

TAYSIDE QUAKER

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Closing date for the next edition is Saturday, 16th January 2016

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(I am happy to receive documents in formats such as rtf, doc or docx.)

Dates for future meetings

East Scotland Area Meeting

13 February 2016	<i>Dundee</i>
7 May 2016	<i>St. Andrews</i>
20 August 2016	<i>Perth</i>
5 November 2016	<i>Dundee</i>

General Meeting for Scotland

5 March 2016	<i>St. Andrews</i>
11 June 2016	<i>Venue to be confirmed</i>
10 September 2016	<i>Aberdeen</i>
12/13 November 2016	<i>Perth</i>
11 March 2017	<i>Edinburgh</i>

East Scotland Area Meeting:

Scottish charity number SC0020698

All opinions in Tayside Quaker are those of the individual writers and not necessarily of The Religious Society of Friends.

East Scotland Area Meeting, November 2015

Dear Friends,

The next Area Meeting will take place in Perth on Saturday 7 November, at 11 am with refreshments available from 10.30 am. All are welcome. The venue is the Subud Centre, 7 St. Leonards Bank, Perth PH2 8EB. Limited parking is available at the centre with other parking nearby. Soup will be provided at lunchtime, but please bring your own sandwiches to supplement this.

We will have reports of recent conferences and gatherings, including Meeting for Sufferings in September. We will also consider follow-up actions needed following the decision last time to lay down Angus Meeting.

In the afternoon session our speaker will be Mairi Campbell-Jack, the parliamentary engagement officer for Scottish Quakers. She was appointed earlier this year. We will hear from her what she has been doing so far and how she sees her role developing, and we will share our ideas about future priorities.

Please come, and do encourage others who may not be regular participants at Area Meeting. It is a good opportunity to meet Quakers from other parts of our area. Attenders are very welcome, but it would be helpful if they could let Busa Cochrane-Muir know in advance on 01333 360438 or lekjom@lesliebank.eclipse.co.uk. Occasionally we have agenda items for members only when attenders are asked to withdraw.

In friendship,

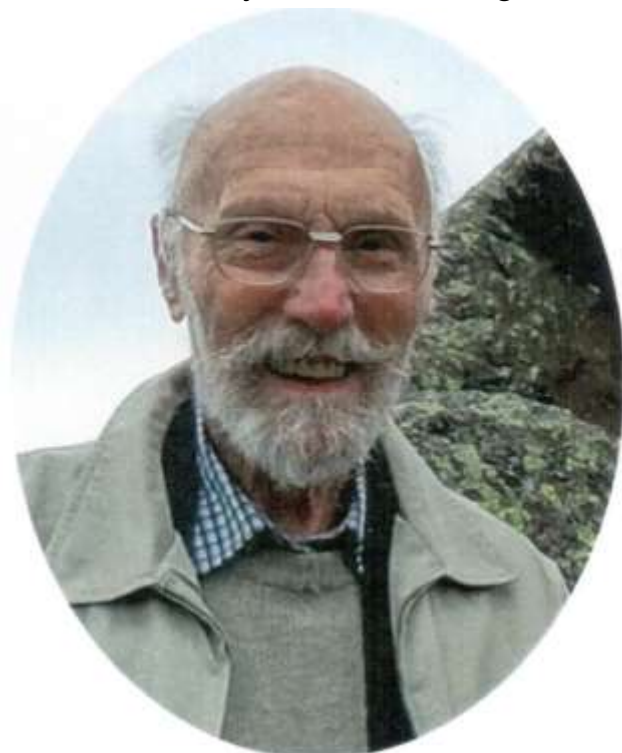
Robin Waterston

Co-clerk

Arnold William Warren 1923 – 2015

Arnold was 91 when he died on 5th August. He and Lorna, his wife of almost 70 years, came to Quakers in Colchester in response to a newspaper advert and with the encouragement of a visiting district nurse who happened to be a Quaker and who spoke to them about Quakerism.

Arnold, who was first and foremost a family man, was an inspiration and an adventurous father to his five children, sons Keith, Barry, Mike and Steve, and daughter Lin. He was born in Edmonton, North London and was in the Merchant Navy before working as an electrical engineer in Essex and abroad,



once living on a houseboat on the River Lee before arriving in Montrose in 1971 to settle.

Part of Arnold's earlier history included a passion for walking, cycling and sea faring activities. He was a keen Scouter and there are many tales of camping in Glenesk and Tarfside, jamborees and canoeing. He was thrilled to have met Chief Scout Baden-Powell!

He was always an active man and even in retirement was as adventurous as ever, an enthusiastic member of the Probus Club and in

demand as a speaker on many topics to do with his life and work. He and Lorna entered and gained a Discovery Award in his late seventies, adding drystone dyking and wood turning to his wealth of skills. His work for Oxfam in recycling goods over-spilled to Lilac Cottage, garage and workshop in a serious way! Even the conservatory built to regain some living space was filled up too. It could be said that Arnold was a hoarder, as Lilac Cottage testifies!

His faith and his Quakerism shone through everything he did and he was always cheerful and optimistic, taking an active interest in each of our lives in Angus meeting, in politics and current affairs. He and Lorna welcomed Friends to Lilac Cottage over many years for worship and for business meetings. Arnold's thoughtful ministry drew on his own personal experiences,

especially his travels and his analogies with Scouting. He was also a sociable man and enjoyed gatherings and events where he enjoyed conversations on a wide number of topics. We remember his and Lorna's pleasure on the Pilgrimage to 1652 country with Angus Meeting.

Friends have spoken of his 'kindness and humour', of 'how welcoming he was at my first Quaker Meeting', and 'a very warm spirited Friend'. Arnold was well loved and a role model for many of us. We will miss him and give thanks to God for his long, happy life and how much he shared of himself with us. He lived Advices and Queries 27 to the fullest.

Pamala McDougall

Arnold Warren: A personal view

In losing Arnold we have all lost a friend.

My enduring memory of Arnold is that of seeing him standing at his door with a beaming smile on his face, saying "Come in. Come in. How nice to see you", as though your arrival had made his day.

I am sure that is the impression he left with most of those who knew him.

After living his early life in North London he joined the Merchant Navy as a Technical Officer (Electrical Engineering) in 1944, travelling the world and helping his Skipper to avoid being sunk by U-Boats!

At this time another important event occurred. He and his lifelong partner Lorna met and married!

In 1947 he was demobbed and started looking for a job, along with thousands of others, in a Britain struggling to get back on her feet and adapting to the loss of Empire status. Eventually he joined the Vulcan Insurance company as a Technical Inspector, travelling the country checking out the state of the Company's customers' electrical (and other) installations for compliance with regulations and state of maintenance.

This was as much a "people" job as a technical one and many an awkward situation will have been eased by Arnold's cheerful friendly manner. He travelled widely in the UK and was eventually transferred to Scotland in 1952, settling in Montrose. He had become a Friend in 1950 and his and Lorna's house in the Mid-Links soon became a place of Worship for a few local

Friends, of whom I was eventually to become one. This informal group eventually grew to become Angus Meeting.

He and Lorna were to spend the rest of Arnold's life in the Montrose area during which time they entered fully into local activities, Arnold becoming a Scout Master and the two of them active members of the Seaman's Mission, which met seamen off their boats and welcomed them ashore with a cup of tea and advice on Montrose affairs.

I mustn't forget that he and Lorna printed and distributed the Tayside Quaker for many years and acted as elders and overseers for the Angus Meeting.

During all this they both found time to raise a family of five, four boys and one girl, several of whom still live and work in and around Montrose.

Arnold did have one fault, or perhaps just an idiosyncrasy. He was an awful squirrel! I think he found it physically painful to actually throw anything away! Bless him!

Finally, a little tribute which I came across and which seems to me to fit.

Reflection:

Some people come in to our lives and move our souls to dance.

They awaken us to new understanding with the passing whisper of their wisdom.

Some people make our world more beautiful.

They stay in our lives for a while, leave footprints on our hearts and we are never ever the same.

(Anon.)

Dennis Murray

Nora Johnston

A full gathering of Friends and family members joined to celebrate Nora's life in St. Andrews Meeting House. Nora was a loving and devoted wife and mother who had so bravely suffered illness for over two years, much of this time in hospital.

After a lifetime in Glasgow, Ian and Nora moved to Strathkiness six years ago and continued to support Friends as they had in Glasgow for many years. In particular, with Ian, she was a great support sustaining the midweek Meeting, so valued by a nucleus of St. Andrews Friends and students.

My personal acquaintance with Nora came largely through hospital visits where she spent so much time. There I learned that Nora was the ultimate stoic. No complaints, no misery, just a highly intelligent, delightful woman and excellent conversationalist. We reminisced about a shared experience of war-time life for young children in big cities and of life as a school teacher.

There can be no greater testimony to Nora's special qualities than when a young grand-daughter has the courage to stand up and contribute to a packed Meeting in the celebration of her life.

Len Goad

Why you? Why not you?

The worship, work and witness of Quakers in Britain start with you and with me.

I'm writing this contribution to Tayside Quaker to encourage you to complete a Quaker Service Information Form.

Some of you may be prevented by age and/or health issues from considering doing so. Nevertheless I hope that you will read on, look at the enclosed form, and encourage others. I hope too that those of you who have already completed such a form, or are already serving in some capacity will do the same.

The Quaker Service Information Form is a tool used by those nominating bodies charged with bringing forward nominations to roles within the centrally managed work of Britain Yearly Meeting. The forms provide such bodies with names and information about Friends who are willing to consider serving in the centrally managed work.

So, you have some objections I'm sure.

You're probably saying that you're too busy. It's quite possible that you are too busy at the moment. However, if, as a consequence of completing a Form, you do receive a letter or email asking you to consider accepting nomination to a particular role, it may come at a time when responsibilities have shifted and you can find time.

You might also be saying that you don't want the hassle of trips to London. I'm reminded of a Quaker Friend of mine in another Scottish AM who, when I

asked her about service as AM representative to Meeting for Sufferings, said “Oh, they won’t ask me. I don’t grumble enough about having to go down to London.”

Please note that not all meetings take place in London these days, and some committees don’t meet face to face every time, but use Skype or telephone conferencing. If you did accept nomination and were appointed and did have to go to London a few times a year, it could be a positive experience. Your travel and accommodation expenses to attend meetings will be paid, and staff can help with hotel bookings. You might be able to extend your visit and catch up with long lost English cousins, visit a gallery, or even do something frivolous (I think it’s allowed!) like shopping on Oxford Street.

You might be worried about being asked to do something you don’t think you can do. Well, that’s true. You might be. It’s happened to me. You might also be asked to do something that means you might have less time for service to your Local or Area Meeting. And that’s true also.

If the Religious Society of Friends were a secular organisation, those last two objections would be entirely valid. But it isn’t a secular organisation, it’s a religious one. Every time a Nominations Committee at any level meets, it meets as a Meeting for Worship for Business. While it’s helpful for nominations committees to have sound administration in place, it is essential that such a committee never forgets that its purpose is to discern the names of those it would be right to nominate for service in the roles under consideration, and to consider who might be enriched by such service. The phrase ‘the will of God’ is around here. Use it if you’re comfortable with it.

If as a consequence of offering service in the centrally managed work, your name is discerned in this way, the letter/email will come. Then it’s to you to weigh up the effect accepting might have on your busy life, your aversion to leaving Scotland (!), the feeling that you can’t do what might be involved and what the effect might be on your present and local Quaker service. You would need to discern whether it is right, (‘the will of God’), for you to accept the nomination proposed.

I’m galloping ahead here. I’m full circle now. I’m asking you to consider whether it would be right for you to complete a Quaker Service Information Form, signalling your willingness to be considered for service in the wider world of Quaker worship, work and witness, outside your local and area meeting.

If you're reading a hard copy of TQ there's a form tucked in. If you use a computer you can complete the form at <http://old.quaker.org.uk/quaker-service-information-form>

The notes to the form provide more information and it would be worthwhile reading Quaker Faith and Practice 3.22 to 3.25 for an overview of nominations work generally.

Beryl Milner

East Scotland Area Meeting (AM), 22 August 2015, St. Andrews

St. Andrews Friends hosted Area Meeting at which 26 Friends attended. The reading in the opening worship was taken from Quaker Faith & Practice 21.14 on knowing and accepting ourselves.

We received Meeting for Sufferings for July 4 2015 (MfS) report from Beryl Milner. Beryl has written a full report for this newsletter.

Dates for Area Meetings in 2016 were identified (Saturday 13 February in Dundee, Saturday 7 May in St. Andrews, Saturday 20 August in Perth and Saturday 5 November in Dundee) noting that General Meeting will be held in St. Andrews on 5 March 2016 and in Perth on 12 – 13 November 2016.

With sadness and understanding Area Meeting agreed to lay down Angus Meeting with immediate effect. We thank all Friends and Attenders who have supported Angus Meeting for so many years and are saddened that it is no longer possible to sustain the Meeting. We hold all those from Angus in our love and affection. At a further date, we may wish to gather together memories and experiences of Angus Meeting. The Clerks have been in contact with staff in Friends House for advice on procedural matters.

In the afternoon session we heard from Robin Baker and Maureen Lambie on Quaker work in prisons.

Robin Baker spoke of his calling to working in prisons, and the tortuous stages of first getting official permission to become a prison chaplain. He is now working through these stages in Scotland. The inmates in the prison where he worked ranged from prisoners on remand to high security offenders, and from repeat offenders to those experiencing prison for the first time. Some had poignant and tragic narratives. The role included non-judgemental listening and giving support to life events such as bereavement.

Some prisoners claimed to have been wrongly convicted, and some of these really may have been innocent. There are particular difficulties for those who assert their innocence, since they have less access to privileges and may forfeit eligibility for early release.

Maureen Lambie spoke of her work as a Samaritan working in Perth Prison. Initially she was trained to do counselling directly with prisoners who requested it. Later, they developed posts as "Listeners" for inmates who would be trained sufficiently to equip them to have confidential conversations with other prisoners in their cells. Maureen assisted in the training of these Listeners.

This generated a period of reflection and discussion.

The full minutes have been sent to all Local Meeting Clerks, all Elders and Overseers.

Busa Cochrane-Muir

Co-Clerk

Meeting for Sufferings, Friends House, July 2015

I attended Meeting for Sufferings on July 4th in the role of Alternate, or understudy, as Robin Waterston, the Representative was prevented.

This was the first meeting of the new triennium and both Representatives and Alternates had been encouraged to attend, so we were a larger than usual gathering.

The morning was designed to provide information, and did so in large volumes and digestible chunks. From Ethel Livermore, the Clerk of the Meeting, we had information about the history of the Meeting, from its beginning in 1675, and its changing function over the years since then. Paul Parker, the Recording Clerk, explained his role, and explained succinctly the staffing structure that carries out the centrally managed work in the world and the work to support the life and worship of Quaker Meetings in Britain. Jennifer Barraclough, the clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) trustees, and Ingrid Greenhow who will be clerk next year, spoke of the work of trustees and of the relationship between the two bodies. We were reminded that BYM trustees are all members of Meeting for Sufferings AND are all members of Local and Area Meetings.

There was an opportunity to clarify and establish our understanding of discernment, and of how a Meeting may move towards discernment.

Anne Ullathorne, the Assistant Clerk of Meeting for Sufferings, provided some detail about the nuts and bolts of how Meeting for Sufferings works in practice, how agendas are compiled, and about the role of the Support Group. The clue is in the name!

Now I don't know the last time that East Scotland Area Meeting sent an unsolicited minute to Meeting for Sufferings, but I would like to share with you what will happen if and when we do. Juliet Prager, Deputy Recording Clerk and Secretary to Meeting for Sufferings, outlined the process. Minutes from Area Meetings (AMs) are received either by Graham Spackman, who provides administrative support to the Meeting, or by Juliet herself. They are forwarded to Arrangements Group whose role is to assist the clerks in the preparation of agendas. Before discussion at Arrangements Group however, it may be necessary to ask the AM to answer questions of detail, to provide additional information, to confirm that the Concern (if the minute is about a Concern) has been tested according to our practice. There may be other AM minutes on the same or related subjects and Arrangements Group may feel it right to group these minutes together at a future meeting. There may be a relevant agenda item already scheduled when the minute might be better received. There may be ongoing work in Quaker Life or Quaker Peace and Social Witness and information about this will help in establishing how best the AM minute may be presented at Meeting for Sufferings.

AM minutes brought to Meeting for Sufferings may be passed to other parts of the organisation for information, for action or for advice, or representatives may be asked to ensure that the AM they are from is aware of the minute. A variety of outcomes is possible.

Over lunch we met in groups with our geographical peers, and in the afternoon session received a number of AM minutes. From these I'd like to draw your attention to three where there may already be interest in your Local Meeting, or from individuals.

The first is about work to assist refugees and asylum seekers, as well as work to challenge the popular rhetoric about people in that position. More information is available from:

The Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN) www.qarn.org.uk and from the Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA) www.qcea.org

The second is about the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). I know that this is important. It is also complex. We are encouraged to engage with our MPs and MEPs and there are some useful links on the QCEA website to help us to understand the issues and to do that.

<https://www.qcea.org/work/economic-justice/ttip/>

Finally Luton and Leighton AM, in their minute, expressed the hope that any meetings or gatherings held to commemorate World War 1 are multi-national, focusing on reconciliation and committing participants to peace building. If any of us are involved, or are planning such events we might like to think about this.

By the end of the day all of us were flagging rather in the summer weather and heat of London. Despite that I felt that it had been an informative and valuable today, setting the stage for more hard work to come.

Beryl Milner

Meeting for Sufferings, Friends House, September 2015

There was a wide range of topics on the agenda. Does the book Quaker Faith and Practice need to be fully revised soon? Maybe and maybe not – no decision has been taken yet. But eventually the time will come, and a committee of Quakers has been thinking about how to prepare for that time. They feel that most of us could benefit from becoming more familiar with the material in the book before we can make a properly grounded decision. One of the items at Meeting for Sufferings was a report from the group explaining their thinking. They have prepared a timetable, starting in October, for groups or individuals to look at the various chapters in the book, as well as ideas for study. It starts with chapter 21 – Personal Journey. We responded warmly to this approach, and the hope is that it will be taken up locally.

How should Quakers best set priorities for national and local work? We had a document “A Framework for Action 2009-2014” and we need a successor. We received a report from a special committee which recommended a different kind of framework, shorter and offering a vision of how we do things, rather than just what we should do. Across the country, are our Meetings for Worship central to our living as Quakers? Do we understand and live by Quaker discipline – letting ourselves be guided by the Spirit and not by our egos? Do we let our lives speak? Are Quaker values active in the world? It

was agreed that these were important challenges for all of us, and the document “Our faith in the future” was accepted. There will be a supporting document going into the six identified aspects in more detail.

We received Minutes from two Area Meetings asking for our support for concerns. The first was North Wales, proposing that a UK-wide Quaker Credit Union be established. There was support for the principle of credit unions, but a fair degree of scepticism as to whether the proposal was either feasible or desirable. The second was from Southern Marches (in the Hereford area), proposing a memorial to “innocent victims of war” at the National Memorial Arboretum. Much of the discussion revolved around what this actually meant, and whether as Quakers we could accept concepts of innocence and guilt in the context of war. Two representatives from each Area Meeting were given time to present their case. In both cases, significant reservations were expressed, but the Minutes encouraged the Area Meetings to “continue their work”. In the case of the Memorial idea, the Meeting supported Southern Marches in their endeavour, but asked them to try to find a better name.

Theological language and concepts do not often exercise Quakers in our business meetings, but one item took us deeply into this area. The World Council of Churches are asking for responses to a report they have written on whether there is a common vision of what the churches are for. Although we are not a member church of the WCC, we do have a positive relationship with them. We were offered a text which could serve as a response from British Quakers. This document “A Spirit-led Church” has been through a number of drafts. An earlier one was considered by Sufferings in February, and returned to the drafting committee for further work and revision of some of the language. Substantial changes had been made, and the new version was endorsed with some enthusiasm. I felt this has been a good example of a Quakerly consultative process, where the various drafts have been open for comment from Quakers across Britain, and the inputs provided considered deeply and ideas incorporated. The final version will be sent to the WCC and will be available for use within local Meetings, along with a study guide.

The meeting was effectively clerked by Ethel Livermore, and I found the atmosphere and the deliberations centred and thoughtful.

Robin Waterston

News from Local Meetings

Dundee



Quaker picnic at Gagie,
September 2015
(Photos from Sheila Phillips)



St. Andrews

Mostly our collective thinking during the last month or so has largely been taken up by Ben Pink Dandelion's 2014 **Swarthmore Lecture "Open to Transformation"**. His visit to Dundee on 20th September acted as a catalyst for those Friends who had not already read his lecture and for those who needed a memory refresher. Joyce Taylor led a thoughtful preparatory meeting on the 17th September so that with this opportunity to engage, listen and participate, the greatest benefit could be gained from his visit to this part of Scotland.

Following the meeting at Dundee two more meetings have been arranged, one already held and the other will have taken place by the time TQ is printed. These meetings were again based on "Open to Transformation", reflecting on how as individuals we celebrate being a Quaker. By following Ben's suggested activities, first in pairs and then sharing in a larger group, we ending by asking "Where do I want the Meeting to be in 10 years time?" Since there was not enough time to complete Session 1, I suspect the series may be extended so that we can continue on the theme of asking ourselves in more detail what it means to be a Quaker today.

On **Tuesday 27th October 7.30 pm** at the Meeting House, as part of a nation-wide project, a group is being formed to read and become more familiar with our **Quaker Faith & Practice**. In addition it should help us to discern if the time may be coming when a revision would be beneficial. The first meeting will be led by Robin Waterston on Chapter 2: Personal Journey. It would be helpful if you could look at the extracts beforehand in preparation for questions such as "How does the text speak to me today?" After this first meeting we shall then think about how best to go forward.

QASTA has arranged a meeting at the Meeting House on **Saturday 31st October 10.30 for 11.00 with Stephen Gethins**. This is a chance to meet our NE Fife MP (his first visit to the Meeting House) to discuss with him issues that are of particular concern to Quakers.

The agenda will include:

- Refugees: policies now and for the future.
- Israel/Palestine: ways towards a just settlement.
- TTIP: developments in negotiations and working to stop it.
- Defence strategy: a non-nuclear defence strategy; issues surrounding armed drones.

Economic strategy: promoting social justice within a sustainable economy.

The meeting will be chaired by Joyce Taylor and we urge as many Friends as possible to attend.

Jill Marshall

Perth

House group meetings: The Friendly Bible Study Group

In the last edition of *Tayside Quaker* I mentioned that we, at Perth Meeting, have a range of house groups. The newest of these is A Friendly Bible Study, which started meeting in March of this year and ran for four sessions. It began at the suggestion of a member of Perth Meeting, who had read of this method of studying Bible passages and then discovered Glasgow Meeting had such a group: "*I wanted to see if it was possible to explore the Bible with Friends*". The member contacted the key person at Glasgow, who very helpfully offered further explanation and advice on leading a group. It attracted between five to seven people, a good number for this type of group, allowing time for each member to speak. People were not committed to each meeting and there was no preparation to complete beforehand.

The approach adopted:

Friendly Bible Studies have a specific approach, which proved to work well. After an opening period of silence, the chosen passage was read aloud then members thought about what they had just read, noting down their reactions to the passage using five questions. These questions form the structure of each meeting, as they are the same questions that are applied to the verses read on each occasion. In brief they are:

1. Main point ~ what is the author's main point?
2. New light ~ what new light do I find in this reading?
3. Truth ~ is this passage true to my experience?
4. Implications ~ what are the implications of this passage for my life?
5. Problems ~ what problems do I have with this passage?

When everyone has noted their responses and is ready, the questions are taken one by one. They are addressed in turn round the circle by each person speaking their thoughts. There is no expectation that members have any biblical background, so this approach values everyone's contributions.

In the first series of meetings the passage we considered was the opening of Mark's Gospel and, over the four meetings, we covered just over half of the first chapter. Our approach was to take about seven or eight verses each meeting. This isn't many, but allowed a closer scrutiny than would have been the case had we taken a broad sweep at more verses.

The views of members:

The member who was the key to setting up the Perth group was moved to explore this approach to Bible study because: *"For some years I have been exploring what the Bible might offer to my spiritual journey. As one who does not come from a religious upbringing I have, for some time, been frustrated by my lack of a vocabulary to voice my journey to myself. Reference to Jesus and Christianity in 'Faith and Practice' were stumbling blocks as I did not know the gospels and I was tired of looking outside Quakers for an introduction to the Bible"*.

Overall group members considered that the meetings had been very well worthwhile. At face value the structured format might have seemed restricted, but as one member indicated: *"I am amazed ... how much freedom ... we all felt to express our own thoughts and interpretations of the short passages under scrutiny and thus clarify our own beliefs, or even lack of them"*.

Aspects of the approach that were immediately appealing included:

- *"No prior study [is] required, as the sharing within the group came from our immediate responses to the text we read together"*
- *"People can use different versions of the Bible and compare the words used - we soon discovered this could open up a verse in a whole new way, at times"*
- *"All responses are valid as there is no single right interpretation"*
- *"One might not know the historical context of a verse, or the significance of some aspects, yet it might still speak to your condition, whilst also allowing us to hear how the same verse might speak to others in the group"*.

Everyone felt they could contribute: *"Normally, any group activity has me seeking ... [a place to] hide. ... The Friendly Bible Study sessions are that – they are friendly and I cannot hide! Further, I find that I am happy to take part and give voice to my thoughts"*.

Our first short run of meetings was a means of testing the water to see if members thought it worthwhile to continue. We did – so, after a break over the summer, the group has just begun another course of study this time on the Psalms starting with number 40.

Note: For a useful link containing a range of resources see:

<https://sites.google.com/site/readingthebiblewithfriends/home/resources-for-use-by-bible-study-groups>

Meeting just for pleasure: Theatre visit

Beside all our regular meetings either for worship or study that take us beyond Perth, we also enjoy meeting for nothing more than pleasure! So, a group of eight Friends met at Pitlochry Theatre last month for lunch and then watched Alan Bennett's play "*The Lady in the Van*".

Northern Friends Peace Board

We were pleased to welcome Northern Friends Peace Board to the Subud Centre last month, when Jill Tutton and Felicity Bryers were the local organisers. Two members of Perth meeting attended a brief session in the afternoon and were made very welcome. The work of Northern Friends Peace Board is too well known to require further explanation here, but if you would like more information go to <http://www.nfpb.org.uk>

Natalie Macmillan

It is with sadness that we heard of the death of Natalie Macmillan on October 1st. She had been an attender at Perth Meeting for 4 years, although ill health had prevented her presence at Meeting for much of that time. Despite that she was well known to a number of us and she will be greatly missed. An appreciation of her life will appear in the next edition.

Enid Harding

Religious Revolutionaries

The course, 'Religious Revolutionaries', was held at Woodbrooke College in July and was a study of early Buddhists, early Christians and early Quakers. It was attended by people from the Christian and Buddhist traditions and we were guided skilfully through the mass of information by the excellent tutors Timothy Peat Ashworth and Estella Lovett .

All three groups (Buddhists, Christians and Quakers) developed from the dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in their respective societies and all claimed access to a more profound and truthful reality. This led in all three cases to new expressions of community and to radical action.

Buddha observed the suffering of all sentient beings and his insights were designed to end this suffering through the elimination of ignorance and craving. [This was to be done by direct understanding and a realisation of the interdependence of all things and the four Noble Truths.] Early Christianity developed in an atmosphere of oppression by the Roman Rulers while Early Quakers emerged from the turbulent times of the mid 17th Century. All three groups developed a light structure of organisation to aid flexibility in leading to a new way of life. Also all three groups had missionary tendencies. They felt compelled to share their new found truths, and the charismatic quality of the message meant that the vibrant message spread rapidly.

There were differences. Early Christians and Quakers felt that the apocalypse was nigh and this lent an urgency to their quests. They were disruptive towards what they felt was false thus making authorities uneasy. Early Quakers disrupted services, refused to swear an oath of allegiance to the Crown, held secret meetings and refused to bow to authority. Early Christians who refused to conform were often scapegoats for dissatisfactions. The Christian refusal to offer sacrifices to the Roman gods was akin to sacrilege and treason. They were denounced for incest/ cannibalism due to the misunderstandings about the nature of the Eucharist. Buddhists did not believe in a personal God and were not disruptive. They would have regarded disruption as 'unskillful' and besides they felt that everybody, even oppressors, could achieve enlightenment. However Buddhists were often regarded by their contemporaries as lazy.

Towards the end of the session we were encouraged to discuss insights for today.

1. When considering acting in the world today not only was stillness important but robust voices were needed to be raised against injustices.
2. A discovery of appropriate (non-violent) disruptions should be considered.
3. We need to be conscious of mindfulness – listening without prejudice and analysing situations before acting with compassion and loving kindness to all.
4. We should be open to prophetic urgency within our meetings though it was acknowledged that this can't be forced.

The course provided an excellent assessment of the similarities and differences of the three groups and all who attended gained useful insights into Buddhism, Christianity and Quakerism in a calm and supportive atmosphere.

Dorothy Aitken

News from Papua New Guinea (PNG)

I have been fortunate enough to undertake a number of placements with Voluntary Service Overseas during the past six years, my current placement in PNG started in March this year. I am living in Lae, the second biggest city in PNG and working in the provincial treasury department to strengthen their information technology infrastructure and train staff.

PNG is just about to celebrate forty years of independence, so there are plenty of flags around and pictures of Birds of Paradise which are the national symbol.

However, the upcoming celebration is being

overshadowed by a crisis

affecting the Highland provinces. The El Nino pattern of ocean currents in the Pacific has caused a combination of drought and frost that has wiped out many of the food gardens that people rely on (sweet potato is a staple crop) as well as causing a water shortage. Estimates vary but most put the numbers affected by frost and drought at over one million people. Here in Lae which is on the coast we are still getting rain and it is strange to listen to radio reports about the drought while a tropical storm is going on outside.

The different districts of Lae are named with a simple but sometimes confusing logic, the district I live in is China Town and there must have been a reason for this name once though I seldom see any Chinese people. The central district which is slightly higher is of course Top Town, while the lower area near the port is Downtown.

PNG is a Christian country, most people are Catholics or Lutherans; other sects are also present in small numbers. Between my house and work, a distance of about a quarter of a mile I pass Anglican, Baptist, Catholic and



Lutheran churches. I have not met any other Quakers here yet but I have heard about one or two Australian and New Zealand Quakers in the capital, Port Moresby. Although it is preached against, belief in witchcraft and sorcery persists in the highlands and there are infrequent but regular reports of people who have been accused of sorcery being beaten or worse.

Luckily there is a radio built into my mobile phone and my house is beside a hill with the transmission masts on it so reception is not a problem. There are local stations and for other news I have a choice of Radio Australia and BBC World Service.

With a fair track record of travel in East Africa and Asia now I am used to standing out because of my skin colour. In Kenya I was a mzungu, in Ethiopia I was a ferenji, and that I was comfortable with. In PNG there is a multiplicity of local languages but the national language is pidgin that contains a mixture of English, German, Malay and Portuguese and I am either 'waitman' (white man) which is OK or 'bossman' which makes me feel very uncomfortable. Of course the people who call me bossman do not mean anything by it, to them any white male could be called bossman and my discomfort says as much about me as it does about them. Living here teaches you about more than just PNG.

Peter Cheer

Green Corner

The UN climate talks in Paris open very shortly. As with previous sessions, first in Rio and most recently in Copenhagen, hopes are raised that the 200 nations who will take part will agree a deal to combat climate change. Many believe that the UN target of achieving a long-term limit of no more than a 2 degree Celsius rise in global temperature is already beyond our reach. Now is the moment to apply the greatest possible public pressure on governments to reach agreement on action and then to carry through their commitments. They did not do so in Copenhagen in 2009. It is vital that the outcome of the Paris talks is far better.

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland is organising a mass demonstration in Edinburgh on Saturday 28 November 2015. Please join in if you can. (Details at www.stopclimatechaos.org)

There are 3 events in our area on Sunday 29 November:

- *For our Children Everywhere*. Hosted by River Almond Farms, Glenalmond
- *Carse of Gowrie Joins In: People's Climate March*. Hosted by Mirabelle Vivana Scott of Errol, who is known to Perth Meeting as a member of Subud.
- *Climate Change Action*. Hosted by Dundee and Angus Green Party in City Square.

Details of all these events can be found at

<https://www.avaaz.org/en/event/globalclimatemarch/?slideshow>

In conclusion, I have been contributing a *Green Corner* (initially *Sustainability News*) to TQ since a minute from Area Meeting in February 2013. I have not received any comment or feedback during that time and feel I should not continue this arrangement. The Paris summit is a watershed, and I hope others will take up the baton in future to ensure that we are not allowed to forget the importance of continuing to work on the themes of minute 36 of Britain Yearly Meeting in Canterbury in 2011.

Philip Bryers

Is it truthful, is it necessary, is it kind?

Guidance for contributions to a non-Quaker online forum that I use says:

Please use the Quaker principle, especially when talking about, or to, any colleague, of asking yourself 'Is it truthful, is it necessary, is it kind?'

I am not aware that this is a Quaker principle, but wouldn't the world be a better place if everyone could keep this in mind before speaking or writing? It's asking a lot – could we rise to the challenge?

Felicity Bryers

Could you be a Turning the Tide trainer?

Join a small and mighty team of people passionate about using nonviolent power to turn the tide of injustice in society. Turning the Tide, a Quaker training and learning organisation, is recruiting trainers to join our volunteer training team.



About us

For over 20 years we have supported grassroots groups taking a stand for peace and justice. We are here to support people active for social change to increase their skills and confidence, and to help their groups become more sustainable and effective.

Our highly skilled trainers run workshops, strategy days, and other events for people working on a range of issues including peace and anti-militarism; fairer economic systems and greater equality; taking action to stop climate change.

Turning the Tide's methods are deep and transformational, the sort of approach we believe is needed to be the change we wish to see in the world.

Our trainers

Our trainers are supported by Turning the Tide's community of trainers and staff.

As a trainer, you will:

- Deliver workshops and events using a co-facilitation model
- Be part of a community of trainers enhancing your skills through mutual support
- Make a powerful contribution to grassroots movements for peace, justice and equality

How to apply

Further details are on our website at <http://turning-the-tide.org/recruitment> . Or get in touch with Turning the Tide's programme manager Steve Whiting to request an application form: stevew@quaker.org.uk

Deadline: please send in your completed application by 5pm Monday 2 November.

When applications have been assessed, invitations will be sent out to a recruitment day on Saturday 5 December, at Friends House, London where applicants will be able to find out more and get to know the Turning the Tide community. Please save this date to ensure you will be able to attend the day, if you are selected.

Meetings for Worship

Dundee Meeting House, Whitehall Crescent, Sundays 11.00 am

Children's Meeting, first Sunday of each month

Children's Contact: Donna Morgan

Tel 01382 775545

Midweek Meeting in the Lower Common Room,
Dundee University Chaplaincy Centre

Wednesdays, November 18, December 16

1.15 – 1.45 pm (room booked from 1.00 – 2.30pm)

Midweek contact: Sheila Phillips

Tel 01382 641043

St. Andrews Meeting House, 2 Howard Place, Sundays 10.30 am

Children's Meeting - each Sunday during school terms

Enquiries: Genevieve Orr Tel 01333 360396

Midweek Meeting Thursday 1.15 – 1.45pm

**Perth: The Subud Centre, 7 St Leonard's Bank,
Perth PH2 8EB**

Second and Last Sundays 11.00 am

Children's Meeting by arrangement.

East of Scotland Area Meeting

Saturday 7 November, Perth

Saturday 13 February, Dundee

General Meeting for Scotland

November 14th/15th: Edinburgh (Residential)