to be held in Edinburgh on October 29th. White poppies will once again be sent to Members of the Scottish Parliament, and the PLFG will be represented at the SNP party 21 21 conference in October. We regularly meet the First Minister along with representatives of other churches. We heard of a helpful Enquirers' Weekend, we welcomed changes to the governance of The Retreat in York to which GM used to appoint a representative (there will be an annual forum we can attend instead) and gathered that ACTS are planning to hold a conference on the role of the churches in addressing social issues arising from the EU referendum result. And many key posts have been filled through the efforts of the Nominations team! GM is very much alive.

We enjoyed each other's company. Lots and lots of friendly conversation took place.

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**RESIDENTIAL General Meeting for Scotland
Station Hotel, Perth 12-13 November
(Sunday morning in The Subud Center, 7 St Leonard's Bank, PH2 8EB)**

Dear Friends and Attenders throughout Scotland,

We decided at our last General Meeting that in future our main session or speaker would be on the Saturday morning with shorter items taken in the afternoon. As usual, the session starts at 11 am with tea/coffee available from 10.30 am.

Having considered some of the practical issues about the holding of General Meeting at our last meeting, we will devote the morning session on Saturday 12th to a spiritual learning exercise where we will seek to develop our community and give direction for General Meeting and its place in Scottish Quaker life. We are keen to hear from all Friends about their vision and hopes for GM for the next years.

The afternoon session will start with feedback from the morning exercise then continue into GM business including a report of the recent Enquirers' Weekend, an update on the concern we forwarded to Meeting for Sufferings on militarisation in schools, a report from our representative on ACTS and consideration of a minute from West Scotland AM regarding the *Children Are Unbeatable* campaign.

On Sunday morning the Subud Centre will be open in good time for Friends to assemble for 9-30. Our Parliamentary Engagement Officer, Mairi Campbell-Jack will give an account of her work this year, and answer questions. We have to take a decision jointly with BYM in the next few months about the future of this work. We will then move into worship with Perth Friends, who will be arriving around 10-45 for Meeting at 11-00.

This will be our last two-day residential General Meeting and we hope that as many Friends as possible will come, both to the meeting and to the evening buffet meal arranged in the nearby Subud Center. This is a chance to socialise which Friends have said they value. The Sunday morning session is an important one and we hope this will also be well attended.

Martin Burnell, Clerk

Meals and accommodation

**Please return the booking form overleaf no
later than Friday 28th October**

But even if you don't want them it would be nice to tell us informally
whether you are coming!

BOOKING FORM : Residential General Meeting 12th/13th November 2016

Name(s)

Meals

Soup, bread and cheese will be available at lunchtime on Sat/Sun

Do you intend to stay for the evening meal on Saturday? YES/NO

Do you have any special dietary requirements?

Do you require a packed lunch on Sunday? YES/NO

Accommodation

Accommodation with Friends - please tick what applies:

I/we would like overnight accommodation for

Friday [.....] Saturday [.....]

I/we have own transport and are willing to stay with a Friend

outside Perth [.....]

I/we am happy to share a bedroom [.....]

(if answering as "I" and you wish to suggest with whom, please do so

.....)

I do NOT wish to share a bedroom [.....]

Please indicate any particular requirements you may have:

e.g. no stairs.....

Or Child care

You may provide this information by phone to Adwoa Bittle - 01738 583108

or email adwoabittle@hotmail.co.uk

Or return this form by post to:

Adwoa Bittle, 4 Burnside Park, Pitcairngreen, PERTH. PH1 3BF

The Station Hotel is directly across from the main exit of Perth railway station and 150 yards from the St. Leonard's bus station. There is free parking in the hotel car park (**behind** the hotel - buzz at the back door and give your name to reception). There are six parking places at the Subud Centre.