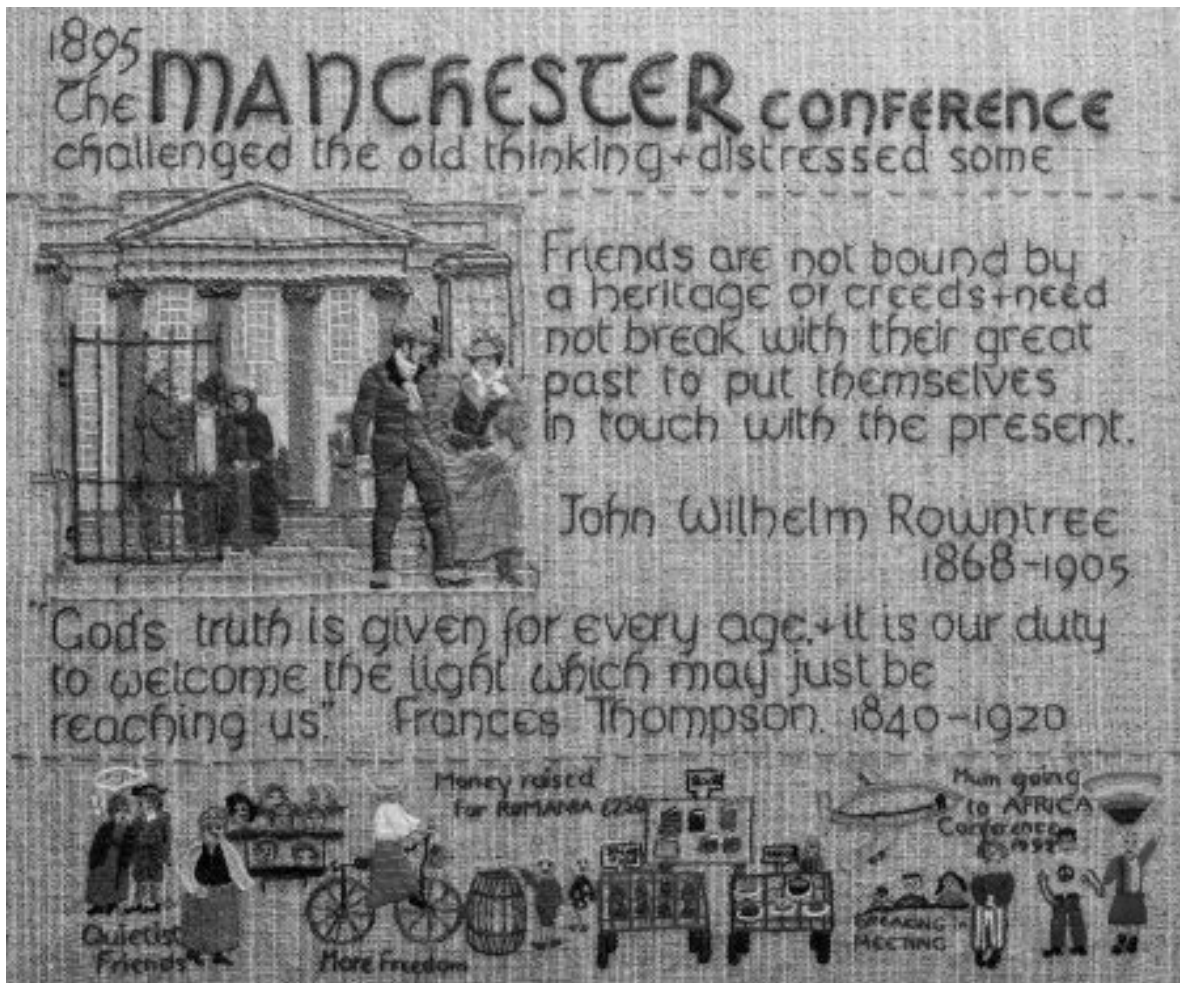


SESAME

Number 213: November 2017

All-age AM at Musselburgh / Memorial minutes & Testimonies / Nominations Report: *Who provides service?* / Funerals arrangements / Meeting for Sufferings / NFPB/ George Lakey/ Quaker Life Rep. Council/ Science & Faith at the Manchester Conference, 1895 / Alan Dickinson / ICAN's Nobel Prize / Sanctuary Meetings – Qs & As / AM Minutes



The 'Manchester Conference' panel from the Quaker Tapestry – see pages 14 and 17.

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SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Area Meeting will be at Fisherrow Community Centre, South Street, Musselburgh EH21 6AT, on Saturday, 25 November. Ample parking is available on site and there is disabled access.

We will begin at 11.00 am. Tea and coffee will be available from 10.30 am. There will be a bring-and-share lunch at 12.15 pm. Portobello & Musselburgh Friends will provide a variety of savoury dishes, as well as tea and coffee. Contributions of cakes and fruit are welcome.

This will be an all-age gathering. During the morning, in parallel sessions, adults and children and young people will focus on Quaker community: what it means to us; how we experience and create it; and its place in the wider church community where we live. In the afternoon, the children and young people's programme will include music and singing with Adam Holmes, while the adults will hear about Catherine Holmes' experience of the Quaker United Nations Office Geneva Summer School 2017. Our Meeting for Church Affairs will also be in the afternoon.

I encourage Friends of all ages to come to all or part of our area meeting.

Elizabeth Allen

Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

PROGRAMME FOR THE DAY

- 10.30 am Arrivals - tea & coffee are available
- 11.00 am All-age Worship
- 11.15 am Exploring the nature of Quaker community
 You will have the opportunity to join a conversation table on:
What makes a Quaker community?
How do local meetings with no base hold together?
How do local meetings fit in with their wider church community?
Parallel children's session on Quaker community
- 12.00 noon All-age plenary session on Quaker Community
- 12.15 pm Bring-and-share lunch. *You are invited to bring a contribution of cakes or fruit. Musselburgh Friends will provide tea and coffee and a selection of savouries.*
- 1.15 pm to 4.15 pm Separate children's session***

- 1.15 pm Local Meeting, Area Meeting, General Meeting for Scotland, Britain Yearly Meeting. *Elizabeth Allen will give a brief summary of how our structures help to link us in a Quaker community.*
- 1.25 pm Catherine Holmes will speak about the Quaker United Nations Office Geneva Summer School 2017
- 2.00 pm Meeting for Church Affairs – *see draft agenda below*
- 4.15 pm Closing – all-age worship-sharing. *During our worship we will share some of what we did this afternoon.*
- 4.30 pm Tea

AREA MEETING - DRAFT AGENDA

1. Worship
2. Introductions
3. Minutes of last meeting, 23 September, 2017
4. Matters arising
5. Fixing the 2018 fund for small donations to newly admitted remand prisoners without personal cash
6. Membership matters
7. AM Nominations Committee report
8. Appointments to Quaker events
9. Area Meeting treasurer – short-term working group report
10. Memoranda of Understanding PAPER A
[The format of these documents (spreadsheets) makes them unsuitable for reproduction in Sesame; they have been distributed by email, and it is hoped that some paper copies will be available at Area Meeting.]
11. Meeting for Sufferings report
12. Festival Committee report
13. Minute from Area Meeting elders PAPER B
[See page 4]
14. Dates and venues for Area Meetings in 2018
15. Friends Ambulance Unit – *proposal for joint event with Scotland China Association*
16. Correspondence and notices
17. AOCB

[PAPER B]

Memorial Minutes and Testimonies to the Grace of God as Shown in the Lives of Friends

A minute from a meeting for learning of South East Scotland AM Elders.

Ten South East Scotland AM Elders, at a gathering on 7 October 2017, have noted that practice in our Area Meeting and its constituent Local Meetings regarding the writing of memorial minutes about deceased Friends (including well established attenders) has continued to be inconsistent, despite this subject having been visited more than once in the fairly recent past (*Letter from Clerk of AM Elders 1 July, 2004; AM minutes March 2007 min 4; March 2009 min 9; 2013/09/08; 2014/02/09*). This may be partly due to established practice not being passed on successfully when there has been a change of LM clerks.

We agree that a memorial minute should

- record factual information about the life of the deceased person, their engagement with Quakers and what they meant to their Meeting;
- be forwarded on every occasion to the AM Clerk.

We are clear about the value of memorial minutes but are less clear about response to the advice in *Quaker Faith & Practice* 4.29 regarding the subsequent writing of testimonies to the grace of God as shown in the lives of friends. We are uncomfortable with the inequality implicit in the suggestion that further discernment may lead to the writing of such a testimony for some and not other deceased Friends.

One suggestion made is that we collect all we write about the lives of deceased Friends under the heading 'Patterns and Examples', recognising that the grace of God is potentially shown in every life, although it may sometimes be difficult to discern. On the other hand, bearing in mind the introduction to *Q.F. & P.* Chapter 18, are we letting down our Yearly Meeting and subsequent generations of Friends if we do not send on testimonies on those whose lives and influence have clearly had considerable impact on Friends and in the world at large?

We wish to refer these matters to Area Meeting for further discernment.

Kerstin Phillips, co-clerk of Elders

A.M. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT TO AREA MEETING, September 2017

In September 2013, Alastair Cameron gave his final report to AM as convener of the Nominations Committee, and concluded it as follows:

It is important to remember that our committees and appointments exist to support our spiritual and community life: it can at times seem that they are an end in themselves, or, worse still, that the cost of nurturing the Society is to drain the individuals involved. If we are to continue to find enough people to do all – or most – of the jobs we establish, we must maintain perspective, exercising discipline and discernment in the decisions we make about what jobs are truly needed.

A year later, as his successor, I reported that, since 2004, 40 Friends had ceased to be available for active service (through advanced age, moving away, or dying) being replaced, in the same period, by 17 Friends. Since 2014 we have “lost” 18 Friends from active service and gained 9.

Being a Quaker

Nominations Committee is challenged by its task to fill more than 120 positions. In theory there should be enough of us available; sadly there are not. In the past, being a Quaker meant participating in the Society in various ways. This has changed and is changing. We are less exclusively centred on the Society, and have many interests pulling us in many directions. It is not a new phenomenon and is seen throughout BYM.

In Scotland, the area meetings are based around the four largest cities, giving a pattern of a large urban meeting and several smaller ones scattered about. In South East Scotland, most AM committees meet in Edinburgh on a weekday evening; inconvenient for those outwith the city. For Friends with families, jobs, and partners who are not Quakers, committing to being on a committee is not easy.

Who provides service?

Fifteen years ago Central Edinburgh would average an attendance of 70 on a Sunday; ranging from 50-100. Now the average is 35, with a range of 25-50. Friends from elsewhere think of it as a very big meeting but it is now a middle-sized meeting. Every local meeting goes through ups and downs, and always has; what is perhaps new is the extent to which commitment is primarily to the local meeting.

Many AM appointments are actually for work in the local meeting: eldership, oversight and pastoral care, nominations, the funeral arrangements committee. Of the rest, Central Edinburgh is currently providing nearly two-thirds of serving Friends. So nominations committee faces the challenge of finding the same number of Friends for service from a much reduced pool. This cannot continue.

Changes

We have held three meetings for learning. As a result we have made several changes to our discernment process. As a nominations committee we are visiting local meetings on a Sunday. A small group of Friends cannot know everyone in AM – especially what their gifts might be. We have been much more flexible in the way we find Friends: we have asked that names of Friends be suggested to us, and have highlighted jobs in *Sesame*.

Area Meeting has agreed that Attenders may be appointed to Pastoral Care & Oversight roles; and we noted that at BYM in May 2016, it was determined that the only role requiring membership of the Society was that of Trustee, including the Treasurer, who is a trustee *ex officio*.

Question of Support

At our meeting for learning in November 2016 the question of support was discussed at some length. Outwith Quakers (in the “normal world”) there are line management mechanisms for providing support to both paid staff and volunteers. We do not have such mechanisms. We were aware of instances, through conversations we had had, of Friends having struggled or felt unsupported.

Who supports the committee member?

Who supports the convenor?

Who supports the solitary Friend?

We do not have any ready answers to these questions.

How to move forward?

We are struggling to find Friends and this is likely to become unsustainable and we need to begin to find ways of rectifying the situation. So the three areas that need to be addressed are:

1. A declining population doing the same number of jobs. And the way Friends “belong” is different.
2. The committees we have and the number of Friends who serve are historical. Might we have few committees; fewer appointments?
3. Our communications between Friends, local meetings and area meeting has evolved. Is it fit for purpose? Can we find better ways of doing it?

Area Meeting has agreed an all-day threshing meeting to examine these issues and see where that takes us: it is to be on **Saturday 9 December**.

I will finish with part of *Quaker Faith & Practice* 20.71, by Mary Lou Leavitt; it refers to conflict resolution but I think is equally applicable to threshing meetings.

Naming: Being clear and honest about the problem as I see it, stating what I see and how I feel about it.

Listening: Listening not just to the words, but to the feelings and needs behind the words.

Letting go: Acknowledging the possibility that there may be other solutions than the ones we've thought of yet; letting the imagination in – making room for the Spirit.

Don Stubbings, convenor, Nominations Committee

Funeral Arrangements Committee

Some personal views

This members of this Area Meeting committee meet twice yearly. I have been a member for a couple of years. In addition, each Local Meeting appoints someone to liaise with the committee and who are invited to these meetings. The committee is clerked by Laurie Naumann.

Any Elder can organise a Quaker Funeral; there is no legal aspect to this role. Members of the Funeral Arrangements Committee offer help and support when required.

Elders and Laurie Naumann often get asked by the family of a deceased member or attender to be involved in arranging a Quaker funeral. It is then so very helpful if the person has left some written instructions. This can be done by completing the Area Meeting Funeral Preference Form, to be found on the AM website page. It can be filled in and printed or completed on line. Laurie ensures that completed forms are stored in a secure place in the Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House. Somebody from the Funeral Arrangements Committee then makes contact with those who have made the approach to us.

As I see it, my task is then to facilitate the planning, so that those closest to the deceased can have a funeral that is what would be helpful to them, incorporating the wishes of the deceased as far as they are known.

Even when someone is known to be close to death, the actual death often comes as a shock. Suddenly there are so many practical things to be arranged within a few days, among these: notification to relatives and friends, appointing an undertaker, booking a crematorium or a church, arranging a reception, printing some memorial notes *etc.* And there can be issues of how to access money for immediate expenses. The Funeral Directors are usually very helpful and they are well used to dealing with stunned relatives.

Sometimes certain family members are hesitant about having a Quaker Meeting for Worship and would rather have a traditional church service. At many funerals the majority of those attending this Meeting for Worship are completely unfamiliar with Quaker traditions. During exploratory meetings with the family we might discuss how we could create more of a programmed Meeting for Worship. It is important that we together work

out a plan for the Meeting for Worship which is sensitive to the needs of the mourners and is acceptable to all.

There are always practical issues about the timing of the Meeting for Worship, a sufficient long slot in the crematorium and any reception afterwards. Whom to notify and how, who to introduce the funeral, flowers, a collection, printed notes for the order of service and what these could contain. There may be favourite music to choose for when people enter and leave the room. Music or singing can be included. Should a photo or some significant item be displayed?

For a Quaker funeral, we try to ensure that there is an adequate Quaker presence at it, especially of serving elders and overseers.

At a Quaker funeral, one of the two Elders at the front will begin by explaining what will happen as in any Meeting for Worship and all are asked participate in silent worship. Vocal contributions are welcome. There will be a short printed notice on the chairs about Quaker funerals.

For many in our Quaker community a somewhat longer Memorial Meeting may be wanted. This can take place on the same day, especially if a short funeral was held in the crematorium and only attended by close family. Or the memorial can be arranged to take place several months later so that more family members and friends have the opportunity to attend.

A Memorial Meeting for Worship usually takes place when the immediate shock of the death has diminished. We can be more reflective and focus better on the Grace of God as shown in the life of the departed Friend. We can give thanks for the humanity of the person, their complex personality and the joy of shared experiences. The Meeting for Worship usually lasts for an hour and is followed by some refreshments. The right holding of this Meeting for Worship is, as usual, the responsibility of Elders.

In some cases the funeral is led together by a church minister and a Quaker Elder.

Kerstin Phillips

Read *Quaker Faith & Practice*, ch. 17. Website: www.quakerscotland.org

Pendle Hill Pamphlets

Our library has a nearly complete run of this series from 1965, and most of them languish undeservedly unread; although East Lothian Meeting members seem to appreciate them! Each pamphlet concentrates on a single subject in thirty pages by a Quaker who has perhaps made it his/her study while at Pendle Hill. I do recommend them.

Rachel Frith

Meeting for Sufferings: 7 October 2017

Sufferings for the first time in this triennium was held at Mount Street Meeting House, Manchester. Despite its being nearer than London, I found the shorter journey more difficult and arduous, and travelling on the Friday evening I missed what were by all accounts delicious food and warm fellowship provided by local Friends. For the first time, Friends House arranged hotel accommodation for those requiring it; however, both myself and the Friend from North of Scotland had already booked our own.

The Agenda included the usual items of Court & Prison register (of Friends and Attenders whose witness has put them at odds with the authorities: 20 this time, including six arrested during a Meeting for Worship outside an arms fair in London); minutes received from Area Meetings and Central Committees; the Trustees' report; appointments; and, of course, silent worship. The order of business was re-arranged so that we heard the substantial Annual Report from Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) Central Committee in the morning.

The first part of this report was given by Jeff Beatty, a committee member, hence unpaid. He told us of the multiplicity of work carried out by QPSW: locally, at a European level and world wide. This enormous range means, of course, a struggle with funding. Short term legacy and grant funding is helpful, but there are also the demands of essential long term work. Some of this is collaborative: QPSW and Quaker Life both value closer links.

This was followed by a presentation on the 'Sanctuary Everywhere' Manifesto by Helen Drewery (now styled 'Head of Worship & Witness'; formerly, General Secretary of QPSW). Friends locally may have been involved in the listening exercise which enabled the Manifesto to be brought to fruition. This had much discussion and flowed by seemingly initial acceptance to being referred back to QPSW to make more explicit its Quaker basis as, although the principles behind the Manifesto were accepted, Friends could envisage difficulties in practice. There are six points and a preamble to the Manifesto and Helen Drewery explained the principles behind each. The Quaker Business Method truly at work. [*For more about the Sanctuary project, see page 20.*]

In 2015, Sufferings adopted a new formalised system for listing groups that exist within Quakerism but are not part of the structure of the Society of Friends. 'Quaker recognised bodies' (QRBs) are divided into four categories: a 'linked' group is one created by a minute of a meeting, or whose members are appointed by meetings; 'external' groups are regulated by some external body such as Companies House or the Charity Regulator; 'free standing' groups are those brought together by a shared interest; and 'emergent' groups are new bodies which may be short-lived and so are given QRB status for up to two years. One emergent body – the Quaker

Decriminalisation Network – was registered at the meeting until September 2019; eleven other groups (7 ‘external’, 3 ‘free standing’ and 1 ‘linked’) were registered until September 2022.

Relating to Europe, which may receive increasing attention because of the vote to leave, we received papers from both Quaker World Relations Committee on the Future of Europe and also a QCCIR paper on the 500th Anniversary of Lutheran Reform (I will bring both with me to AM on 25 November if Friends wish to read them; but also check BYM’s website).

Sadly the presentation by Jane Dawson, head of External Communications, was compressed by time constraints. Her main point is that *every* Quaker is a communicator. If Friends have views on how they wish to hear about public statements, please contact the Advocacy & Public Relations Team.

Arising from Yearly Meeting, we are all to look at how Quakers can be diverse and inclusive. Area Meetings, and others, will be asked to consider the following questions :-

In what ways is your meeting (or committee, or group) already diverse?

In what ways could it be more diverse?

What would help it become more diverse? What are the opportunities and barriers?

This was a useful exercise: a tiny part of a long-term process.

Finally, but certainly not least, we heard that Friends in Wales would be celebrating their 25th anniversary on 21 October in Newtown, Powys. I hope there were representatives from Scotland present.

Kate Arnot

Northern Friends Peace Board

The Board met for the final time in 2017 at Darlington Meeting House on 14 October. At our last visit there, in March 2012, the programme had to be revised at the last minute because Maya Evans, who had been due to tell us about peace work in Afghanistan, was in prison; this time, the afternoon speaker (our Friend Janet Fenton) was in the happier position of being part of a body that had just won a Nobel Prize! – *see page 19*. We were nevertheless reminded of the risks entailed in peace activism: Sam Walton, a QPSW staff member who used to attend Board meetings, was, we heard, to stand trial in Bolton for attempting to damage fighter jets awaiting shipment to Saudi Arabia; he and his co-accused, Dan Woodhouse (a Methodist minister) faced a possible ten-year sentence. [Both were acquitted when the case reached court, however; *see* [https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/peace-activists-found-not-guilty-of-criminal-damage.](https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/peace-activists-found-not-guilty-of-criminal-damage)]

In the morning, Peter and Carol Greenwood spoke to us about an initiative local to Darlington, the White Rose Group, which they had set up as a response to right-wing racist activism in the north of England; they had felt that the confrontational opposition of such groups as the Anti-Nazi League might not be the best way to address bigotry. Taking their name from the non-violent German resistance group which opposed Hitler in 1942-3, and their inspiration from the much-quoted saying of Jo Cox MP that *we have more in common than that which divides*, they have been developing a range of activities to put these words into action in the town. Information about them is at <https://www.whiterosedarlington.com/>.

Janet Fenton's talk updated us on progress towards a Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, a news story which the mainstream media seem studiously to have avoided, and a development which the UK government has strenuously opposed. Janet had been back at the UN in New York in the week before the Darlington meeting, and mentioned in particular efforts to promote nuclear disarmament in the Middle East. Her own website <http://www.nuclearban.scot/> has more information about this, and also on local action in favour of peace and disarmament, such as the major demonstration planned for Faslane in September 2018.

This year the Board has met only three times instead of four, and there was discussion as to whether we should make this the regular pattern. It was decided, however, that we will go back to having four meetings, except in years when there is a Yearly Meeting Gathering, when an event at that will take the place of one of them. The next YMG is to be in 2020; thus in 2018 and '19 we will meet four times, although the venue for our next meeting was not mentioned in our closing minute.

Alan Frith

Job Vacancy: Temporary Assistant, Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House

Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House wishes to recruit a Meeting House Assistant on a fixed-term, temporary basis, from early February to mid April 2018 (10 weeks maximum). Duties include providing a Friendly welcome for users of the building, serving/clearing refreshments, and some admin. Hours: 15 hours per week, to be worked Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday, normally 10am-3pm. Possibility of additional shifts on a casual basis. Salary: £8.75/hour (Real Living Wage).

For full details and an application form, please contact the managers Sue Proudlove & Tony Wilkes on 0131 225 4825, or email office@equaker.org.uk.

Closing date: 15 December 2017.

George Lakey

Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, 9 October 2017

After attending Yearly Meeting Gathering, where he gave one of the introductions to the first session, our American Friend George Lakey toured Britain to talk about his newest book, Viking Economics: How the Scandinavians Got It Right – and How We Can, Too. (Melville House Publishing, ISBN 978-1-61219-621-3). David Sterratt was at the third of the three meetings in Scotland at which George Lakey spoke.

On the way home from hearing George Lakey, I realised that something about him had made me think of Roald Dahl's Big Friendly Giant. There are the obvious similarities: George is tall, friendly, gentle, sweet and funny, like the BFG. But there's more: the BFG catches dreams so he can distribute the good ones to children. George, initially through living in Norway in the late 1950s, caught the Nordic "dream" and has been trying to distribute it to "his people" in the US ever since.

Surprisingly for a talk ostensibly on economics, George began with the story of how he fell in love with a Norwegian woman on a workcamp in Nebraska and found himself married and living in Norway at the age of 21. The economics came in when he recounted being able to matriculate at Oslo University for only \$14 – a tiny sum compared to US colleges. He asked a fellow student how this Norwegian system could possibly make sense. "Wouldn't you say that brains are an economic resource to a country?" he was asked in reply. "Yes." "Then why wouldn't you want to develop your resources fully instead of letting a barrier like money get in the way?" This alien notion got George thinking, and after a year in Norway he was keen to export the ideas to "his people" in the US.

Many of the virtues of Nordic countries are fairly well known: excellent public services, especially good childcare and free higher education, and short working hours. All seem to be connected with low inequality and high scores on global indices of happiness. George's talk was not so much about these virtues, but rather about how they came to be.

In his analysis, covered in the first third of his book, the polarisation of society in the 1920s and 30s actually led to the system. In essence, by a combination of a positive vision, coupled with strike action, the workers forced compromise on the elites: the elites would hold on to their properties and companies, but political control would truly lie with the people and the well-off would be taxed heavily. Critically, the power of the elites, the 1 %, was permanently weakened.

This was one of the major themes of George's talk: the importance of a positive vision, not just an analysis of what is wrong. In his view there is little point going to meetings to find out how bad things are; much better is

to work out how we can change things. This vision needs to be informed by new thinking, and pursued persistently.

For example, the Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal turned economics on its head by assuming people want to work, rather than to avoid it, as many economic theories assume. George's elegant proof for this? His children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren at the beach, where they spontaneously work on building sandcastles and digging holes, despite their efforts being washed away daily.

Nordic countries meet this desire to work with a "design economy" in which jobs are made to be manageable and satisfying. Long holidays mean more rested and productive workers. There is free rehabilitation and it's easy to change if an existing job becomes unsatisfying. George contrasted this with the International Monetary Fund's advice to New Zealand that more unemployment would encourage inward investment. This is one of the areas covered in the second third of the book, "Design for living in Nordic countries", along with co-operatives, poverty abolition, education, taxes and (perhaps surprisingly) entrepreneurship: Norway has a higher rate of start-ups than the US, perhaps because of the lack of worry about education, retirement, student debt and healthcare, as well as an active government programme of support.

After his 45-minute race through the themes of the book, the audience was invited to find someone new to discuss the talk with and come up with challenging questions. We obliged. My neighbour and I were intrigued as to why in the UK we seemed to have had half a Nordic revolution after World War II, but had somehow lost momentum. The elites had not been completely subdued, was George's view, as they had in the Nordic countries. Adept at spotting trends and giving ground when under pressure, they take it back when the pressure relaxes.

What, if anything, was the equivalent of the unions in 1920s & 30s Sweden and Norway? This question drew forth a mini-lecture on the power of non-violent direct action, shown by the Earth Quaker Action Team's successful campaign to make the seventh-largest bank in the US end its involvement in "mountaintop extraction" of coal – blowing the tops off hills with high explosive, not only causing environmental destruction, but also followed by increases in cancer and birth defects. George and the team tried to work out what a "Quaker hold-up" of a bank would be like. It turns out it is running a Meeting for Worship in the bank hall. The management find this very difficult to deal with. How do rule-obeying middle-class Quakers disrupt an AGM? Hold a business meeting at it, announcing items of business at the same time as the AGM agenda is read out. Result: AGM adjourned after 20 minutes, Quakers leaving singing 'This little light of mine', and some of the others present joining in! Key to this campaign's success was constant reflection, learning about other successful campaigns, gradual es-

calation and persistence. And the X-factor: the management was unnerved because it couldn't read what the Earthquakers were going to do next. Middle-class, they were behaving more like stereotypical activists.

It's all very well, said the next questioner, to do these things if you *are* a middle-class white person, but what if you're a minority? How can the people already marginalised win this sort of battle? – look at Black Lives Matter, for example. This question caused George to pause for the first time in the evening. He cited the civil rights movement as a minority movement that effected change, and of how he was one of the relatively few white people to join it. It is critical to be always attacking, never on the defensive – a point on which Gandhi and Napoleon agreed. Thus the LGBT movement, of which he was also part, has been constantly pushing, not stopping at legalisation, but going on to gay marriage.

The rise of the far right in Sweden and Norway was mentioned. There was little time left to answer this, but this and other challenges to the Nordic system are covered in the final part of *Viking Economics*, and the system's shortcomings and mistakes are mentioned the book, including a discussion of how Sweden, Norway and Iceland dealt with the banking crash that followed their flirtation with neo-liberal economics.

Over his almost 60 years of activism, George Lakey, has been collecting stories and methods of the "technology" of non-violent action. At the same time as being deadly serious about the "craft" of non-violent action, he exudes a childlike joy in what he does. Much as when the BFG tames the man-eating giants non-violently by feeding them snozcumbers.

Quaker Life Representative Council October 2017

Writing this article has given me quite a task as there is so much I would like to share. I came away with more questions than answers but with a heart lighter and definitely hopeful for our future. Trying to condense the weekend into a few paragraphs has been difficult but I have tried.

Michael Long (Clerk to QLRC) offered an introduction by recalling the Manchester Conference of 1895, when a thousand Friends gathered to discern how the Society might save itself from a slow descent into obscurity. It was younger Friends at that time who spoke with eloquence and force of a future for the Society. John Wilhelm Rowntree envisioned a revitalised faith, '*deeper in its basis, clearer in its vision, broader in its charity...and as warm in its love*' rising out of the '*seeming chaos*' of the modern world. [See also page 17]

Michael mentioned the 2005 'Recast' Report (*REpresentation, Communications and Accountability in our SStructures*) which shaped the way we look at our meetings today and wondered if it should be looked at again, with fresh eyes, to see if further implementation might produce rewards.

In our main session we heard from three Friends, Paul Parker, Deborah Rowlands and Julia Ryberg.

Deborah Rowlands, currently Clerk to Britain Yearly Meeting, and Paul Parker, Recording Clerk, combined their powerful and eloquent resources, reporting on their recent journey through North America and the ideas they have brought back. We were challenged with three opening queries:

What gives life?

Why do we meet? and

What is 'Gospel Order'?

According to Sandra Cronk (1942-2000: Quaker author, spiritual nurturer, teacher, and historian of religions), Gospel Order rests on three pillars. Deborah and Paul used the metaphor of a three-legged stool.

The first pillar is our inward life of worship and discernment. In North America, with over 40 yearly meetings, it can be hard to find common ground between them, but in any faith community there must be outward teaching and inward reflection. Do we do enough studying ourselves? North America yearly meetings make regular use of clearness and care committees. How can we make better use of our Quaker practices? Could we try extended worship, communal singing, more programmed worship or worship sharing?

The second pillar is the functioning of the church community. We should function in a way that reflects our needs, rather than doing things in the way we have always done them. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting laid down many of its committees and formed collaboratives of those with particular interests. How do we grow leadership? Are young people able to exercise leadership locally? We should be asking how young people can be enabled. Collectively agreeing minutes is an important part of our discipline. People need to learn it. Minutes give authority and support to work. How often are we in touch with those who don't come to meeting for worship? Can we use our meeting houses to build community? Can we consider using paid support to free up people for other tasks? How good are we at naming our gifts? Nominations must enable us to grow in service. Deadness happens when Friends wish they were somewhere else.

The third is social testimony. What are meetings doing together? In Baltimore Yearly Meeting area there is a Quaker voluntary service project to enable young people to put belief into action with support. We also heard about an example of training groups of 20 young people a year in political lobbying on Quaker concerns. Doing work together is what draws us together. It's about finding our meeting's ministry.

They concluded by once again challenging us. Is there a particular pillar or leg of the stool that our meeting needs to pay attention to? Three legs give

stability. We need to encourage experimentation. It's about removing or replacing things, not adding extra burdens for ourselves.

Julia Ryberg provided a lively and fascinating glimpse of her role as an enabler and supporter of Quaker communities around Europe and the Middle East on behalf of Friends World Committee for Consultation. Reflecting on the previous speakers' analogy of a three legged stool to represent the pillars of Gospel Order, Julia remembered that Helen Rowlands had used a similar analogy when she visited Sweden with 'Woodbrooke on the Road' twenty years ago. In that instance, one leg of the stool was the individual, another the group and the third represented tradition. Julia suggested that tradition can be life-giving or it can also bring stagnation. She feels that we need to expand our ideas about tradition to incorporate context, thinking about context in terms of politics, culture and linguistics, as well as Quaker tradition. She is constantly surprised at the way in which she encounters the presence of war in her work. The memory and legacy of war is strong in young Friends in Europe, even this long after World War II.

The rest of the weekend was given over to reflection, storytelling, group discussions and the chance to watch one of two films on offer: *Of Gods and Men* (*Des hommes et des dieux*, 2010) and *Intouchables* (2011). Both powerful films.

As you can see there is much to reflect on. In the meantime I will continue to wait in the silence and see what rises to the surface.

Katrina McCrea

DAY CONFERENCE

Spiritual and Ethical Challenges for the 21st Century

Speakers & Facilitators: Dr Sarah Chan, Prof Charles Cockell, Prof Tim Hayward, Dr Kieran Oberman, Prof W.C.K. Poon, Dr Naomi Richards, Dr Mathias Thaler, and Dr Elizabeth Drummond Young.

Venue: Sanctuary, Augustine United Church, 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EL.

Date: Saturday 9 December 2017.

Time: Registration: 9.30am-10am. *Day Conference:* 10am-5.15pm.

<http://eicsp.org/events/event-details/501-day-conference-spiritual-and-ethical-challenges-for-the-c21-9-december-2017>

Can a Scientific Man be a Sincere Friend?

SILVANUS P. THOMPSON (1851-1916) was an eminent physicist who wrote on electricity, light and magnetism, as well as what Chambers Biographical Dictionary calls "a witty and effective little book", Calculus Made Easy (1910). His address on the above question was one of the most memorable contributions to the Manchester Conference; this extract runs together two passages, as reproduced in The Later Periods of Quakerism, Rufus M. Jones, 1921.

We have no right to neglect our intellects any more than we have to neglect our bodies. We have no right to starve the one or the other, or to cripple any faculty or limb by persistently refusing to use it. We do not persistently refuse to use our eyes for fear they should show us something we had forgotten, or that our forefathers had incorrectly observed. Neither are we justified in refusing to think for fear that thought logically followed out might change opinions that we or our fathers have cherished. The faculty of reason, the noblest possession of a man's physical being, that which distinguishes him from the brute, is a faculty not only to be prized, trained, and used, but to be trusted and followed. He who neglects his intellectual powers, or refuses to be guided by them in the discovery of truth, is not only an intellectual coward, he is defying the purposes of the Almighty, just as truly as if he were deliberately to starve himself or to put out his own eyes. The heart cannot say to the head, I have no need of thee: else that would dishonour Him who created both.

Here, then, in the stress of modern problems, the true Friend may go forward, finding scope for his faculties, not fearing amid evil report and good report to use them. Man of science he may be, if such be his bent of mind and his training; and man of science none the less sincerely because he is a true Friend. For what is a Friend but one who, illuminated by the quickening Spirit, has learned to cast off the incrustations which ignorance and intellectual pride or intellectual folly have during the centuries built up around the simple code of Christ's teachings? Back to Christ's teachings was the essence of the Quaker reformation of the seventeenth century.

The historian THOMAS HODGKIN (1831-1913) also spoke at the Conference:

[W]e can say [...]: "It is no device invented yesterday to escape from the logical consequences of these discoveries, it is a conclusion to which our forefathers were led by the Spirit of Christ Himself, that we need not ask you to accept the Hebrew chronology or the Hebrew cosmography as a necessary part of an all-rounded and infallible Word of God. Take the book and read it patiently and reverently, and you will find many precious messages of God to your soul. But that which was spoken unscientifically in the childhood of the world by the unscientific Hebrew sage is no essential part of Christ's message to the world today."

Alan Dickinson

Our Friend Alan Dickinson died on 27 September, aged 87. Phil Lucas shared these memories at his funeral.

Pat and I first got to know Alan in 1994, when we came to manage Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House. Alan had been attending that Meeting for many years. We soon learned we had a mutual interest in gardening (though his was far better informed than ours) and we responded to his invitation to visit his lovely garden at Greenfield Lodge, which he and Helen opened regularly under the Scottish Gardens Scheme.

When we bought our house and garden at Stenton, not far from Dunbar, in 1997, Alan and Helen were already thinking about downsizing, and generously offered a wide variety of plants to help us develop our own garden, many of which we still have and cherish. We were delighted to find they were moving to Dunbar, and became regular visitors to their house and listeners to Alan as he shared with us his detailed interest in plants and details of the research in which he was still, in retirement, engaged. Neither of us having scientific education past O-level, we were often bemused but also entertained by his quirky and delightful sense of humour. Visiting 63a Belhaven Road almost always involved a tour of the garden and inspection of whatever just then was providing interest.

After Helen's death, Alan became a frequent visitor to our house and it was a pleasure to share his delight in the simple food we cooked for him. He craved company, and found his loneliness painful.

He continued to be generous with gifts of plants and, on one occasion, after we had admired it, gave us his beautiful coffee table book of Vermeers's paintings, which we treasure and keep on display. Perhaps he was in love with the girl with the pearl earring. He shared our addiction to *The Guardian* and often urged us to read articles he thought we might have missed.

Alan was a man of great integrity and generosity, driven by a powerful social conscience, enormously enthusiastic for the things which interested him (his science, plants, saving the NHS and creating a more equal society); driven, eccentric, charming and kind. He found the physical and mental decline of the last few months puzzling ... 'It's weird,' he said frequently. We are glad that his suffering ended when it did but we already miss him greatly.

The Nobel Peace Prize for 2017

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017 to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). The organization is receiving the award for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition of such weapons.

We live in a world where the risk of nuclear weapons being used is greater than it has been for a long time. Some states are modernizing their nuclear arsenals, and there is a real danger that more countries will try to procure nuclear weapons, as exemplified by North Korea. Nuclear weapons pose a constant threat to humanity and all life on earth. Through binding international agreements, the international community has previously adopted prohibitions against land mines, cluster munitions and biological and chemical weapons. Nuclear weapons are even more destructive, but have not yet been made the object of a similar international legal prohibition.

Through its work, ICAN has helped to fill this legal gap. An important argument in the rationale for prohibiting nuclear weapons is the unacceptable human suffering that a nuclear war will cause. ICAN is a coalition of non-governmental organizations from around 100 different countries around the globe. The coalition has been a driving force in prevailing upon the world's nations to pledge to cooperate with all relevant stakeholders in efforts to stigmatise, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons. To date, 108 states have made such a commitment, known as the Humanitarian Pledge.

Furthermore, ICAN has been the leading civil society actor in the endeavour to achieve a prohibition of nuclear weapons under international law. On 7 July 2017, 122 of the UN member states acceded to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. As soon as the treaty has been ratified by 50 states, the ban on nuclear weapons will enter into force and will be binding under international law for all the countries that are party to the treaty.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee is aware that an international legal prohibition will not in itself eliminate a single nuclear weapon, and that so far neither the states that already have nuclear weapons nor their closest allies support the nuclear weapon ban treaty. The Committee wishes to emphasize that the next steps towards attaining a world free of nuclear weapons must involve the nuclear-armed states. This year's Peace Prize is therefore also a call upon these states to initiate serious negotiations with a view to the gradual, balanced and carefully monitored elimination of the al-most 15,000 nuclear weapons in the world. Five of the states that currently have nuclear weapons – the USA, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China – have already committed to this objective through their accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1970. The Non-Proliferation Treaty will remain the primary international legal instru-

ment for promoting nuclear disarmament and preventing the further spread of such weapons.

It is now 71 years since the UN General Assembly, in its very first resolution, advocated the importance of nuclear disarmament and a nuclear weapon-free world. With this year's award, the Norwegian Nobel Committee wishes to pay tribute to ICAN for giving new momentum to the efforts to achieve this goal.

The decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2017 to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons has a solid grounding in Alfred Nobel's will. The will specifies three different criteria for awarding the Peace Prize: the promotion of fraternity between nations, the advancement of disarmament and arms control and the holding and promotion of peace congresses. ICAN works vigorously to achieve nuclear disarmament. ICAN and a majority of UN member states have contributed to fraternity between nations by supporting the Humanitarian Pledge. And through its inspiring and innovative support for the UN negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons, ICAN has played a major part in bringing about what in our day and age is equivalent to an international peace congress.

It is the firm conviction of the Norwegian Nobel Committee that ICAN, more than anyone else, has in the past year given the efforts to achieve a world without nuclear weapons a new direction and new vigour.

Oslo, 6 October 2017

https://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2017/press.html

Being a Sanctuary Meeting – Questions & Answers

Your meeting is invited to become a Sanctuary Meeting: part of a national network of Quaker Meetings working to replace the government policy of creating a 'hostile environment' for immigrants in Britain with a culture of welcoming hospitality which answers that of God in every person.

What does being a Sanctuary Meeting mean?

Being a Sanctuary Meeting means a commitment to building a culture of welcome, challenging racism in all of its forms and helping change the laws on destitution, detention and deportation.

Where did the idea come from?

Quakers across Britain are working in different ways to welcome newcomers to the country, including by supporting and establishing City of Sanctuary groups, lobbying local councils, visiting detention centres and campaigning with the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network. Friends expressed a desire for greater support with current work and developing new projects. They also wanted a more coordinated way of working together for political change.

Sanctuary Meetings forms part of a wider Quaker Peace & Social Witness 'Sanctuary Everywhere' Programme, working towards a manifesto which includes abolition of immigration detention centres and the right for asylum seekers to work.

What support do Sanctuary Meetings get?

Sanctuary Meetings will be supported with regular tele-conferences identifying political opportunities for change; publicity materials; an annual retreat; and pamphlets exploring issues around destitution, detention and deportation. You'll have access to training supporting you to build alliances with migrant and BME-led groups, and you'll be linked to like-minded Meetings for sharing ideas and supporting one another.

What kinds of thing would we do as a Sanctuary Meeting?

The form a sanctuary meeting takes could vary depending on a meeting's resources, location and the local organisations they may link with, but all will be linked in their desire to provide a safe and welcoming space. Here are some ideas based on things that are already happening:

- Holding at least one public meeting a year with migrant- or BME-led anti-racist groups in your area;
- Lobbying local politicians on issues of destitution, detention and deportation;
- Assisting in campaigns to resist deportations;
- With support from the training, finding ways of dismantling 'borders' to participation in Quaker community and campaigns;
- If your meeting has a local City of Sanctuary group, affiliating with it; or, if it doesn't, finding other ways of befriending and accompanying people seeking sanctuary;
- If your meeting is based in a rural area, linking up with an urban group to provide holidays or short breaks for asylum seekers;
- If your meeting is close to a Quaker school, working together on projects to assist asylum-seeking children;
- If your meeting is within travelling distance of a detention centre, at least one person joining a visiting group, upheld by – and reporting back to – the meeting. You might also consider taking part in the project to observe immigration bail hearings (*see <https://bailobs.org/>*);
- If your meeting (or members of it) own property, consider making it into a House of Hospitality where longer term residents and destitute asylum seekers may live together.

How do Sanctuary Meetings relate to City of Sanctuary?

Quakers were amongst the founders of City of Sanctuary, and many meetings support local City of Sanctuary groups – local networks that welcome people seeking sanctuary. Sanctuary Meetings are actively encouraged to be part of local City of Sanctuary/Town of Sanctuary networks.

How do Sanctuary Meetings relate to the Quaker Asylum & Refugee Network?

The Sanctuary Meetings Project has been developed with Quakers across Britain including many members of the Quaker Asylum & Refugee Network. The regular advocacy tele-conference will also be co-hosted by the Quaker Asylum & Refugee Network.

Our Meeting is already doing things to welcome people seeking sanctuary. What difference would it make to be a Sanctuary Meeting?

Part of the rationale for the Sanctuary Meetings Project is to provide a way for Quakers and Quaker meetings already active in the movement to welcome people seeking sanctuary with a coordinated political voice for change. It also meets the request for infrastructural support such as training, retreats and networking.

Our Meeting doesn't do anything to welcome people seeking sanctuary yet. Can we still become a Sanctuary Meeting?

Absolutely yes. Through the training and discussions in your meeting, we hope you will find the actions that are right for your community.

My Meeting doesn't feel able to do anything to welcome people seeking sanctuary, but I do. What can I do?

You can still join the lobbying tele-conferences as an individual. Just email timothyg@quaker.org.uk with your name, telephone number and where you live to receive an invitation.

What does 'Sanctuary' mean in this context?

Adapted from the definition offered by the Quaker Jim Corbett, co-founder of the Sanctuary Churches Movement in the US, we understand a Sanctuary Meeting as a protective community with people whose basic human rights are being violated by government officials. The public practice of sanctuary also holds the state accountable for its violation of human rights.

How do we become a Sanctuary Meeting?

Being a Sanctuary Meeting is a whole-meeting commitment. To become a Sanctuary Meeting, take the idea (perhaps with this Q & A) to your local Business Meeting. You don't need to decide at once what activities you will engage in. The starting point is simply to identify one or two people willing to act as a link with the Programme Coordinator for one or two years, and email their names and telephone numbers to timothyg@quaker.org.uk.

How long will the project last?

Sanctuary Meetings is legacy funded to the end of 2019. There will be a review in mid-2019 to which all participating Meetings will be able to contribute. The end of the project will not mark the end of Friends' commitment to those forced to flee; we hope the processes put in place will enable Friends to continue working together for justice and peace.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 23 September 2017 at Quaker Meeting House, Abbey Row, Kelso

2017/09/01 Worship and Introductions

We began our business meeting with a period of worship.

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

2017/09/02 The Minutes of our last meeting, held on 15 August, 2017 at Scottish Churches Housing Action, 44 Hanover Street, Edinburgh, have been signed and entered in the minute book.

2017/09/03 Matters Arising

Newly admitted remand prisoners without personal cash

Further to minute 2017/08/06, Quaker prison chaplaincy at HMP Edinburgh, in response to our email to Michael Matheson, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, we received a letter from Stuart Henderson from the Operations Directorate of the Scottish Prison Service. He makes the following points:

- Remand prisoners have in theory the opportunity to work and earn money but priority for jobs is given to convicted prisoners;
- The essential needs of all prisoners are met by the Scottish Prison Service;
- Each prisoner is allowed to send one letter per week at the prison's expense.

We are dissatisfied with this reply and ask our clerk to draw the attention of the Scottish Prison Service Operations Directorate to the unanswered questions in our original communication.

We ask those members of Polmont Meeting who are Michael Matheson's constituents in Falkirk West to take up the issues we raised with him.

2017/08904 Recording Between Meetings Decision

We record the following:

31 August, 2017: We appoint by between-meetings procedure Kerstin Philips (Central Edinburgh), who is a member of the Area Meeting Funeral Arrangements Committee, to attend a day conference, "We need to talk about dying". The conference is on 21 September and is being organised by Faith in Older People, under the auspices of the Church of Scotland. We ask our treasurer to pay the fee of £40.

*Elizabeth Allen, Clerk
Alastair Cameron, Assistant Clerk*

2017/09/05 Area Meeting Nominations Committee Convenor's report

Don Stubbings, Convenor of Area Meeting Nominations Committee has presented a comprehensive analysis of the issues facing this committee. [See page 5]

Despite many months of searching, Nominations Committee is not able to fill all vacancies, as not enough Friends are available for service.

In searching for the way forward, we must recognise that the Religious Society of Friends and society in general have changed radically and there are many demands on Friends' time. These pressures and others also affect attendance at local meetings: Central Edinburgh is now a middle-sized meeting, whereas in the past it was a large meeting.

In attempting to improve the situation, Nominations Committee now records why Friends say no to an approach; has organised jobs into required, essential and desirable; has raised the question of support for those serving the Society; and is developing more flexible practices in the way it finds Friends to serve. On the suggestion of Nominations Committee, Area Meeting agreed that attenders may be appointed to pastoral care and oversight roles.

We were reminded that our committees and appointments exist to support our spiritual and community life but we must be realistic about what jobs are truly needed.

We have spent time in worship reflecting on the situation.

When considering the shortage of people to appoint to area meeting positions, we recognise that we are not alone in facing this issue. We hope to approach the problem positively and to find new ways to work together. We wish to identify processes and techniques, which help us to know each other spiritually. We wish to help each other find our gifts and to take the opportunity for that service which energizes and enriches our lives and that of the Society.

We agree to set up an area meeting threshing meeting to consider this crisis we have reached of being unable to find sufficient Friends to serve in area meeting roles. The threshing meeting will be open to all but should be attended by area meeting and local meeting clerks and convenors of area meeting committees. We ask our clerks to invite Friends from the wider Quaker community in Scotland to attend, as this is a wide-ranging problem.

We thank Don for his report and the work he has done in preparing it.

2017/09/06 Nominations Committee report

1) Appointments

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

To serve from October 2017 to end of September 2018:

- (a) Nominations Committee – Don Stubbings, Central Edinburgh
- (b) Festival Committee – Alan Sayle, Central Edinburgh
- (c) Festival Committee – Cathie McCurrach, Central Edinburgh

To serve from October 2017 to end of December 2018

- (d) Interim Library Committee - Jackie Matas, Polmont

To serve from October 2017 to end of September 2020:

- (e) Treasurer for the Library – Sara Davies, Central Edinburgh
- (f) Meeting House Management Committee –
David Sterratt, Central Edinburgh (2nd triennium)
- (g) Meeting House Management Committee – Sue Sierra, South
Edinburgh

We appoint these Friends accordingly.

2) Completion of service

We note that the following Friends completed their service
earlier this year:

- (a) Rhoda Mackenzie, Central Edinburgh, Archives
- (b) Sarah Phizacklea, Central Edinburgh, Festival Committee

We note that the following Friends will complete their service
at the end of September:

- (c) Jane Pearn, Kelso, Elder
- (d) Rachel Frith, Central Edinburgh, Festival Committee
- (e) Laurie Naumann, Central Fife, Pastoral Care & Oversight
- (f) Martin Burnell, S. Edinburgh, Meeting House Management Cttee.
- (g) Janet Grimwade, C'l. Edinburgh, Mtg House Management Cttee

We thank these Friends for the service they have given to Area Meeting.

We thank Nominations Committee for the work it does on our behalf.

2017/09/07 Area Meeting Treasurer

Our current Area Meeting Treasurer has been serving since July 2013 and completes his service at the end of June 2018.

Nominations Committee has reported that despite searching for eighteen months, it has been unable to find a Friend willing to serve as treasurer. Area meeting has been asked to consider the way forward.

We agree to set up a short-term group to bring suggestions about how to proceed to the area meeting on 25 November, in Musselburgh.

We appoint Kate Arnot, Polmont and Liz Law, Central Edinburgh, to this group. Don Stubbings has made himself available to advise the group. We will ask John Philips if he is also willing to do so. We suggest that Kate and Liz co-opt a third member of the group.

2017/09/08 Membership Matters

Applications for Membership: David Clarke

We have heard read the report of David Sterratt and Justin Kenrick's visit to David Clarke on 29 August, 2017. In his youth David worshipped in the Church of Ireland and was attracted to many aspects of Anglicanism but not the 39 Articles and militarism. He has been attending Central Edinburgh Meeting since 1999 and is committed to Quakerism and Christianity but remains open to new inspiration. He now feels it is right for him to move forward into membership, and understands the responsibilities and commitment that membership entails.

We are pleased to accept David into membership of this Area Meeting and ask Rachel Frith to welcome him and inform Central Edinburgh Local Meeting.

Transfer of Membership – out: Gregory Valatin

We have received a request for transfer of membership of Gregory Valatin of Central Edinburgh Meeting to Surrey & Hampshire Border Area Meeting. We ask our Assistant Clerk (Membership) to send a Certificate of transfer to Surrey & Hampshire Border Area Meeting.

2017/09/09 Attendance at events, courses and conferences: guidance on financial support

Further to minute 2017/06/08, Attendance at courses, the guidelines for applying for bursary help to attend conferences, courses and events have been updated and the draft has been circulated in advance of this meeting. We accept the updated guidelines. Copies of the application forms will be sent to overseers.

2017/09/10 Universal Basic income

Speaking on behalf of the General Meeting Parliamentary Engagement Working Group, Phil Lucas has told us about the group's main focus on economic justice.

This began with a symposium last autumn, which was followed up with a meeting for invited representatives of various concerned organisations and experts in the field.

The group is looking in detail at Basic Income and encourages all Friends to become better informed about it so that we can discuss it in depth.

Phil Lucas has prepared a synopsis of Annie Miller's book *A Basic Income Handbook* (Luath Press). We ask our clerk to attach it to the minutes.

2017/09/11 Provisional Dates for Area Meeting in 2018

Proposed dates are:

Monday evening:	22 January
Saturday all day:	17 March
Monday evening:	14 May
Saturday all day:	23 June
Tuesday evening:	14 August
Saturday all day:	22 September
Saturday all day:	24 November

Please notify the clerks of any suggested changes to these dates.

We will agree the final dates and venues at our next meeting.

2017/09/12 Correspondence and notices

a. George Lakey will talk about "A Divided Britain: What can we learn from the Nordics?" referring to the provocative answer in his new book *Viking Economics*. Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, 9 October, 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm. [See page 12]

b. Jane Tingle of Polmont Meeting would like to start a Footpaths Group in Central Scotland (see www.leicesterfootpaths.org). She asks anyone interested in this to contact her.

c. Some Friends in Kelso Meeting are exploring the possibility of holding a Kindlers Workshop. They invite any local meeting with an interest in this to contact Barbara-Jean Borthwick: bjborthwick@gmail.com

2017/09/13 What we did today

We have spent time together as an all-age community, starting our day with worship during which *Quaker Faith & Practice* 2.89 was read. We have shared food together at lunchtime and walked together in the afternoon, exploring Kelso, guided by Marianne Butler from the meeting. We have heard about the return of otters to the Tweed in an illustrated presentation by Anna Levin from Polmont Meeting.

While the adults were talking about church affairs, the children had their own session. They showed us what they had made at it.

We finished our day together in worship.

We thank Kelso Friends for being our hosts today.

2017/09/14 Closing minute

19 members, 5 attenders and 2 children, representing seven Local Meetings have attended all or part of this Area Meeting, as indicated below:

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

We next meet on Saturday, 25 November, 2017 at Fisherrow Community Centre, South Street, Musselburgh EH21 6AT, for an all-day, all-age Area Meeting, hosted by Portobello & Musselburgh Local Meeting.

(Signed)
Elizabeth Allen, Clerk

From THE COMMON QUESTION
And so I sometimes think our prayers
Might well be merged in one;
And nest and perch and hearth and church
Repeat "Thy will be done!"

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

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
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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 sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk 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: Fisherrow Community Centre, South St, Musselburgh EH21 6AT. <i>Children welcome.</i>	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
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Fourth Sunday in the Month

North 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. 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.