

# SESAME

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7VT Windows/ Health Care Pakistan/ Salt and Light/ Health and Safety/ QPSW/ Sufferings/ Ben Pink Dandelion Review/ QLRC / AM Minutes



Willistown Meeting House (1799), Chester County, Pennsylvania

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## SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

**Saturday 30 June 2012 at 2 p.m., Polmont**

Our next Meeting will be at 2 p.m. on Saturday 30 June 2012 at Greenpark Community, Greenpark Drive, Polmont. The Centre is not far from the railway station, and a 2-3 minute walk from the nearest bus stop. Parking there is almost always available.

The room being used is fully accessible and has an induction loop. There are accessible toilets. We aim to finish by 5 p.m. and, as always, all Friends and attenders are very welcome.

As well as regular agenda items we will hear of the work of the John Wigham Trust, and hope also to hear further of the Area Meeting's income and expenditure, to have a report of General Meeting on 9 June, and to look forward to General Meeting in Nairn on 8 September; also to hear of Friends' experiences of Britain Yearly Meeting.

Kate Arnot Clerk

South East Scotland Area Meeting

## HOW TO GET THERE

From Polmont Station: Go up to the main road and turn left downhill; continue until you meet another main road (about a 10 minute walk). This junction, is almost, but not quite, a cross-roads. Cross the road on a slight diagonal, and continue downhill. Take the first left and you will see Greenpark Community Centre on your right.

By bus: Alight Polmont Cross. Cross the road, go a few yards right towards the mini roundabout and take the first left. On your right you will see Greenpark Community Centre.

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## 7 Victoria Terrace Windows to the World Appeal

We would like to inform you about the work of the 7 Victoria Terrace Windows to the World Appeal. We are small, time-limited group appointed by Area Meeting, tasked with raising funds to replace the failing windows in our main Meeting Room and Hall at 7 Victoria Terrace, the home of Edinburgh Central meeting.

Recently a number of improvements have been made to the building, to ensure it is as safe and accessible as possible, and to meet current standards for WCs, food preparation areas, and so on. The cost of these repairs and minor alterations is being met from existing funds; the exceptional cost of replacing the windows should, it was decided, be the subject of a separate appeal. Since the existing windows are not original there is no damage to the historic fabric. The new ones will be specified as being of a design to complement their setting and of sustainable materials. They will also enhance heat conservation and contribute to a reduced carbon footprint for the building because of their better insulation properties. The cost of the work is estimated at £108,000

We decided upon the title *Windows to the World* for our appeal because of the very special views from the Meeting Room, over the fantastic Edinburgh Old Town roofscape, to distant hills beyond. We feel very lucky to have such a beautiful space, and want to ensure that future generations can enjoy it as we do now. This means making sure that everything is in good repair, especially our windows to the world.

The appeal group has been applying to various Quaker and other grant-making trusts, as well as to the statutory body Historic Scotland. In addition, we have drafted and commissioned a design for an appeal leaflet, which will go out with The Friend on 6 July, and to all UK meetings in September. The appeal has also been adopted as one of the beneficiaries of fund-raising during the Edinburgh Festival, when the building hosts even more visitors than usual, as a performance venue and tea room.

Most of the grant applications we have made are pending but we have received £2000 in awards at the time of writing. We have also

received £20,200 in earmarked donations from individual Friends, so we are a fifth of the way there! Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far.

We invite all local meetings in South East Scotland to join our fund-raising efforts. While it is our Meeting House, we do feel that its use during the Festival, as by many clubs, societies and other organisations, from the capital and beyond throughout the year, makes it a very public face of Quakers. We would love your help to be responsible guardians of our lovely Category B listed building. Perhaps you or your meeting could organise a cake sale, a bring-and-buy sale, a ceilidh, a sponsored walk, or a bring-and-share lunch after meeting, and ask for donations. You will know what skills and creativity you hold within your meeting that could be harnessed into a community event. All fund-raising efforts, small or large, will go towards reaching our target.

Individual donations to the appeal are welcome by cheque or BACS. Please make cheques payable to *South East Scotland Area Meeting* and send to: **Caroline Evens, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh, EH1 2JL.**

BACS payments can be made to the following account:

*Name of Account Holder:* South East Scotland Area Meeting

*Name of Bank:* Triodos

*Sort Code:* 16 58 10

*Account Number:* 00652501

*Reference:* Windows to the World Appeal

(If sending donations by BACS, please drop us an email at [sesam.appeal@gmail.com](mailto:sesam.appeal@gmail.com) so we can thank you, and keep track. )

Please include a statement if you are a UK taxpayer, to enable us to reclaim Gift Aid on your donation. To qualify for Gift Aid, you must pay an amount of UK Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the relevant tax year.

Thank you in anticipation of your support. We will keep you updated on our progress later in the year.

**Susie Harding**  
Convener of the 7VT Windows Group

## News from Pakistan

*Over many years, Madeline Patterson has supported the Frontier Primary Health Care (FPHC) project in Mardan, Pakistan. She recently received an email from Dr Emel Khan with news of its progress, part of which we reprint here (Eds.).*

...

Here in FPHC things are fine. Activities in Afghan refugee camps are continuing as before. The only change is that as per policy of UNHCR and [the] Government of Pakistan, the burden of Afghan refugees will be transferred to those local health facilities which are accessible for camp refugees. The idea is that where a local health facility is accessible for camp refugees, that particular health facility will be strengthened and the facility in that camp will be closed down. However, where a local health facility is not accessible for camp refugees, the health facility in that refugee camp will be strengthened. WHO is taking the role of strengthening health facilities and in this context they have started training of FPHC's staff members on different health topics.

FPHC is continuing emergency health and nutrition activities in tribal area despite security problems. UNICEF and World Food Programme are providing support for these activities.

The EmOC centre in Ismaila near Baghicha camp is moving fast towards financial sustainability. However, still we have to make efforts for its 100% sustainability. However, the school in Wardaga area and Ahmad Shah Abdali Hospital in Mardan city are 100% sustainable.

*Friends interested in learning more or in contributing to support the work of FPHC should contact Madeline via Edinburgh Central Meeting. An application supported by Area Meeting for QPSW funding of FPHC was unsuccessful.*

## Being Salt and Light at the Sixth World Conference of Friends

From 17–25 April 2012, almost a thousand Quakers from all over the world came together at Kabarak University near Nakuru in Kenya. This was the Sixth World Conference of Friends, a once-in-a-generation event with the theme of 'Being salt and light in a broken world'. You can read more material from the conference at [www.saltandlight2012.org](http://www.saltandlight2012.org).

Along with Jasmine Perinpanayagam, Alastair Reid and Sonia Vandembark, I was there. So what did I experience? What made it special for me? Although this wasn't my first international Quaker conference, nor my first Quaker event in Kenya, I found the Sixth World Conference special and profound: I believe it will have a lasting effect on my spiritual life.

### POWERFUL MESSAGES

We began each day with worship on the theme. Much of this was 'programmed', in that it was prepared in advance. I was really grateful for the care and faithful work which speakers had given to their message: almost all of the seven or eight speakers gave me food for thought.

A few points really stood out for me. First, many speakers reminded us of the need to stay 'salty' – to preserve our God-given flavour even when this might be uncomfortable or challenging. I think this is a special challenge for liberal and unprogrammed Quakers. We are rightly concerned to foster an open atmosphere, so we can include a diverse community. But we should not lose our distinctive flavours as we do this: a bland faith community is of little use.

Noah Baker-Merril shared a powerful message with an existential theme. I was really struck by his retelling of the story of Anne Wilson, an early Friend who challenged young Samuel Bownas:

*...she with a great zeal pointed her finger at me uttering these words with much power, viz: 'A traditional Quaker; thou comest to meeting as thou went from it, and goes from it as thou came to it but art no better for thy coming; what wilt thou do in the end?'*

[Quaker faith & practice, 19.60]

This challenged me. How ready am I to be transformed?

Jocelyn Burnell spoke about community and brokenness. She encouraged us to be honest about pain and difficulty we had experienced in our lives. Jocelyn pointed out that often there is no 'quick fix' for brokenness – sometimes we just have to live with it for a while. She also reminded us that we can be called to ministry, even when we feel 'broken'. And that a community doesn't need to be perfect to be prophetic. I found this very thought-provoking. Often within the Quaker tradition, we can expend a lot of energy 'putting our house in order'. Perhaps feeling that we need a little more time to perfect ourselves before we are ready to go out and answer God's call. And yet it is clear that we can minister and be faithful to God's call just as we are. Indeed, ministry from a 'broken' (or imperfect) place can be more authentic, more real, than supposedly 'perfect' ministry.

### **TRANSFORMING EACH OTHER**

But the conference wasn't just about wise words spoken in a plenary session. We also spent time in small home groups. This was where I felt we put some of the wise words into practice. We were very honest with one another, sharing deeply from our spiritual experience. We didn't hold back out of fear of causing offence, but we were respectful and listened carefully. I was really struck by this powerful mix of honesty and openness. It felt like God was using us to teach one another. I was also impressed at how gathered our times of worship felt. Often at conferences where diverse forms of Quaker worship are practised, we can get 'trapped in the form'. By this I mean that we are so struck by the novelty or unfami-

liarity of a different form of worship, that we find it hard to experience God through it. At Kabarak, I could see Friends experiencing God through many different practices.

Another time where I felt God was using us to teach each other was during a series of Young Friends meetings. We were asked if we would like to share a message with the main conference. So we spent a session in open worship, with people sharing as the spirit led from the body of the meeting. Two Friends were clerking, trying to come up with something which faithfully conveyed our experience to the wider conference. It became clear that we didn't want to settle for a bland 'minute of record'. So we tried for something more like an epistle, something which shared the content of our experience.

Sadly, though we got close, we did not find unity on a shared message to the wider conference, even though we met for a second late-night session. Perhaps we tried to do too much in too little time? There certainly wasn't a specific 'issue' that blocked us from agreement. But when we realised we were not going to find unity in a shared message, that felt painful. We felt as if we had failed somehow. But after some prayer and reflection, some of us came to realise that our time together had not been fruitless. We might not have agreed a formal message, but God had used us to teach one another. Out of a place of worship, we had written an epistle on our hearts.

There were many other powerful experiences at Kabarak. Just living in such a large, cross-cultural community for over a week was transformative in itself. I felt blessed to see old friends again (especially my roommate Ben, whom I hadn't seen since 2005), and to meet many new friends for the first time.

Overall, I think some of the key messages from the Sixth World Conference were:

- An emphasis on listening to God
- Being ready to be transformed
- Being ready to speak to one another's condition
- Also, being honest about where Quakers worldwide are at: we have some divisions, some brokenness
- Accepting such brokenness as a gift and not an obstacle.

**John Fitzgerald**

***De Profundis Clamavi: why we need Health and Safety***

Sometimes it is helpful to reflect on what we take for granted in our busy daily lives, and in particular what we rely on to stay safe and, we hope, healthy. We tend to entrust these fundamental services and responsibilities to those in government and public service professionals. The provision of our water supply is a classic example. I remember cycling with my father a couple of years ago along the series of inter-connected reservoirs that supply Edinburgh and being most impressed. The *hard* task of society is ensuring that satisfactory maintenance continues to afford one and all with tap water that is safe to drink.

It was suggested I should write something on the role of Health and Safety and, bear with me, I propose to link it to issues surrounding the sinking of the *Titanic*, given that we are in the centenary year of its fate. The true worth of health and safety really does come to the fore when looking at the bigger picture and to events that affect the national conscience.

Health and Safety in this country is governed by a tool called the Health and Safety at Work *etc* Act, 1974, which applies in all the legal jurisdictions of the UK. This tool is

put into practice by the Health and Safety Executive whose employees number between three and five thousand, depending on the view and generosity of the government of the day. A large number of these are specialists in their fields: metallurgists, chemists, statisticians, engineers, physicists, and microbiologists to name but a few. There are also generalists. You may appreciate that there is an ongoing battle to keep these individuals from the temptations of commercial practice. Most choose to remain in the public service. Their practice ranges from small building sites to nuclear installations and oil rigs.

It is not my intention here to go into the details of the law. However, I will say that it is there to ensure that, to a large part, there is accountability for, to, and by us as members of society and members of a community who increasingly rely on each other whether we like it or not. The disaster in the Gulf of Mexico is a clear case, and the water shortage in the south of England a less obvious one.

In recent years, 'health and safety' as an issue has been having a hard time. Public perception of its role is often misguided and frequently concentrates on the trivial. As a society one might be forgiven for thinking that we need a disaster to ensure that a healthy and safe practice is either adopted from the beginning or that it is put back on track.

Risk is something we must all live and work with, and it is managing risk that is the key. Think of crossing the road. It always bemuses me is that we let heavy metal vehicles move in opposite directions on the same road, where there may or may not be the protection for us provided by a painted broken white line. The key to all of this is in man-

aging the risk with a system that is ongoing, a living instrument, if you like, to cope with new developments.

The law is our tool to do this and we rely on our leaders – politicians – to ensure it is done largely proactively. They put into practice what they think the people want, which is obviously much easier after an event than before it, when resources are much easier to find. Our current law provides accountability in a criminal court, and so it is often a decision for a jury (thus regular people like you and me) to decide on its outcome. The role of the specialist in health and safety is to explain to us the often complex details involved in a way that we can all understand.

Let me now move to the issue around the sinking of the *Titanic* – and by the way, no one ever said before the event that it was “unsinkable”. The simple facts were that the *Titanic* set out on its maiden voyage to New York from Southampton on 10 April 1912 with 2,208 passengers and crew. With about 1,000 miles to go at 11:45pm on 14 April it hit an iceberg some 200 feet high from the waterline, and sank some two and a half hours later. Even by today’s standards the *Titanic* was a massive ship, with the boat deck about 100 feet above water level. It had 29 enormous boilers and 159 furnaces.

No one had anticipated ice so far south in the Atlantic. The consequence was that 815 passengers and 688 of the crew were drowned, and 705 were rescued by the *Carpathia*. This many died despite the fact that the sea was so calm it was likened to glass. It was possible to launch lifeboats from both side of the ship and these were able to pull away without being smashed against the sides of the ship, as is possible in rough seas.

The provision of lifeboats was woefully inadequate. There were 16, when the number should have been nearer three times as many. Accommodation was not an issue: there were nearly two *miles* of deck space available. New winches or davits had been fitted, specially designed to deal with up to three lifeboats each. The irony was that not all the 16 boats were full when rescued. Those in charge had been told to pull a good distance away so as to ensure they would not be sucked under when the great ship sank. People in the water had no chance and died quickly (it is hoped) owing to the low temperature, enhanced by the proximity of the ice fields no doubt.

Most people at the time had not expected anything on this scale to happen. Before the ship left Southampton it had undergone extensive scrutiny and testing. The number of lifeboats complied with the law of the day: an Act from 1894. In the ten years prior to this disaster only 9 passengers were lost on British ships. Wireless communication was possible then, though in its infancy.

It was known even in 1912 that communication through air (wireless telegraphy) was not dependable owing to barometric pressure changes. And then, notwithstanding the strength of a signal if there was, say, fog then rescue could be very difficult. Nowadays we have gps and satellite technology though there are issues even there. Various systems to supplement the provision of lifeboats or as alternatives were around in 1912, such as floating off parts of the ship’s deck by a ratcheting mechanism. There were also systems known at the time for aiding rescues even when there was a fog. It was known, for example, that sound travels at 4,400 feet per second in water. In essence

a bell could be fixed on either side of the ship and the technology was available to 'hear' it up to 30 miles away. The system was used by the coastal service around our shores. An officer of the coastal service had been asked to cut expenses by omitting this submarine signalling apparatus, but replied: "I would rather take out the wireless. That only enables me to tell other people where I am. The submarine signal enables me to find out where I am myself." A familiar theme. No liners at the time had been fitted with this equipment. The cost was £60.

We all have a role to play in our community. Some have specialised functions to perform as a consequence of disasters such as the sinking of the *Titanic*. We rely on them to get to the bottom of the matter after an event but also in their proactive work to ensure an event may never happen. We all must support this proactive work.

If the Health and Safety Executive had existed in 1912, the *Titanic* would have carried the submarine signal apparatus and it is possible that more passengers would have been saved and the ship completed its voyage.

The submarine signal apparatus was manufactured in the US. They had a motto adopted – "De Profundis Clamavi" and to translate, "Out of the deep have I called unto thee". A prophetic motto perhaps for all those who die having entrusted the safety and health of their lives to others.

### **Ben Davies**

(Ben Davies is a member of South East Scotland Area Meeting, listed under Central Edinburgh Local Meeting. He works as a Senior Teaching Fellow and Solicitor at the University of Warwick where among other things he leads courses on Regulatory and Health & Safety issues.)

### **Quaker Life Representative Council residential conference at Woodbrooke Study Centre 13 -15th April**

The weekend was a very pleasant, rewarding and fulfilling experience. Woodbrooke has a bright, inviting atmosphere with an aspect overlooking informal gardens with its nature trail, duck pond, walled garden, labyrinth, many mature trees and plenty of surprises. I had a warm welcome on arrival on Friday afternoon and in particular, patient instruction from Anne, a volunteer, in the use of the card key to let me into my room which didn't work for me when I first tried it. There was a guided tour of the House for those who wished to join. The original house was built by Josiah Mason in 1830 and in 1903 it was given to a Friends' Trust by subsequent owners, George and Elizabeth Cadbury for use as a Quaker Residential College. It has undergone many additions and changes over the years and, facing out towards the garden, there is a new modernist extension being built to enhance the study facilities and provide an informal space for visiting residents to mingle and become acquainted. I should add that there is an unfulfilled £50,000 appeal for funds to complete the project which was flagged up by Sandra Berry, the Woodbrooke Director, in her welcome address.

A total of 80 Area Meeting reps attended the conference and there were about 15 staff and volunteers to steer us through the weekend. Quaker Life is a central committee with Richard Summers as its general secretary and is primarily responsible for the nurture of the spiritual life of meetings, members, attenders and visitors and to assist the work of elders. Each Area Meeting appoints representatives or deputies, who form the Quaker Life Representative Council, to attend these residential weekends twice a year and report back their experiences to their Meetings. This was the first time I have represented you and also my first visit to Woodbrooke. So, it was a double first for me.

On Friday evening after a 6pm supper, we were welcomed by Terry Wood, QLRC clerk and Margaret Baker, deputy clerk sitting in for Jasmine Perinpanyagam who, as Terry said with a twinkle in his eye, is in Kenya. Meg Hill, clerk of QL Central Committee and Richard Summers, general secretary, spoke of new resources and pamphlets and a new book *The God Who Just Is*. Before the epilogue, we moved into groups of about 20 to share with each other what is happening in our respective Meetings. I have to admit I went unprepared for this, thinking we were to attend workshops only. But, as others were speaking, I jotted down a few ideas that came to mind and decided to outline Central Edinburgh LM's tussle to find the best arrangement for children to join adult Meetings for Worship. A lengthy discussion ensued, taking up more time than any other topic, but although a burning issue for several meetings, none would seem to have adopted the arrangement Edinburgh Central practices. Over lunch the following day, a Friend described an interesting departure from the usual business meeting practice which, I later learned, is practised occasionally by Central Sheffield Local Meeting where a Meeting for Worship lasting half an hour immediately precedes their Meeting for Worship for Business. The children hold their business meeting concurrently then present their minute to the adult meeting. Perhaps this is worth looking into for other meetings.

On Saturday after breakfast, (I have to say with no exception, all meals were excellent and the food plentiful), Ginny Wall introduced the conference theme "Deepening the Light of the Spirit" and we were all given a small booklet of the same title. She reminded us that we are all beginners in spiritual awareness, not experts and that without spiritual practice, we experience disappointment. Gerald Hewitson spoke of his spiritual practice in religious discipline. Terry Wood told us of his spiritual journey starting with his upbringing as an only child in an Anglo-Catholic community, abandoning religion for 20 years and then attending West Kent Meeting to become a Quaker.

Before we came to this conference, we were asked to choose three workshops out nine prepared by Quaker Central Committee all of which are described in the aforementioned booklet. This was a difficult task because they all had interesting sounding titles and content. The first I chose was the Spiritual Friendship/Companionship Group led by Gill Pennington because it might confirm and reinforce my contention that friendship forms an intrinsic part of our Society. To convey the gist of what this sets out to do, it is best to read page 34 of the booklet. Gill had provided us with a variety of objects on the table along with pencils, paper crayons etc and after having selected an object we were asked to write a poem or a piece of prose about our responses to the object or draw it or something else which it evoked in our minds and share our thoughts with each other. This was not dissimilar from the art workshops conducted at Central Edinburgh on occasions.

Following lunch and free time, I attended my 2nd workshop, Centring Down Practices which I chose because I thought I may benefit from methods advocated by Frances Henley Lock. The 3 exercises Frances described were using breath, using a single mantra word or using a short mantra phrase with breath. These help mind and body to become still and focused. Again, I shall have to refer you to the booklet to help you to understand the details of the techniques. Some people in the group thought, with practice, they would benefit from what Frances had to say and maybe I would but I would have to think about that.

In the evening after supper Aiden Fallon, who organised the whole event, rallied volunteers from the assembled company to stage an impromptu concert of song, music and monologue displaying an array of talent.

After Sunday morning worship, I attended the final workshop titled "Sound and Light: healing relationships with the world and



others" which was led by Ginny Wall. So often, during silent worship, we experience noises which irritate us or think of people whom we dislike. Attempting to block out these irritations indicates we are living with our judgements of what is good and what is bad. But if we regard all sound as "what is" and put judgements aside we can enjoy sound for what it is. The same can apply to our feelings towards people. Applying this technique helps us to "Hold yourself and others in the Light knowing that all are cherished by God". I gained much from what Ginny had to say.

The weekend ended after lunch and I for one, went away very much enriched.

The booklet "Deepening the Light of the Spirit" has been sent to all Local Meetings and I urge you to read it and perhaps try to practice some of the techniques described.

John Fox

### **QPSW conference 23-25 March 2012**

Why did I want to attend the QPSW conference? *Quaker Faith and Practice* 20.36 sums up the reason: "I wish I might emphasise how a life becomes simplified when dominated by a faithfulness to a few concerns" [Thomas R. Kelly, 1941]. I hoped I might find my "few concerns". I had a general idea of some aspects of Quaker work - it's a very steep learning curve for someone relatively new to Friends to get a clear picture, and I was beginning to demonstrate "headless chicken" signs, pecking away at the surface of a whole range of concerns.

During the weekend, Helen Drewery introduced us to the history and role of QPSW: to put our faith into action and respond to need; to do work rooted in our Testimonies.

Our second main speaker was Susan Seymour, who, in the most unassuming manner, told of a life which responded, and still responds, to what she called "risking to try and create a better world". Her response has ranged from involvement in setting up small businesses in Macedonia during the war in Kosovo, through becoming a trustee of the Joseph Rowntree Trust, campaigning against the arms trade, working with A New Economics Foundation and attending Meetings on the steps of St. Paul's during the "Occupy" movement. She invited us to question the accepted concept of growth and the economic model which takes no account of sustainability and human well-being. All who listened to her were humbled and inspired, and came away, I'm sure, determined to find and exploit what she, using images from the works of Jonathan Dale and Tony Stoller, termed the prophet and the wrestler within us.

We had chosen two workshops to attend, but there were also opportunities to speak to the leaders of all the workshops, since selecting just two was not going to satisfy us!

You may have had the chance to read Lynne's report of the workshops she attended, about the "Turning the Tide" programme in Kenya and the work of the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva. I too found my choices both a source of information and inspiration and an opportunity to reflect and discuss with Friends in the same group.

Suzanne Ismail led the workshop on Economic Growth and Development, with reference to the rise in social in-

stability linked to inequality. She asked us to consider to what extent the policy of economic growth has reduced global poverty, and whether it was an *efficient* tool, when \$166 of economic activity makes the poor a mere \$1 better off. She challenged us to engage in controlling change.

My second workshop was led by one of QPSW's Peace Workers, Andrew Branch. He has a one-year, full-time job, paid for by, and with responsibility to, QPSW. All Peace Workers must have a project which cannot be carried out without them. Andrew's is with the "Freedom From Torture" group in London. He started by telling us in detail of the work of the group, originally part of Amnesty International, dealing with the medical care of victims of torture. The group has doctors, lawyers, therapists and over 100 volunteers. Their work includes medical consultation, forensic documentation, campaigning, and art therapy. He explained the harrowing stages of the journey an asylum-seeker faces once he is in our country, the rehabilitation process, which can take 5 years, and the even more harrowing experience of fast-track deportation if asylum is refused. He invited us, in groups, to think about the concept of "personal peace", the end product of rehabilitation - personal peace as freedom to.....? Then he moved on to describe his own role, which is to design and implement a self-care package for all workers with the group, for whom overwork, ignoring their own health needs, and vicarious traumatisation can lead to burn-out. He outlined some of the workshops he had devised for workers' self-care.

Our mixed base groups met twice, and gave us the time to listen to the thoughts of other Friends, to reflect quietly on

the work being done and to hear what Friends around the country are doing. Because my base-group was led by Katie Frost, we learned more of the source of QPSW finances, and hence of BYM's, and were encouraged to read *Quaker Faith and Practice* on finance.

I came away knowing I would need time to process so much information and to wait quietly to see where the "sense of the possible" brought out by the conference would lead me - and with thoughts to share with my LM, contact details of new Friends, a lengthy reading list - ! - and another quotation from *Quaker Faith and Practice*:

'Politics' cannot be relegated to some outer place, but must be recognised as one side of life, which is as much the concern of religious people and of a religious body as any other part of life. ...

Lucy F. Morland, 1919 [QF&P 23.06]

Thank you to AM for supporting me.

**Jennifer Wilson**

### **Meeting for Sufferings 31 March 2012**

This was a slightly melancholy day for me and all the other members of Sufferings who will not be returning next triennium. In addition, it was the last meeting before the change to a pared-down body. Janet Grimwade will continue to keep us up to date with her reports.

Four requests to Area Meetings and individuals emerged through the day. We need to write to our MPs for the end of indefinite detention of migrants and asylum seekers. We should write to the Foreign Secretary for the UK to oppose any attack on Iran and uphold peaceful means of

resolving conflict. We should support the October 2012 March for Justice in India. Contributions to central work are falling and we should review our giving.

We agreed a Statement on Equality. In our discussion on Advocacy we agreed a change of practice to put our trust in the Recording Clerk and Central Staff to issue statements on our behalf if delay would be unhelpful. In addition, we agreed that greater priority should be given to advocacy with political decision-makers, even if other work has to be curtailed.

In the nomination business, Jasmine Perinpanayagam was appointed to Friends World Committee for Consultation, and Pat Lucas was released from Central Nominations Committee.

Among the minutes from Area Meetings we received the one seeking support for Annie Miller's concern for a social wage. It was sent to Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee for testing and advice.

The Assistant Clerk gave us an account of our delegation's visit to Buckingham Palace to present a loyal address to the Queen. Jasmine was in the party.

**Rachel Frith**

**“This demanding work”**

**Margaret Mortimer’s work as Prison Chaplain**

*At Area Meeting in May, Margaret Mortimer reported on her service as Quaker prison chaplain at Saughton (H.M. Prison Edinburgh). This report is adapted from Minute 8.*

Margaret thanked us for our donation, agreed last time [Minute 14 of 31 March 2012], of £250 – prisoners and staff are grateful. This enabled the Visitor Centre, run by the Salvation Army, to buy toys and a play table and chairs; and to have a small amount of cash - £30 - to cover such small but essential expenses as the cost of phonecalls when a remand prisoner arrives with no money. Destitute prisoners can ask the duty Chaplain for the money to pay for necessities.

**A Quaker prison chaplain**

has four tasks: to visit and minister to those in prison who have registered themselves as Quakers; to assist the work of the prison chaplaincy; to be a Quaker presence in the prison, particularly in relation to staff; and to be a channel between the prison service and the monthly meeting, keeping Friends aware of prison issues. [QF&P 13.47]

Edinburgh Prison is the prison where Margaret fulfills these tasks. She was appointed some 18 months ago and meets with Quakers in prison. In the past, Quaker initiatives have included a Toybox Project in the Visiting Centre inside the prison. Participating in this was good, a moving experience, but it was laid down when a paid worker was appointed by Barnardos. However, the funding for that post ended, so there is currently no provision and it is much missed. South Edinburgh Friends were formerly active, but over the past few years this has not happened for various reasons, which is disappointing.

There is a team from Christian churches and the Chaplain is now very welcoming of our participation. The Chaplaincy Team has been very warm and supportive. The Salvation Army has made considerable financial contributions.

One current issue is training for Margaret in meeting people with complex difficulties. As English prison structures are different from those in Scotland, the QPSW Prison Chaplaincy group has not been very helpful to her. This work may move

to be part of the Quaker Life Network and Margaret is hopeful that this will work better.

The Scottish Criminal Justice Group has Quaker membership and reports have come to General Meeting. Margaret has visited Scott M, a remand prisoner, who had attended a Meeting within South East Scotland AM. He greatly appreciated times of silent worship and Quaker resources. Since his release he has attended meeting for Worship and Margaret is still in touch with him.

Margaret has attended church services in the prison, as being there is important. About 40 take part. She has been invited to attend as often as possible but it is difficult, with Quaker commitments. 120-150 women have been moved to a specially built unit (transferred from Cornton Vale). We may be able to serve, in some form, within this women's unit. This would be a good way forward for us – making teddies, knitting, patchwork *etc.* – but also a being spiritual presence.

Families Outside, at a seminar at the Scottish Parliament, has been addressed by our Friend Oliver Robertson, from QUNO, Geneva. It was a good session at which appreciation was expressed for the work in prison of Quakers.

Margaret hopes for our support and would value an informal support group. Janet Grimwade, Anthony Buxton and Caroline Evens have offered to provide this.

Margaret concluded by quoting John Smith, the late Labour Party leader: "the opportunity to be of service – that is all we ask."

Friends commented

- The Quaker Tapestry has several panels which have aspects of prison life
- It may be possible to run a group for women prisoners to play with their children

- Work in Cornton Vale is being funded by Trusts.

We thanked Margaret for her service.

## BOOK REVIEW

### ***The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction* - Pink Dandelion Oxford University Press, 2008, £6.99**

Books in this series (this is No 177) are "for anyone wanting a stimulating and accessible way in to a new subject" say the publishers; I don't know whether they add quietly to their authors, "especially in the U.S.", though the choice of illustrations suggests they might. After Fox, and "A Quaker Meeting from the 17th Century", we get Herbert Hoover, and Richard M. Nixon in chapter 1 - hardly the first names that spring to mind, given its title, "Who are the Quakers?" - and most of the later pictures, of meeting houses, meetings, and notable individuals, are American, including a rather blurry group photo of the sort once common in *The Friend*, "The congregation of the Friends' Church, Dead Ox Flat, Oregon, 1939" (p. 46), where even those present would be hard put to match names to tiny faces. There is, however, an amusing Punch cartoon I hadn't seen before, of John Bright (p. 97); and a picture of a Manchester soup kitchen, the caption of which helpfully tells us that Lancashire is in England (p. 96).

The text itself, though, is much better. After the overview of Friends in the first, and a brisk trot through "The History of Quakerism" in chapter 2, the remaining five

chapters deal in turn with "Worship"; "Belief"; "Theology and language"; "Ecumenism"; and "The future of Quakerism". The last, the shortest, has a handy table setting out areas of difference between Evangelical, Conservative and Liberal Friends, a bar chart showing changes in membership numbers between 1940 and 2000 (notably the huge growth in Africa and South America), and, in conclusion (p. 118), sets out "the four-fold common ground of the world family of Friends", which is worth repeating:

- 1) the centrality of direct inward encounter with God and revelation, and, thus, forms of worship that allow this to be experienced;
- 2) a way of doing business based on the idea of corporate direct guidance rather than voting;
- 3) the spiritual equality of everyone, and the idea of 'the priesthood of all believers'; [and]
- 4) ... the preference for peace and pacifism ... and the commitment to other forms of social witness.

Worth repeating? - apparently, since the same list, worded only slightly differently, was on page 2 - but it does seem to me well put, and in the right order. I suppose it might be that I share the author's opinions that stops me hearing any clatter of hobby horses in the writing - there have been Friends who sounded to me cranky even when I agreed with them - nevertheless, the picture of Quakerism seems accurate and fair.

As the titles of the four middle chapters indicate, Ben Pink Dandelion's is a theological approach, in which the peace testimony (say) arises from what he is writing about, rather than being part of his subject in itself. Thus the

index cites references to "peace work" only in chapter 2, and has nothing at all on "equality" or "simplicity" or "social justice", but does offer a lot on "God" - "see also Inward Light, non-realism". (In contrast, Geoffrey Hubbard's *Quaker by Conviction* (1974), likewise meant for interested outsiders, mentioned God far fewer times in twice as many pages. His index also had jokes; if there are any here, I am missing them.)

These middle chapters carry the thrust of the book. Each treats its theme historically showing how the current position (or positions) of Friends was (or were) reached. The one on Ecumenism seems to me the most interesting, tracing an evolution from

not an incipient universalism, but a keen sense that all could and should become Quakers [p. 87]

(inspired by which John Luffe told Pope Alexander VII "thou art indeed Antichrist" and was hanged the next day), up to the involvement of London Yearly Meeting, as was, in the Interchurch Process that led to the founding of the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland.

The text crams a lot into 118 pages, there is also a three-page guide to "Further Reading"; a four-page "Timeline", from 1537 to 1999 (Henry VIII's break with Rome to the opening of a Quaker theology school in Burundi); an eight-page glossary; and the aforementioned index. I recommend it.

Alan Frith

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

**Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2012 at 2.00 p.m at Kinghorn Community Centre, Kinghorn, Fife**

**Minute 1:** We welcome today Jennifer Wilson, an attender at Central Fife LM.

**Minute 2: Apologies**

The following Friends are prevented and send their apologies: Maureen Anderson; Alan Davies; Caroline Evens; Daphne Foster; John Foster; Rachel Frith; Madeleine Harding; Marilyn Higgins; Rachel Howell; Annie Miller; Jasmine Perinpanayagam; Alison Perks; David Turner; Ida Turner.

**Minute 3: Signing of the AM minutes of 31 March 2012**

The minutes of 31 March 2012 have been published in *Sesame* which has been delayed at the printers. Copies were available (thanks to Central Fife LM). A copy has been signed by the clerk and entered in the Minute Book

**Minute 4:** Extract 13.52 of *Quaker Faith & Practice* was read during our opening worship; it concerns preparation and support of Quaker prison ministers [“Quaker prison chaplains” in Scotland – *QF&P* 13.46].

**Minute 5: Matters arising:**

Further to minute 8 of 14 January 2012, applications to QPSW supported by ourselves, have been i) *successful* for mine clearance in Cambodia and ii) *unsuccessful* for the hospital in Pakistan. [See page 5]

**Minute 6: General Meeting, 9 June 2012:**

We appoint the following Friends to represent us at General Meeting to be held at 7 Victoria Terrace on 9 June 2012 – Alison Burnley; John Fox; Pat Lucas; Phil Lucas.

**Minute 7: Membership Matters**

[In the terms of *Quaker Faith and Practice* 11.31, it was agreed to terminate two memberships.]

**Minute 8: Prison Chaplaincy**

Margaret Mortimer has told us of her work as Quaker Prison Minister and told us of the different aspects of this work and service. *See page 18.*

**Minute 9: Nominations and Appointments**

a) Our Nominations Committee has brought forward the following names for appointment to serve until the end of April 2015:

**Elder - Cathy Bell**

B&B Co-ordinator - **Alison Perks** for a second triennium

These names being acceptable we appoint our Friends accordingly.

b) Request for release: As Health & Safety Officer, **Ron Murray** with immediate effect. We agree to this request.

c) Friends House has informed us of the following:

- i. The appointment of **Madeline Patterson** to QPSW Overseas Peacebuilding Sub-Committee, to serve from 15 March 2012 until 31 March 2013.
- ii. The appointment of **Jasmine Perinpanayagam** as representative to Friends World Committee for Consultation, to serve until 31 December 2014
- iii. The release of **Pat Lucas** from Central Nominations Committee (on behalf of Yearly Meeting)

**Minute 10: Report from QPSW Conference at Swanwick, Derbyshire, 23 to 25 March 2012**

Jennifer Wilson has told us of this. (Lynn Barty who also participated on behalf of South East Scotland AM has written a report for *Sesame* [printed in our last issue]).

Jennifer has been attending Quaker Meeting for more than three years.

Helen Drewery, from QPSW, introduced the Conference with a history of QPSW. The second speaker, Susan Seymour, outlined her work, described as bringing faith into action. She inspired and humbled those present.

There was the opportunity to attend two workshops but all could meet with those facilitating the other workshops. There was also time for reflection in mixed base groups and to hear what Friends are doing in Britain. There was a great deal of information and time is needed to discern.

The report is attached to these minutes and we ask that it be published in *Sesame*. See page 14.

We thank both Jennifer and Lynn for attending and for their reports.

**Minute 11: Report from QLRC at Woodbrooke, Birmingham**

John Fox attended this Conference in April which was a very rewarding, pleasant experience, staying at Woodbrooke. 80 Area Meeting representatives attended, with 15 staff and volunteers present. Friends shared their experiences of their own Meetings.

Quaker Life is primarily responsible for supporting the spiritual life of our meetings.

The theme of the Conference, 'Deepening the life of the Spirit', was developed by three Friends. The booklet of this name will be sent to all Quaker Meetings in Britain, an example of new resources which are available. Friends attended three of nine workshops, a difficult choice as all were attractive.

The report is attached to these minutes and we ask that it be published in *Sesame*.

We thank John for attending and for his report.

**Minute 12: AOCB:**

Quaker Disability Equality Group: Further to Minute 9 of the 26 November 2011, it appears it would be helpful if we were to support this group, financially, as well as otherwise. We therefore agree to pay the suggested £50 and ask the Treasurer to action this.

**Closing Minute:** 19 Friends from five local meetings attended all or part of this Meeting for Worship for Business. Our next Area Meeting will be on Saturday, 30 June 2012 in Polmont, at Greenpark Community Centre.

**Kate Arnot**

Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

**FUTURE AREA MEETINGS**

**Sunday 16 September**, at the Open Door, South Edinburgh 2 p.m. – 5.30 pm

**Saturday 20 October**, at 7 Victoria Terrace: 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

**Saturday 8 December**, at 7 Victoria Terrace: 2 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.

Simple Gifts

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free  
 'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,  
 And when we find ourselves in the place just right,  
 'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.  
 When true simplicity is gain'd,  
 To bow and to bend we shan't be asham'd,  
 To turn, turn will be our delight,  
 Till by turning, turning we come 'round right.<sup>[2]</sup>

*A Shaker song, perhaps giving dance instructions, written by Elder Joseph Brackett in 1848. Sydney Carter, a Friend, based his 'Lord of the Dance' (1963) on 'Simple Gifts'.*



**Some Plain Friends at the Stillwater Ohio Conservative Friends  
Gathering 2008**  
(see pages 6-9)

## Quaker Meetings for Worship in South East Scotland

### Every Sunday

Central Edinburgh: 7 Victoria Terrace	9.30am & 11.00am
South Edinburgh: Open Door, 420 Morningside Road,	10.30am
Polmont: Greenpark Community Centre	10.45am
Kelso: Quaker Meeting House, Kelso	10.30am

### Every Wednesday

Mid Week Meeting: 7 Victoria Terrace	12.30pm- 1pm
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### First Sunday in the Month

Penicuik & Peebles: Valleyfield House, 17 High St., Penicuik <i>Children welcome, bring and share lunch.</i>	11.00am
Portobello: Old Parish Church Hall, Bellfield Street	7.30pm

### First Tuesday in the Month

Edinburgh University Common Room, Muslim Prayer Rooms (opposite the Weir Buildings) at Kings Buildings: <i>contact Sarah Martin 07818050853 or <a href="mailto:sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk">sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk</a> for more details</i>	1pm- 1.30pm
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### Second Sunday in the Month

Tweeddale: Tweedbridge Court, Margaret Blackwood House, Dukehaugh, Peebles <i>All welcome but please phone to confirm. 01721 721 050 or 01896 850 389.</i>	10.30am
Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (in Kirk Wynd opposite the Old Kirk)	10.30am
East Lothian: East Linton Community Hall	11.00am

### Third Tuesday in the Month

Edinburgh University Common Room, Muslim Prayer Rooms	1pm- 1.30pm
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### Fourth Sunday in the Month

Tweeddale: Tweedbridge Court, Margaret Blackwood House, <i>Details as Second Sunday above</i>	10.30am
Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy <i>as above</i>	10.30am
Portobello: CHANGES Community Health Project 108 Market St, Musselburgh, East Lothian EH21 6QA	10.30am
Barony St Meeting 33 Barony Street, Edinburgh	7.00 pm

### Last Sunday in the Month

East Lothian: East Linton Community Hall	11.00am
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### Distribution of Sesame & Scottish Friends Newsletter

The current practice is to distribute one copy of Sesame and the Scottish Friends Newsletter to every Member and Attender household. Contributions to the costs of Sesame are always warmly welcomed by the Area Meeting Treasurer, Caroline Evens. An email version of Sesame is more ecological and is free! A large print version is available on request.

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