

# SESAME

Number 204: July 2016

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EU Referendum: *a Statement* / Post-STIR Proposals / Decriminalising Drug-use: *a concern from Cornwall* / John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust / The work of MAG / Venue 40 – *help sought* / Polmont's 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday / Q. Life Rep. Council / YM Impressions / C.O. Stories / Meeting for Sufferings / NFPB at Edinburgh / June AM Minutes / Books of *possible interest*

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*There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

*1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (NRSV); cited, in a different translation, in the YM Epistle.*

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## SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Our next Area Meeting is in Peebles on Saturday, 23 July, starting at 2.00 pm and finishing in time for tea at 4.30 pm. We meet at the Old Bakehouse, St Andrew's Leckie Parish Church, Eastgate, Peebles EH45 8AD.

We shall be making a decision about a new Area Meeting structure. At our June Area Meeting we asked our clerks to prepare detailed proposals for this new structure, based on the STIR report, and these are set out on pages 4 & 5, with a minute commenting on them forwarded from Central Edinburgh LM.

In February of this year we invited Michael Hutchinson, Clerk of West Scotland AM, to speak about Quaker discernment, whereby concerns which originate in Local Meetings are tested by Area Meeting before being passed to Meeting for Sufferings. Sometimes further testing is needed. Such is the case with the concern of Cornwall Area Meeting on the *Decriminalisation of the possession, for personal use, of all drugs*. Meeting for Sufferings is asking Area Meetings to consider this concern and to report back. An extract of the Cornwall AM minute, including three key questions, begins on page 6. We will be discussing this, and in preparation you might find it helpful to talk about the issues with Friends in your Local Meeting.

Mary Woodward will help us engage with "Sharing our end of life stories – discovering Quaker understandings of dying and death", the theme of the most recent Quaker Life Representative Council meeting. Her report begins on page 15.

I hope to see you in Peebles.

In Friendship,

**Elizabeth Allen**

Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

### **Portobello & Musselburgh Meeting is on the move!**

After many years at the parish hall in Bellfield Street, Friends are seeking new premises. Meeting for worship will be at **Fisherrow Community Centre**, South St, Musselburgh EH21 6AT, on 24 July and 14 August (at 11.00 am, as usual); it is hoped there may be an evening meeting on 7 August, but please phone **(0131) 665 8166** to confirm if so and where.

# The EU Referendum

*Statement from Northern Friends Peace Board, meeting on 18th June at  
Central Edinburgh Meeting House*

After the referendum, regardless of the outcome, there will be many people in the UK and elsewhere feeling hurt, angry and disappointed. The role of the media and many politicians in framing the debate has too often been very negative; passionate assertions have been presented as credible predictions, untruths have been used as if they were fact (in spite of frequent challenges), and fears and prejudices have been stoked up in support of competing agendas.

As Friends concerned for peace, we can unite in affirming the importance of equality, respect, integrity in public life, and environmental sustainability as key foundations for peace. We can also affirm our commitment to internationalism and to cooperation between nations and peoples, the basis on which the EU was founded. Global challenges require responses at all levels, from local to international. Cooperation is not always easy or straightforward, but in linking across cultures, national boundaries and languages, violent conflict is made less likely.

We know that, for these and other reasons, many Friends are committed to the European Union and to the UK staying within it. We also know that Friends have real concerns about the EU as an institution, and in particular by how it is shaped by the less positive influences of multinational trade. We aspire to a Europe whose security is based on mutuality and care for the marginalised and vulnerable, rather than on militarism and fear of the other.

Whatever the outcome, we as Quakers want and need to be ready to engage with our neighbours, in our communities, between nations and across Europe as a whole in challenging policies, practices and structures that work against the building of peace, and in promoting those which sustain and nurture it.

“Let us then try what love will do.”

*William Penn*

## **South East Scotland Area Meeting new structure – proposals**

There will be **seven** Area Meetings per year: four full-day Saturday meetings and three weekday evening meetings.

### **Saturday Area Meetings**

These will be held out of Edinburgh. They will be all-age meetings.

At various points in the day, there will be opportunities for worship, including all-age worship.

The agenda of each meeting will reflect the elements of the trefoil, as in the following guide.

#### ***'Housekeeping'***

- Governance and business matters – such as annual report and accounts, tabular statement
- Nominations
- Membership matters

#### ***Community building*** *(This list is a guide, it is not prescriptive.)*

- Welcoming one another
- Children and young people's programme
- Life of our Meeting – including news from Local Meetings, Elders, Overseers, Children and Young People
- Our life within BYM – including our involvement with Meeting for Sufferings, Quaker Life, Quaker Peace and Social Witness
- Social event – such as a meal or ceilidh

#### ***Witness***

Sharing how we are living out our faith in the world

Each of the three elements will be planned as discrete, bounded events with Friends easily able to attend any or all, as they are able. Participation at any of the events will be welcomed and encouraged.

#### **Involvement of the host Local Meeting**

The Local Meeting hosting Area Meeting will be invited to provide an assistant clerk for that event and to have particular input into the Witness and Welcome elements of the day.

#### **Planning Meeting for full-day AMs**

This will take place at the beginning of year.

The AM clerking team, and representatives of each of the four Local Meetings hosting Area Meeting that year will attend it.

AM clerks will prepare an agenda, including a check-list of what needs to be considered and what actions need to be taken.

### **Weekday evening Area Meetings**

These will be held in Edinburgh and will last from 1 ½ to 2 hours.

They will be open to all, and the following 'core representatives' will be expected to attend:

*The clerking team*

*The treasurer/ assistant treasurer*

*Representative of Trustees*

*Representative of Elders*

*Representative of Overseers*

*Representative of Nominations Committee*

The agenda may include any Area Meeting business matter.

### **Proposed 2017 dates**

23 January – *evening*

25 March - *full day*

15 May - *evening*

24 June - *full day*

15 August - *evening*

23 September - *full day*

25 November - *full day*

### **Central Edinburgh Meeting – Minute 2016/07/11: STIR report**

*We have discussed, as a Meeting, the recommendations of the STIR report [...] regarding the holding of Area Meeting.*

*We can see many positives in the recommendations and suggestions: it is helpful and pleasurable to visit other parts of our Area Meeting.*

*It would be helpful for Edinburgh Friends to have evening meetings in Edinburgh.*

*It would be helpful for reports to be included in Sesame and not revisited in Area Meeting itself.*

*We have some concerns: Does this mean that, with General Meeting, we would have*

*eight full-day meetings a year? Would these proposals lessen the import and impact of our Quaker Business Meeting? It is precious.*

*We are concerned that we as a Meeting are losing our “inclusivity” by Friends moving away, leaving an “elderly” Meeting without support for the Friends within it. We feel that we have lost our ballast.*

*Who will provide the “all-age” input and care?*

*Are we getting hung-up on numbers? Jesus emphasised “two or three in my name ...” A Friend has commented that agenda-setting a year in advance could lead to inflexibility and staleness, and the blocking of the movement of the Spirit.*

*We have been exhorted by a visiting Friend from Northumbria to be bold in upholding these proposals – and we also wish to take care of what we have.*

*We note that the minutes of the last Area Meeting have not yet been made available to us though Sesame. It has been difficult to have an informed and prayerful session without them.*

*We have felt rushed in our consideration of these important issues – not by our Meeting but by Area Meeting’s timetabling.*

*We thank our Area Meeting’s Clerks for their work, and ask that Area Meeting considers our response and reflects Area Meeting’s considerations back to us, as we regard this as the beginning of a conversation.*

## **Decriminalisation of the possession, for personal use, of all drugs. Minute of Cornwall AM, 12 September 2015 (extract)**

The concern of Cornwall Area Meeting regards the decriminalisation of the possession, for personal use, of all *controlled* drugs. We advocate the decriminalisation of all drugs.

Our Quaker concern relates solely to the decriminalisation of the possession, for personal use of all drugs. It does not relate to the issues of supplying and selling drugs, producing drugs or trafficking drugs. The concern, also, does not relate to drug-related crime *i.e.* inquisitional crime committed in order to purchase drugs.

### ***Background information (extract)***

For more than five years Cornwall Area Meeting has been examining and discussing current drugs policy.

The concern was initially raised in the autumn of 2009 when a Member from Marazion Local Meeting brought the issue to our attention. He said that it was wrong that there was a war on drugs, which was treating people who are drug dependent as criminals who must be punished, rather than human beings who need help. He had himself been dependent on heroin for many

years and now runs an organisation to support people who are recovering from dependency.

### *The concern*

In the UK many people use illicit drugs: some use drugs for pleasure or for other reasons and suffer few consequences while others become dependent on drugs and suffer serious consequences.

In the 18th century in England, Quakers established the first modern hospital for the treatment of mental disorders – the Retreat at York. Previously, the method was to imprison the mentally ill, often chained to walls and living in appalling conditions. Today, people are still punished and imprisoned for using illegal drugs.

It is time for Quakers speak out for change, believing in a healing rather than a punitive approach to dependent drug use and believing in a rational response to recreational drug use. We believe that all drug policy should be evaluated on how effectively it reduces harm to individuals, families and communities.

We are deeply aware of the devastating impact of the current UK drugs policy in that it criminalises all sectors of the community for personal drug use. In 2011/12 there were 229,103 drug offences<sup>1</sup>, of which 86% related to drug possession. 1,247 people were imprisoned for having possession of a controlled drug, 655 were given a suspended sentence and 21,862 were fined. Having a criminal record prevents people from fulfilling their personal potential. In addition, are the significant related issues of social and economic exclusion and inequality, particularly in relation to young people from Black and Ethnic Minority communities, poor people, vulnerable people and people from Black and Ethnic Minority communities. There is a huge racial disparity in rates of stop and search, arrest, prosecution and sentencing outcomes.

It is accepted by many analysts that the prevalence of drug use tends to rise and fall in line with broader cultural, social or economic trends.

Decriminalisation with concurrent investment in treatment and harm reduction services can lead to a number of very positive outcomes.

A range of international studies conclude there is little or no relationship between the legal status of drug use of a country and the rate of drug use within it. Removing penalties for drug use does not result in an increase in overall drug use. Evidence from Portugal which decriminalised the personal use of all drugs in 2001 shows the following gains: personal drug use no longer at-

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<sup>1</sup>*A Fresh Approach to Drugs. The final report of the UK Drug Policy Commission. (2012)*

tracts a criminal record and so drug users are no longer damaged by this; voluntary access to and uptake of treatment and prevention services has improved; HIV infection rates are down and drug related deaths have markedly decreased; the criminal justice system is able to concentrate on drug trafficking. Importantly, there has been no substantial increase in the prevalence of drug use. Portugal shows small variations in trends and numbers in common with its European neighbours.

### *What we ask of Meeting for Sufferings*

1. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2010 published a report, *From Coercion to Cohesion: Treating drug dependence through health care, not punishment*. It uses research evidence to show that a health-based approach results in both less restriction of liberty and better prospects for the future of the individual and society. We support UNODC in urging a more humane policy to drug users and their problems. We ask Britain Yearly Meeting to encourage the UK Government to back this policy at the UN General Assembly Special Session "World Drug Problem" in April 2016.

2. We ask that MfS test our concern and conduct a process of discernment regarding the decriminalisation of the possession, for personal use, of all drugs [and] that MfS representatives raise the concern with their Area Meetings. We hope that a process of testing and discernment will lead to BYM agreeing to support decriminalisation and issuing a statement to that effect.

### *Linking concerns to faith*

The concern stems from the negative and discriminatory effects of criminalisation on individuals in terms of inequality, poverty and social exclusion.

We raise this concern as Quakers because it is not ethical to punish people for their vulnerability and we feel deep concern and compassion for those harmed by criminalisation.

Referring to the Quaker testimonies, Chris Lawson wrote: "Finding ways of expressing the testimonies that are relevant to present times is a continuing challenge. Such expressions will not necessarily seem practical, tactful, sensible, and expedient or in line with some current vogue of thinking, for they are based on what seems right in an absolute sense of inner conviction." (Q.F. & P. 20.17) Cornish Quakers wish to share their sense of inner conviction with the Society of Friends as a whole and to speak truth to power.

By advocating for this concern we are expressing our love in action.

### **Cornwall AM Briefing paper – Executive summary (extract)**

Criminalising personal drug use exacerbates the social exclusion of vulnerable individuals, as it impacts negatively on educational attainment, employ-



ment, travel and generally on life chances and future wellbeing.

A good minority of the UK population uses, or has used, drugs recreationally. For a much smaller group of people recreational use may develop into problematic use. This latter group of people are the ones who are in need of support. The major determinants of drug use becoming problematic are deprivation and childhood abuse or trauma. In 2013-14 there were estimated to be over 293,000 opiate and crack cocaine users in England. Of these 193,000 were in contact with treatment services.

Portugal is perhaps the clearest and most relevant demonstration that decriminalisation does not increase the prevalence drug use. The whole administration addressing drug use is under the healthcare sphere with a consistent and coherent policy which has been functioning since 2001.

A decriminalisation approach coupled with investment in harm reduction and treatment services can have a positive impact on both individual drug users and society as a whole.

Decriminalisation does appear to direct more drug users into treatment, reduce criminal justice costs and shield many drug users from the devastating impact of a criminal conviction.

Calls for reform to the drugs policy framework have come from a number of eminent sources. They include the United Nations, the World Health Organisation, the Global Commission on Drug Policy, the UK Drug Policy Commission, the UK Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Human Rights Watch and eminent medics. Many authoritative voices call for the end of the criminalisation of drug users.

## QUESTIONS

1. The majority of problematic drug users have experienced abuse or trauma as children and are therefore vulnerable. Which is right – punishment, or compassionate health and social support for them?
2. In countries where decriminalisation has been implemented the prevalence of drug use has not increased. Criminalising drug users, whether they are ‘recreational’ or ‘problematic’, stigmatises, socially and economically excludes them – it causes them harm. What then is the purpose of criminalising the possession of drugs for personal use?
3. If a young person from your family got caught experimenting with drugs would you want them to have a criminal record which would spoil their life chances?

## JOHN WIGHAM (ENJOYMENT) TRUST

### ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2015

At the end of 2012, John Wigham's bequest was fast diminishing, with just under £5,000 left in its reserves. Some generous donations supported it through 2013, without which the fund would have become exhausted in 2014. In 2014 we received wonderful news from two sources. An anonymous donor gave a substantial grant of £10,000 to the Trust through the charity 'Foundation Scotland'. Also, The Christian Fellowship of Healing (Scotland) laid down its work, and its remaining assets were distributed between the churches that had supported it. Our General Meeting for Scotland received nearly £3,800. GM then decided to offer this fund to the John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust (JW(E)T), to use for any awards where the pleasure or comfort comprised a substantial element of healing. This fund was used to finance two JW(E)T awards during 2014 and a further one in 2015. These additions to our funds should extend the life of the Trust by some three years, to about 2018.

In the meantime, the warnings in 2013 that the funds were diminishing must have hit home, because both the number of applications and the total value of the awards have also diminished. In 2014, only five awards were made in the first half of the year and none in the second, and in 2015, we made only four awards in the whole year. We are anxious to let people know that we are still open for business, and that we welcome pro-action by members and attenders throughout Scotland to encourage each other, and their non-Quaker friends and acquaintances, to apply for awards if they meet the criteria.

As usual, it is the reports written by the recipients after they have made use of their awards to which we look forward most. Although only five awards were made in 2014, four of them impressed us so much with the profound effect that they had had on their recipients that we asked their permission to offer them to the *Scottish Friend*, and they have appeared during the last year.

Of the four awards made in 2015, reports of two of them have already appeared in the *Scottish Friend*. Anneke Kraakman described the pleasure that she experienced from attending a course of Thai Herbal Compress massage, and the pleasure that she was able to pass on to friends who benefited from her new skills. Alastair Simmons gave an enthusiastic and comprehensive account of the course at Woodbrooke on Taoism and

Quakerism. The other two awards were for momentous journeys, both physically and spiritually, and we look forward to their reports, too.

The JW(E)T thanks Hilary Davies for her six years (2010-15) of compassionate and insightful service as trustee, and welcomes Mel Richards to the role in 2016. We look forward to continuing John Wigham's generous legacy. Surely giving awards purely for *some additional comfort and pleasure of an exceptional nature* must be unique in the charity world?

**Anne Miller**

*Convenor of trustees*

*Note:* A table summarising the number of awards and their total cost, together with income sources, for the years 2008-15 is available on request from Anne Miller, via [anniemiller15@gmail.com](mailto:anniemiller15@gmail.com).

*Application forms may be obtained from Melissa Richards, by phoning 0131 225 1298 or emailing [deusexmacintosh@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:deusexmacintosh@yahoo.co.uk).*

## **MAG – Mines Advisory Group**

*MAG has been one of the beneficiaries of Venue 40 for the past two years. As the Edinburgh Festival Fringe approaches, and with it the end of the current three-year arc of donations, Jane Pearn updates us on MAG's work.*

As you would expect, the work is as vital as ever. On one level, it is beautifully simple: making unsafe places safe, for people fleeing to them, or returning home; providing safe corridors to enable MAG's humanitarian partners to get through. But the emergency in the Middle East, with no sign of an end to the fighting, is challenging MAG to find new ways of working. The need is immediate and urgent: regardless of the risks, MAG believes it has a moral obligation to continue its work.

The effects of the emergency extend deep into the region. Within Iraq alone, 3 million people are internally displaced, fleeing the actions of 'Islamic State'. That's the equivalent of the entire populations of Edinburgh, Manchester, Birmingham, Cardiff and Bristol living in camps or host communities. As land is regained, families try to return home – where mines, booby-traps and unexploded bombs lie in the rubble of their homes, hospitals and schools. Some of these have been laid deliberately to target civilians and the people trying to help them.



*This mother and child fled the violence, seeking safety on Sinjar mountain in northern Iraq. The camp has been cleared, but there are landmines and unexploded bombs in the surrounding area. (Photograph © Sean Sutton/MAG)*



*12 year old Amin walked straight into danger when he stumbled across a hidden bomb. He lost a hand and sustained such serious leg injuries that he can barely walk. He faces a lifetime of difficulty and pain. (Photograph © Sean Sutton/MAG)*

In the countryside, littered with lethal debris, many people are left trapped.

*'The village can't survive. The people can't rear their animals. They can't eat.'*

Mihar is a farmer living on the Iraqi-Syrian border. When the fighting stopped in his village, he tried to start farming again, only to find hidden, deadly explosives buried in the soil. Some of his sheep triggered an explosion. *'We didn't know where was safe any more. We were so afraid and couldn't go into any fields. A shepherd was killed just the other day.'* MAG has recently cleared 1,100 home-made landmines in northern Iraq.

*'You can imagine how we felt when MAG came here. We were very happy.'*

MAG is imaginative in its approach: in Lebanon, still heavily contaminated, they are working with Clowns Without Borders to create lessons using puppets – lessons that could be the most important children ever learn. They say, *'We need to reach every child before the unthinkable happens.'*

As long as there is a need, the work must go on. This is the message from Nick Roseveare, MAG's Chief Executive:

**"Everyone has the right to live in safety and free from fear. Everyone has the right to hope for a better future. Everyone has the right to provide for their family and work their way out of poverty. In 2015 MAG's work directly benefited over 1.4 million men, women and children, giving them greater safety and the opportunity to rebuild their lives, livelihoods and futures. All of our work is funded entirely by contributions and it is thanks to the generosity and support of people like you that our work can have such a positive impact on the lives of so many people. Thank you."**

*MAG is based in Manchester, and has a sister organisation, MAG America, in Washington, D.C. As part of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, MAG was co-laureate of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize. For more information, go to the website at [www.maginternational.org](http://www.maginternational.org) – MAG is also on Facebook, at <https://www.facebook.com/minesadvisorygroup/>.*

Rosemary Hartill's obituary of our Friend Marjorie Farquharson was in *The Guardian* of 2 July; for anyone who missed it, it is available online at: <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2016/jul/01/marjorie-farquharson-obituary>.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT VENUE 40!

### *Pre-Festival Baking Days*

Are you a Quaker Baker? Our popular Festival Tea Room specialises in cakes and other baked produce and your contributions will be greatly appreciated. If you would like to help, please come along and join us on a Baking Day – please let us know what you'd like to bake (and email a recipe if possible) so we can get supplies in and make sure we have a varied selection. **No cream** please (it's difficult to freeze and store), and gluten-free and dairy-free options are welcomed.

We will be baking after Midweek Meeting on Wednesdays in July starting at approximately 1.30 pm; other dates are possible by arrangement. Please sign up in the Library, or drop us an email.

So why not come along and help us stock up the freezer – all levels of experience welcome, we can learn from each other!

### *Other opportunities to get involved at Venue 40:*

We will have a team of volunteers from all over the country and beyond helping us run the venue, but we would also warmly welcome local Friends to help with tasks such as operating the tea-room till, helping to serve the volunteers' evening meal, and helping to host some additional concerts on the evenings of 6, 28 & 29 August; also, writing reviews for the noticeboard of the Venue 40 shows.

Sign-up sheets will be up in the Library during July. Nearer the time, contributions of flowers for tea-room tables, or herbs/fruit/veg. for cooking, would be greatly appreciated.

There are lots of ways for you to be a part of our Festival community, and we hope you'll join us this year.

Many thanks in anticipation,

**Sue Proudlove & Tony Wilkes**

### **Reading Quaker Faith & Practice**

The reading suggested by the Revision Preparation Group for what is left of July is Chapter 26 – *Reflections*. For August, it is Chapters 7 and 15 – *Meeting for Sufferings* and *Trusteeship* – and for September, Chapters 8 and 28 – *The central managed work* and *Sharing the Quaker experience*.

## Polmont Meeting's 30th Birthday celebrations

Plans are progressing well for our various 30th birthday events and we hope Friends will be able to join us. On Saturday 3 September, in Trinity church, Falkirk, we are doing a '**Meet a Quaker**' Coffee Day. This is, of course, aimed at raising our profile locally, but if you'd like to come along and support us, we'd love to see you. Then on Saturday 1 October, we will be having a **birthday party** at the Greenpark Community Centre, Polmont. This will be a party/ceilidh with a bring-and-share tea, balloons, games, birthday cake... you get the idea! Invitations will be coming your way soon, but save the date meantime.

We are delighted that our hopes and plans for a **Peace Pole** for Falkirk are looking very positive. We are in the process of choosing a site from a number of options. The timescale is a little uncertain but we will be celebrating the Pole with a dedication and a peace vigil and would love to share this with Friends. Details to follow.

**Mariot Dallas**

*Quaker Life Representative Council, Woodbrooke, 15-17 April 2016*

## DEATH AND DYING

Quaker Life is that part of Britain Yearly Meeting which is concerned with how we live our life as Quakers, (as distinct from Quaker Peace & Social Witness, which is about how we as Quakers engage with the world). Quaker Life Representative Council (QLRC) enables "ordinary" Quakers to get together with people working for Quaker Life, find out what others are doing, and take ideas and inspiration back to their Area Meetings. A different topic is chosen for each Rep. Council meeting, to which each AM sends a representative.

This was my first time as your representative: the weekend's theme was 'Death and Dying'.

The Friday evening was very much about settling in – with 96 AM reps, staff from Friends House, members of the End of Life Issues Working Party and various others, Woodbrooke was bursting at the seams. It was good to be in small 'home groups', with whom we ate on the Friday evening and spent time reflecting and sharing on Saturday and Sunday.

On Saturday morning we heard three deeply moving contributions from Diana Lampen, Iain Law and Barbara Davey.

Diana told us about her encounters with death and dying, voicing our fears of inadequacy in knowing how to speak to those dying or bereaved, telling us how Experimenting with Light has helped her, reminding us that we don't need to do anything except *be* with people, sit in the Light, trust our leadings.

Iain spoke about the death from HIV/AIDS of his partner, Andrew – thirty years ago, and still raw: death is messy, dying is messy, it's not all neat and pretty and tidy, and the pain is always there. Now Iain “cares about getting on with life till it ends... In my experience there *is* light in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it: but when the time comes for me...? I don't know”.

Barbara told us of the short life of her daughter Angelica who lived for 150 days – “trapped by the technology surrounding her: too weak to live without it, too strong to die”. She spoke of her pain, anger, frustration, isolation, resentment, fear, despair after Angelica's death; and how gradually she was helped to an understanding of her life's work – to acknowledge the darkness and the sorrow and move into some kind of life-giving relationship with it, and “try to let God's love tenderly ease away the fear”.

In the afternoon we had to choose two workshops from the nine on offer. My first was an excellent session where we talked about issues around medically assisted dying. It was very helpful to have a doctor among us, who clarified the difference between assisted dying and palliative care, voiced health care professionals' views about being the one to administer the lethal dose, and reminded us that it is not possible to generalize – every case is individual. So – no answers, and many more questions that I'd not previously thought of!

The other workshop, about “the spiritual experience of dying”, I found extremely frustrating. The facilitators spent so much time telling us how they had received strength and support from their spiritual lives, and from the support of their Meeting and weighty Quaker friends that we had no time to speak ourselves. I was left feeling “that's all very well, but what about those who don't have a supportive Meeting, or feel



isolated within it, and who don't number weighty Quakers among their friends?!" (In conversation with others after the session, I found I was not alone in my frustration.)

These workshops were followed by a plenary session in which we could reflect on the topic and the day. The Saturday evening offered a chance to see the film *What We Did On Our Holiday*: I found I needed time to myself, to digest all I'd heard and to reflect on the unexpected emotions I'd found arising in myself during the day, which I was very glad to be able to talk through with our home group's assigned Elder.

On the Sunday we had 'closing events': a session in which various Friends House staff members spoke to us about the work they are doing: interesting in itself, and helping to put a face to a name and give pointers to whom to approach when seeking help or advice. We were given a copy of the book produced by Leeds Quakers on Assisted Dying, to take back to our LM and use to initiate discussions, and were reminded of other resources available to us, including the new leaflet arising from the work of the Concern For End of Life Issues Working Party – the lovely exhortation "use this as a trampoline" has given me a wonderful mental image of 96 QLRC reps bouncing at their Area Meetings as they report on this weekend ...

Our final session in our home group was helpful in addressing my concerns about "what to do now". Yes, it would be good to report back to our AMs in whatever way we could: from the reactions of Friends who had seen it, showing *What We Did On Our Holiday* would be an excellent way to encourage conversations between Friends of all ages around death and dying; "Death Cafés" are also something well worth considering running. Most important of all is what the weekend has done for and to me, and the conversations I have with people which can prompt other conversations, with a ripple effect spreading out from each of the 96 reps who attended the conference.

I found the weekend stimulating, challenging and hugely enjoyable. The overall message from it was to make the most of LIVING, not to sleep one's way through life but make the most of every moment and of every person we meet along the way.

**Mary Woodward**

## Impressions of Yearly Meeting

For me, YM 2016 was a happy occasion with Friends pleased “to see one another’s faces” (*Q.F. & P.* 6.02) and ready to follow the Agenda. We were lucky to have good weather.

Before we had even crossed the threshold of Friends House, the resolve to reduce the use of paper became evident when documents were given only to those who had asked for them in advance: an example of the careful organisation undertaken by the staff.

Deborah Rowland took over as Clerk. Her having two female assistant clerks made this the first occasion that all three at the table were women, which some found noteworthy.

The focus of the Meeting was to hear how following the Spirit had changed the lives of various Friends, and varied from interesting to inspiring. The receiving of reports can be dull, but I particularly liked Ingrid Greenhow’s report of the work of Trustees. The Epistle Drafting Committee achieved a miracle! – we didn’t ask for any changes at all.

Usually one of the highlights of the Yearly Meeting weekend is the Swarthmore Lecture; one of this year’s two speakers was unable to travel from Rwanda, however, owing to her passport’s getting ‘lost in the post’ after the visa had been issued, and so, as an event, it was unfortunately much diminished. The printed version – *Mending broken hearts; rebuilding shattered lives* – is due to be published at the end of August, and so we may look forward to that, as its subject, Quaker peace-building in Eastern Africa, is interesting and important.

**Rachel Frith**

*At AM in Kelso we were reminded that the first woman to serve as YM Clerk, Mary Jane Godlee, had done so in 1918 (by default: the appointed Clerk, John Henry Barlow, having been directed by the Meeting to attend the trial at Guildhall police court of three members of the Friends Service Committee to show solidarity with the defendants – see page 20); and the first regularly appointed woman Clerk, Maude Brayshaw, had served 1943-48; so having a woman Clerk supported by women assistants had been a long time coming, despite the fact that since the time of Gill Hopkins’s clerkship (1978-82) it has not been unusual to have one or two women among the three.*

## *Conscientious Objection: the experiences of a father and son*

Each year on International Conscientious Objection Day, 15 May, there is a vigil by The Mound and various people are invited to speak. Several Quakers have been amongst them.

Last year, Alan Davies spoke about the experience of his father-in-law in becoming a conscientious objector while a serving officer in the First World War, and of his own experience during the period of conscription following the Second World War. (See *Sesame* 195: May 2015.) Alan also asked me to write about my grandfather's and father's experiences in the two wars.

My knowledge of my paternal grandfather's early life is very little: my father never spoke of it. Although I saw him regularly in my teenage years, he too never spoke of the past. He came from a Methodist family of Yorkshire worsted spinners, studied science at Imperial College, London, and in 1915 married in Edinburgh the daughter of a Free Church of Scotland minister. He was living in Birmingham, and I suspect that his pacifist views had led him to attend a local Quaker meeting before the introduction of the Military Service Act: he was accepted into membership in August 1916 [*see overleaf*]. The family moved to Edinburgh in the early autumn of 1918 but my grandfather had no job. I've been told that he used to leave the house in early morning, not returning until 6 pm so as not to arouse suspicions amongst the neighbours that he was a conscientious objector. He didn't get a job until 1922 when he started at George Watson's, teaching geography(!) I know he was in touch with other COs during these years from his visitors book. He was always working for peace issues, writing many pamphlets for the Northern Friends' Peace Board. In 1942 he left teaching and moved to York to become the secretary of the NFPB.

My father would have gone before the 'panel' in 1939 while he was a dental student. He was given conditional exemption so long as after graduation he continued to practice and undertook night fire-watching. I never knew my father to meet with his fellow professionals who had all served during WW2. He felt ostracised for his pacifism for most of his life.

**Andrew Farrar**

September 2<sup>nd</sup> at the  
 Stanley meeting here.  
 There is a tea before the  
 meeting) at 5.30. when there  
 is a very good opportunity  
 to introduce new members.  
 Perhaps you would let me  
 know if you can come then.  
 Assuring you of a very warm  
 welcome to the Society & a  
 hope that <sup>your admision</sup> ~~last~~ way prove  
 of real benefit to yourself  
 & to the Society  
 Cordially yours  
 Harrison Barrow

TELEPHONE: EDCBASTON 1033.  
 57, WELLINGTON ROAD,  
 EDCBASTON,  
 BIRMINGHAM.

Aug 7/16.

Dear Stanley Turner.

At the monthly meeting  
 of the Society of Friends,  
 for Warwickshire North,  
 held on August 1<sup>st</sup> I  
 was deputed to admit you  
 to membership in the  
 Society.

I hope that, in my haste to  
 come to the monthly meeting  
 to be held on Tuesday

The letter from Harrison Barrow, Clerk of Warwickshire North MM, welcoming Stanley Farrar into membership. Harrison Barrow (1868-1953) was himself an active pacifist: the Lord Mayor-elect of Birmingham at the outbreak of war, he resigned his civic offices, and in May 1918 was one of three Friends tried under Regulation 27C of the Defence of the Realm Act for issuing a pamphlet, A Challenge to Militarism, without submitting it to the official censor, for which he was sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

## Meeting for Sufferings, held in London 2 July 2016

Part of the Northern Friends Peace Board's pre-referendum statement was read at one point, and the clerks modified the agenda to include time for reflection about the "situation in this country following the Referendum."

There is not a great deal of note to report from this meeting.

### *Reorganisation of central management*

In the Trustees' Report, we were informed of changes to the roles, and the titles that go with them, in the Management Meeting (which runs Friends House, essentially): Helen Drewry is to be "Head of Worship and Witness" a role that combines her own previous responsibilities as General Secretary of QPSW with some of those formerly exercised by Richard Summers (now retired) at Quaker Life; Lisa Kiew is to be "Head of Finance & Resources" (having been General Secretary, Finance & Resources); and the "Head of Operations" is Paul Grey, who was Head of Facilities and Operations hitherto.

These changes are effective immediately, but will take a while to be reflected on the website, in email signatures, *etc.*

### *Property Support Pilot Project*

"[T]his pilot project will explore new approaches to supporting local and area meetings with their property management and maintenance." It will run for three years supported by legacy funding, with a dedicated staff appointment (to be announced shortly).

### *Refugees*

Helen Drewery of QPSW reported that they had decided *not* to join the Citizens UK private sponsorship scheme: the right decision, in my view.

Approval was given to using legacy funding on a 'scoping' (or 'discernment') project to consider issues raised by the refugee crisis: "great movement of people is going to be the new normal." There will be a one-year full-time appointment advertised shortly, possibly extending for a further two years; it is expected that the person will work closely with Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network, that QCEA will also be involved, and other European YMs will be somehow represented in the project.

There is to be a Woodbrooke Weekend (3-5 February 2017) on *Forced migration – how can Quakers respond?* Area Meeting might consider whether we should send a representative.

*Various items of news:*

- Five Friends will be appearing in court in August as a result of participation in the Trident protest on 27 June.
- Leeds AM has produced a book: *Assisted dying: a Quaker exploration*.
- A review of the Society's appeal process [see *Q.F. & P.* 4.25-26] has been launched *via* the Church Government Advisory Group. So far as I know, there have been no appeals in recent years; but if we have any views on the process, we should feed in to this.
- Arms trade: CAAT has been given leave to take to a judicial review the UK Government's sale of arms to Saudi Arabia.
- Sufferings has a new Clerk: Anne Ullathorne (wife of the YM Treasurer, Peter Ullathorne).
- In the annual report of the Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations (QCCIR), they identified their remit as relationship with three broad categories: "Christian", "Other faiths", and, latterly, "Nones".

Sufferings is considering meeting outside London in 2017. Might we offer 7 Victoria Terrace as a venue, perhaps with Scotland GM as the official host?

**Henry Thompson**

## **Northern Friends Peace Board, 18 June 2016**

The sombre weekend between the murder of Jo Cox MP and the day of the Referendum vote was the occasion of the Board's second meeting of 2016: as at Nottingham, our numbers were somewhat depleted, but it was good to welcome Jo Alberti to the table as our new clerk, and Karina McIntosh as a new rep. for South East Scotland AM.

The Referendum was our first item of business: Philip Austin, our co-ordinator, had prepared a draft statement, which, while largely acceptable, was felt to need 'tweaking' in places, and so was handed over to a small group to work on during the lunch break.

The so-called ‘main gate’ decision on Trident renewal had been expected to be made by MPs in October, but we learned that it was likely to be put to the vote as early as the second week in July. [We now know it will be on 18 July.] There was discussion of what can be done, given that the majority of MPs can be expected to support it. Janet Fenton drew our attention to the UN Open Ended Working Group, convened last year at the urging of the Red Cross/Red Crescent to identify “concrete [and] effective legal measures [...] that would need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons”, and “substantively address recommendations on other measures that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. The working group is meeting in Geneva *without* the participation of the UK, despite the Government’s claimed commitment to multilateral disarmament. (For further information see <http://www.unog.ch/oewg-ndn>.) It was anticipated too that the Chilcot report would remind people of how most of the deaths of British service personnel in Iraq had been due to the inadequacy of their equipment when a third of the procurement budget was being devoted to Trident. Such considerations might perhaps, it was felt, have more weight with those unswayed by arguments based on morality than would the possibility of diverting the cost of weapons systems into the building of schools and hospitals. Tim Wallis, whose new book *The Truth About Trident* [see page 31 for further details] had been launched at an event the previous evening, reminded us that the vote is not the end of the matter: ‘No Faith in Trident’ is a new initiative by Christian CND, Pax Christi, Religions for Peace and others to encourage debate within faith communities and rally them against a new generation of weapons; ‘Nukes of Hazard’ monitors the nuclear weapon convoys and seeks to publicize the dangers they pose; lobbying of MPs goes on. [Since the meeting, it has been reported that public support for renewal is “waning”; see [http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/14614614.Trident\\_challenge\\_for\\_Theresa\\_May\\_as\\_support\\_for\\_renewal\\_falls/](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/14614614.Trident_challenge_for_Theresa_May_as_support_for_renewal_falls/)] Chris Butler updated us on the activities of the group working in Barrow-in-Furness (where the boats will be built and BAE Systems is the main employer): a public meeting on alternative applications for the skills of the workforce had brought out the possibilities (although Nathalie Bennett MP of the Greens had seemed disappointingly poorly briefed) and contact has been established with the GMB Union.

As always, we had some ‘housekeeping’ items: nominations, the report of

trustees, and the Treasurer's report (more cheerful than at some recent meetings, after a rise in AM contributions and the receipt of some grants.)

While other Board members mounted an anti-Trident demonstration in the Royal Mile, the revision group set to on the revision of the Referendum statement. The resulting version was approved – see page 3 – although it was noted that except *via* the NFPB website and social media there was no prospect of its being widely disseminated ahead of the vote that Thursday. It was hoped nevertheless it would still be relevant after it. [Philip Austin emailed on 27 June: *Since the vote, there is growing concern about the number of race-hate crimes across the UK, the fragility and sense of uncertainty of our political structures and a profound awareness of some of the divisions in our society that the vote and its aftermath have brought to the surface. Thinking about the last paragraph of our statement, I would welcome information or news about how Friends are responding or thinking of engaging in promoting peace.*]

In the afternoon we heard two reports. Our Friend Hilary Patrick gave a brisk account of the work of the Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre; the minute concluded faintly: “The output of the Centre, we have realised, is impressively large.” Then Mairi Campbell Jack told us about her second year as Scottish Quaker Parliamentary Engagement Officer, focusing mainly on the concern about militarisation. A petition to the Parliament that visits to schools by members of the armed forces should be recorded attracted 1,027 signatures and favourable press coverage (see <http://www.parliament.scot/GettingInvolved/Petitions/armedforcesvisitstoschools>) although the First Minister was said to have distanced herself from the “senior SNP source” quoted in the *Sunday Herald* as using the phrase “cannon fodder” in respect of UK government recruitment policies. In England, cadet forces are being encouraged in state schools, funded from the fines imposed for the LIBOR-fixing scandal, which ought to generate extra money for Scotland too; Mairi was at a meeting with Education Scotland to raise the possibility of such monies being used for Peace Education instead. She also told us of plans to produce peace-related materials to link with the Scottish Government's “Year of History, Heritage & Archæology” (2017) and “Year of Young People” (2018) when the theme of the year will be promoted in special projects.

Our final item was a chance to reflect on “Building Positive Peace”.

We meet next at Penrith Meeting House on 1 October.

**Alan Frith**



## SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

### **Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 4 June 2016 at Kelso Quaker Meeting House**

#### **2016/06/01 Worship**

During opening worship *Quaker Faith & Practice* 19:43 has been read to us. In this passage Isaac Penington reminds us that we must engage wholeheartedly with the small things before we are spiritually ready for the light to show us what greater things we may be called to do.

We have remembered the life of our dear Friend Marjorie Farquharson, who died on 13 May, 2016. We have been told that her vibrancy and enthusiasm touched Friends beyond this Area Meeting.

#### **2016/06/02 Introductions**

We have ensured those present know each other's names and meetings. The attendance will be recorded in the concluding minute.

**2016/06/03 The minutes of our last meeting**, held on 9 April, 2016 at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, have been signed and entered in the minute book.

**2016/06/04 Final Report of the Area Meeting Short-term Review Group (STIR)** (Minutes 2014/10/13, 2014/11/04(b), 2015/10/06 and 2016/02/06 refer)

The STIR Group has produced its final report, including recommended actions. This has been circulated electronically with the draft agenda to Friends on the Area Meeting mailing list and published in *Sesame*. Paper copies are available today. Alastair Cameron has presented the report and we have had opportunities, both formal and informal, to ask for clarification, to express our thoughts, and to explore the implications of the recommended actions.

The STIR report suggests radical changes, which are intended to help us be more creative in the ways we come together in our Area Meeting. It brings a vision of increased participation and with it building a more inclusive community of Friends of all ages. We have heard that these changes are challenging us to live adventurously.

We have also been warned that there will be problems and without appropriate support, smaller Meetings may feel overwhelmed by the extra expectations of the new structures.

It was suggested that we will only know if the STIR recommendations

work, if we carry them out.

We have been reminded of the need for Friends to trust one another. We must remember that the Friends making decisions on our behalf are us and we are them.

In prayerful worship we have shared our thoughts on the STIR report's recommendations. We would like to try them out for a period of two to three years, and then review the situation.

We ask our clerks to draw up detailed proposals for a new Area Meeting structure, based on the STIR report and to bring this back to our July Area Meeting.

We are very grateful to the STIR group for their careful listening and thoughtful proposals for Area Meeting.

#### **2016/06/05 Record of appointment made by between-meetings process**

We record that on 20 April, 2016 and by between-meetings procedure John Eccles and Audrey Sinton were appointed as membership visitors for Derek Morrison (Central Fife).

#### **2016/06/06 Area Meeting Nominations Committee report**

Don Stubbings, Convenor of the Area Meeting Nominations committee, has spoken about forthcoming opportunities for service within Area Meeting. Nominations Committee has experienced difficulty in finding Friends to serve and although it is hoped that this will improve when the recommendations of the STIR report are implemented, current vacancies have to be filled.

Don emphasized the importance and difficulty of recognizing our own and other people's spirit-given gifts and of encouraging one another to develop and exercise these gifts. At Yearly Meeting 2016, Friends shared how their gifts had been used in local and national Quaker service.

Don said we should live adventurously, and this means being prepared to make mistakes.

He asked those on committees to consider people they know who might be suitable for forthcoming vacancies.

We encourage Local Meetings to explore opportunities for Area Meeting service and what these involve. We hope Friends who have, or have had, a task to do on our behalf, will share their experience of this service with Friends in their Local Meeting.

We note that the latest version of *Who Does What in Area Meeting* was

circulated to Friends for information, along with the papers for this meeting. This is produced quarterly.

We recommend that any review of communications will consider describing the roles on the Area Meeting website.

We recognise the need to make people aware of the practical implication of taking up an appointment, including the time and travel commitment. We note the need for ongoing support to people, following their appointment.

### **Appointments**

Nominations Committee has brought forward the names of the following Friends:

1. To serve from January 2016 to end of December 2018
  - a. Bed & Breakfast Scheme – **Judith Benton**, Central Edinburgh  
(second triennium)
2. To serve from July 2016 to end of June 2019
  - b. Elder – **Joan Torbett-Schofield**, Portobello & Musselburgh
  - c. Elder – **John Harris**, Kelso (second triennium)
  - d. Northern Friends Peace Board rep. – **Karina McIntosh**, Central  
Edinburgh
3. To serve from July 2016 to end of June 2018
  - e. Editor of *Sesame* – **Alan Frith**, Central Edinburgh
  - f. Assistant Editor of *Sesame* – **Kim Smith**, P 'bello & Musselburgh

These names being acceptable to us, we appoint these Friends accordingly.

We thank Don for his report and Nominations Committee for its work.

### **2016/06/07 Membership Matters**

#### **a) Jessica Paterson**

Mark Bitel and Laura Pearson visited Jessica on 9 April, 2016. The report of the visit has been read to us by Laura Pearson.

Jessica started attending Quaker meetings about ten years ago and along with her twin daughters, has been a regular and active attendee at Polmont Meeting for seven years. She has participated in Becoming Friends and is enrolled in an online course on Exploring Early Quaker Vision. She feels she is already a Quaker and that it is time to formalise this commitment.

We are pleased to accept Jessica into membership and welcome her in person, as she is here with us today.

**b) Derek Morrison**

Derek was visited by Audrey Sinton and John Eccles, on 10 May, 2016. The report of the visit has been read to us by John Eccles.

Derek has been attending Central Fife Meeting for over a year and is now serving as its treasurer. During this time, he has read widely on Quakerism, attended Area Meeting on several occasions and participated in residential Quaker events, including the QPSW Spring Conference. He feels ready to take the next step and that it is now right to make the commitment of membership.

We are please to accept Derek into membership and welcome him in person, as he is with us today.

c) [An application was received and visitors appointed]

d) [An application was received and visitors are sought]

**Transfer of membership (out)**

The following transfers of membership have been accepted:

- **Andrew Williams** by Cornwall Area Meeting

**Transfer of membership (in)**

We have received certificates of transfer for:

- **Rachel Crockett** from Hertford & Hitchin Area Meeting
- **Gillian Sinton** from North Scotland Area Meeting

We accept the transfer of membership of Rachel and of Gillian and ask our Assistant Clerk (Membership) to send certificates of acceptance to the appropriate Area Meetings.

**Record of death**

We record the death of Marjorie Farquharson of Central Edinburgh Meeting, on 13 May, 2016. Her funeral was held on 27 May, after the manner of Friends.

**2016/06/08 Minute from Edinburgh Central Meeting**

We have received the following minute from Edinburgh Central LM:

***2016/05/06 Death of Sylvia Marshall:***

*We are sad to record that our dear Friend Sylvia Marshall died on March 16th, following a long period of illness. The funeral was held at the crematorium on Friday April 1st 2016, and was attended by about 50 people, Friends and non-Friends. The Meeting for Worship lasted about half an hour.*

*The Memorial Meeting for Worship that followed later that day at the Meeting House was attended by about 80 or 90 people and lasted about one hour, followed by tea. There were many appreciations of Sylvia's life and her witness for peace and justice; several Friends had travelled from York and Carlisle.*

*A collection held on behalf of Amnesty International, a particular passion of Sylvia's, raised £485, which has been sent to their office in Edinburgh.*

*We forward this minute to Area Meeting.*

*Margaret Mortimer, Clerk*

We note this minute.

### **2016/06/09 John Wigham Enjoyment Trust report for 2015**

Annie Miller has presented the annual report of the Trust, which gives awards for 'some additional comfort and pleasure above the ordinary necessities of life'.

We are pleased to note that substantial donations to the Trust in 2014 have made it possible for this work to continue until at least 2018. Trustees are anxious to let people know that they would welcome applications for awards.

Four awards were made in 2015 and reports on two of these have been published in the *Scottish Friend*.

We have heard of the experience of Anneke Kraakman in attending a massage course; and of Alastair Simmons who attended a Woodbrooke course on Taoism and Quakerism.

Annie thanked Hilary Davies for her six years of service as trustee.

We thank Annie for her report.

### **2016/06/10 General Meeting for Scotland, 11 June, 2016**

We appoint the following Friends to attend General Meeting in Glasgow on 11 June: Jane Pearn, Andrew Farrar, Pat Lucas, Phil Lucas.

### **2016/06/11 Impressions of Yearly Meeting 2016**

South East Scotland was well represented at Yearly Meeting, with 15 Friends attending. We have heard personal reflections of Yearly Meeting 2016, held in London.

Our attention was drawn to the new Yearly Meeting clerking team of three women. It is the first time YM clerks have all been women.

### **2016/06/12 Receipt of written Reports**

We note that the following reports have been received and circulated to

Friends for information:

- Quaker Peace & Social Witness Spring Conference 2016; and
- Northern Friends Summer Shindig 2015 Clerk's Report.

Copies of the Shindig report and accounts have been made available at this meeting.

### 2016/06/13 Correspondence and notices

1. *The Truth About Trident* by Tim Wallis – Book launch, Friday 17 June, 2016, 6.00-7.30 pm at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House.
2. Northern Friends Peace Board is meeting at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House on Saturday, 18 June, 10.45 am - 4.15 pm. NFPB Meetings are open to all Friends. (Further information from Philip Austin, [nfpb@gn.apc.org](mailto:nfpb@gn.apc.org))
3. General Meeting Enquirers Weekend, Friday-Sunday, 2-4 September, 2016, Conforti Institute, Coatbridge. Cost £200, including full board. Pat Lucas (East Lothian LM) has spoken to this item.
4. Annual Community Building Weekend for Friends in South East Scotland, 9 - 11 September, 2016 at Wiston Lodge, near Biggar, South Lanarkshire. Jessica Paterson (Polmont LM) has spoken to this item.
5. Palestine Solidarity Campaign boycott of Medjool dates from Israel and the illegal settlements during Ramadan.
6. During Quaker Week, the first week of October, Polmont Quakers are commemorating 30 years this year of worshipping at Greenpark Centre, Polmont. They are planning three events: a party/ceilidh; a coffee morning in Trinity Church, Falkirk with a Quaker information stall; and installing a Peace Pole. Kate Arnot (Polmont LM) has told us of these plans.

### 2016/04/14 Closing minute

31 members and five attenders representing eight Local Meetings have attended all or part of this Area Meeting, as indicated below:

Central Edinburgh 7 + 1A	Central Fife 3	East Lothian 3	Kelso 6 + 2As	Penicuik -
Polmont 3	Portobello & Musselburgh 4	South Edinburgh 2 + 1A	Tweeddale 3 + 1A	Dog 1

We next meet in the Old Bakehouse, St. Andrews Leckie Parish Church, Eastgate, Peebles EH45 8AD on Saturday, 23 July, 2016 at 2.00 pm.

(Signed)

Elizabeth Allen, Clerk

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## *Books of possible interest to Friends*

*The Truth About Trident: Disarming the Nuclear Argument* by **Timmon Milne Wallis** (Luath, pbk, ISBN 978-1-910745-42-7 – £12.99) Five broad assertions, frequently made - “We need Trident for our security”; “... to maintain our place in the world”; “We can manage Trident legally, safely, responsibly”; “We are doing all we can to disarm”; and “The Bomb is here to stay” – are unpicked and rebutted, with introductory material beforehand and appendices, references and notes. Pat Kane calls it “a lucid, authoritative and vital instrument of peace”.

*The Joy of Tax; How a fair tax system can create a better society* by **Richard Murphy** (Corgi, pbk, ISBN 978-0-552-17161-8 – £8.99) Now in paperback, this book was said to have formed the basis for ‘Corbynomics’ during the Labour leadership campaign, although its author is not a party member (and has since been talking to the Greens and the SNP). He *is*, however, a member of the Society of Friends; his chapter on “the underpinnings of a good tax system” finds them in Quaker testimonies (Peace, Equality, Truth and Simplicity). It is not written for specialists (or for people who have necessarily given any thought at all to the matter: that tax is *not* ‘taxpayers’ money’ is explained over eight pages, for example) but is full of stimulating ideas.

*Briggflatts* – **Basil Bunting** (Bloodaxe Books, pbk, ISBN 978-1-85224-826-0 – £12) “In silence, having swept dust and litter from our minds, we can detect the pulse of God’s blood in our veins, more persuasive than words, more demonstrative than a diagram. That is what a Quaker meeting tries to be, and that is why my poem is called *Briggflatts*.” Basil Bunting (1900-85) never joined the Society of Friends, but had been a pupil at Leighton Park and as a teen-aged C.O. was imprisoned, at Wormwood Scrubs, among other places, until May 1919; the poem, some 700 lines long, is subtitled *An Autobiography*. (Briggflatts (one g), now in Cumbria, has one of the oldest meeting houses, at a place where Fox held one of his meetings in 1652.) This edition includes notes, photographs, essays, a CD of the poet reading the work, and a DVD.

**Quaker Meetings for Worship in South East Scotland****Every Sunday**

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

**Every Wednesday**

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

Penicuik: Valleyfield House, 17 High St., Penicuik <i>Children welcome, bring and share lunch</i>	11.00 am
Portobello & Musselburgh: SEE NOTE ON PAGE 2	7.30 pm

**First and Third Tuesdays in the Month**

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

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
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**Second and Fourth Sundays in the Month**

Portobello & Musselburgh: SEE NOTE ON PAGE 2	11.00 am
Tweeddale: Nomad Beat, 10-11 Cavalry Park, Peebles <i>All welcome, but please phone to confirm 01721 721 050 or 01896 850 389</i>	10.30 am
Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am

**Fourth Sunday in the Month**

N. Edinburgh Meeting: Broughton St Mary's Church, Edinburgh	7.00 pm
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**Fifth Sunday in the Month**

Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am
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**Last Sunday in the Month**

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
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**Distribution of *Sesame* and *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, Mark Hutcheson. An email version of *Sesame* is more ecological and is free; if you would prefer to receive it this way, or to change the address to which a paper copy is sent, or if you would like to get one by post and currently do not, please contact Kim Smith at [kimdsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:kimdsmith@yahoo.com). A large print version is also available on request. Published by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, South East Scotland Area Meeting, Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL. Scottish Charity No. SC019165. Printed by Footprint UK, Riverside Works, Edinburgh Road, Jedburgh TD8 6EE.