



**Religious Society of Friends  
General Meeting for Scotland  
Glasgow 9th September 2006**

**Min 1 - Reading**

During meeting for worship we heard from QF and P 6.08 on the importance of coming to business meetings with heart and mind prepared.

**Min 2 - Deaths**

During meeting for worship we heard the MM minutes recording the deaths of:  
Elizabeth Salter and Walter Lever of South East Scotland MM  
Roma Foster and Pat Kass of East of Scotland MM  
Bobby Harrison of West Scotland MM

**Min 3 - New Members**

We warmly welcome the following new members;  
Suzie Warden of South East Scotland MM  
Barbara Organ of West Scotland MM

**Min 4 - Attenders**

We welcome the following Attender – Ian Arnot  
Visitors in membership, Michael Hutchinson and Simon Best

**Min 5 - Representatives**

The following names are recorded as representing MMs  
East of Scotland - Peter Kennedy  
North of Scotland - Peter McCaffery  
South East Scotland - Geoffrey Carnall, Phil Lucas  
West Scotland - Mary Alice Mansell, Margaret Peacock

The names of all present will be recorded and added to these minutes.

Total attendances;

East of Scotland	4
North of Scotland	2
South East Scotland	8
West Scotland	25
Attenders	1
Visitors	2
Total	42

**Min 6 - Reporter to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend***

We appoint Phil Lucas to report this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend* and ask West Scotland MM to bring a name to the next GM.

**Min 7 - 'Dots and Commas'**

We appoint Mary Latham to correct any errors in grammar, spelling and clarity to these minutes while preserving the sense agreed at this meeting.

## **Min 8 - Nominations and Representatives**

### ***Nominations***

We agree to the following names as brought to us by the Nominations FG

*Assistant Clerk* – Robin Waterston from November 2006 - November 2007

We will discuss the future responsibilities of GM clerk after proposals are published in the *Scottish Friend* to allow Friends' to consider these.

Search Group for *Convenor of Nominations FG* - to report with a name at next GM – Peter Kennedy, Pat Lucas and Mary Alice Mansell.

*Archive Group* - From September 2006 – Sept. 2009, Lindsay Burton, Paul Burton and Linda Murison etc.

*Adult Education and Conference Group Convenor* - Kate Arnot From September 2006 - Sept 2007.

We note the appointment by West Scotland MM of Mike Brown *to the Communications FG*.

### ***Representatives***

*ACTS Finance Committee* – Pam Brunt from September 2006 – September 2008

*World Day of Prayer*, Alison Chalmers – September 2006-Dec. 2008

## **Min 9 - Appointments to BYM**

Mary Latham, member of the BYM Nominations Group, brought the concern of the difficulties of finding names from Scotland to fulfil posts in BYM. Any volunteers are asked to contact John Durston at Friends House. Nominations committee members are particularly needed and Mary hopes Scotland would be well represented.

## **Min 10 - Summer Gathering 2007 Under 19s Programme**

Simon Best, Co-coordinator of the Under 19s programme for the Summer Gathering to be held in Stirling on 21st-28th July, told us of the theme '*Faith into Action*'. All ages will have the opportunity to explore the theme through activities, visits and discussions in age groups and with all-age activities. Home - groups are planned to facilitate new contacts and friendships. Simon encouraged us to let others in our meetings know of the event, particularly families. Volunteers are needed for the core team to work with the different age groups including peer group planners from 14 years upwards and Simon hopes many will come from Scotland. We thank Simon for enthusing us and wish the planning group well for its meeting in Glasgow this weekend.

## **Min 11 - Annual Scottish Spring Conference**

Ian Arnot reminded us of the difficulties in timing, energy and resources in planning any event in 2007 with the Summer Gathering happening in Scotland in the same year. An informal event at Kindrogan was agreed at last GM and a booking has now been made for 30 people for 25-27th May. The Summer Gathering Planning Group plan to use Kindrogan during the same weekend to take some of the 30 spaces, so those intending to be at the informal event should let Kate Arnot know. June 13-15th is booked for 2008 and a new FG convenor will be appointed from Sept. 2007 - Sept. 2008. We record our thanks to the organisers for enabling those who wish to attend both BYM and the Spring Conference. Dates have coincided in the past.

## **Min 12 - Bi-Centenary of the Passing of the Act to Abolish Slavery**

Peter McCaffery, GM representative on the ACTS Task Group to mark the Passing of the Act to Abolish Slavery, told us of events which are planned from March to June 2007. Peter distributed a leaflet produced by the Task Group but said this may be updated. The planned events are not self

congratulatory but aim to highlight the present day forms of slavery, including human trafficking of women for prostitution. The main event is to be an Open Day and Service at Blantyre to which church leaders and politicians are invited. There is to be an event at Inveresk Lodge in Musselburgh, which will take the form of a Freedom Walk, but details are not yet known. Ian Whyte, a retired Church of Scotland minister, has been commissioned by the Scottish Executive to write a booklet to be called 'Scotland and the Slave Trade'. A joint statement which is hoped will be adopted by all member churches of ACTS has been issued and read out today by Peter. Despite reservations over the use of the word 'repent', we agree to endorse the Statement.

### **Min 13 - GM Minutes on Website**

We have discussed this item at GM before (Min.10 November 2005) and agreed to ask a small group of knowledgeable Friends to take the matter forward. The Website Group and Central Committee support the suggestion of GM minutes appearing on the website, and recommend that GM Clerk, in consultation with the Assistant Clerk, ensure any sensitive material is removed before the minutes appear on the website. We note Meeting for Sufferings minutes appear on the GM website. We agree to having our minutes on the GM website, trusting GM Clerk and Assistant Clerk to edit sensitively.

### **Min 14 - Gerald Richards Bequest**

Paul Burton reported on the results of a meeting of the group which spent some time discussing charitable status and a venue for a Quaker Study Centre. The idea of an inaugural lecture at the Summer Gathering 2007 is being explored and we look forward to hearing more when plans come to fruition.

### **Min 15 - BYM 2006**

Geoffrey Carnall, who was a member of the Epistle Drafting Committee, missed some detail in some sessions and was drowning in papers until he allowed BYM to 'wash over' him. Some doubts, which were expressed regarding the setting up of the Trustee body, were overcome much to Geoffrey's relief. He said that this was a satisfactory BYM, decisions were made and the clerkship was superb. The only minor note of dissatisfaction was Geoffrey's observation of the weight of papers that Friends had to carry around. We acknowledge the work done by QPSW on a small budget. We thank Geoffrey for his amusing and personal recollections of BYM.

### **Min 16 - Responses to Consultations**

Quakers in Scotland have been asked to respond to Consultations on a variety of topics from the Scottish Executive. The requests come from the Executive itself or through the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office. The Scottish Parliament website also invites views from groups and individuals on proposed legislation topics. There have been responses from elders from a MM and also from an individual Quaker at the invitation of the Parliamentary FG convenor to respond to Consultations in the name of Quakers in Scotland.

We have received a minute from South East Scotland MM (Min.12 of 20th November 2005), which states in full –

*"We have discussed whether we wish to monitor and respond in fuller detail to the programme of proposed legislation from the Scottish Executive. We appreciate the opportunity to respond to consultations both as a body and as individuals. We hope that a Quaker viewpoint can be put forward on those issues that have a particular relevance of interest to Friends. We consider that this may best be done nationally and therefore is the province of General meeting.*

*We ask that General meeting consider the current arrangements for commenting on proposed legislation. It may be possible to identify issues of interest well in advance by using the Scottish Executive's website. We also encourage individual Friends to respond personally if led to do so. We ask that this minute is sent to General meeting for Scotland".*

Due to lack of time and to give Friends time to reflect on the topic we decided to leave this item to November GM.

### **Min 17 - Developing Relationships between BYM and GM for Scotland**

John Melling, Assistant Clerk, introduced a paper on behalf of the Central Committee, which aims to simplify and update those sections of the existing chapter 5 of *Quaker faith and Practice* relevant to Scotland (paper attached). The requirements of Trustee status and the decisions taken in our GM minute of 11-9-04 on the report of the 2004 Working Group have been included.

Michael Hutchinson, Assistant Recording Clerk and General Secretary of Quaker Life, started his presentation by recognising the heavy burdens which some Friends carry, and the 'recycling' which occurs due to difficulties in finding post holders for Quaker posts. In the wake of RECAST and the decisions taken at BYM 2006, Michael suggests this is a time for imaginative change. Organisations follow cycles of development over time and can die unless periodically renewed and made relevant.

We need to ask if our structures strengthen three areas –

1. *The discernment process*, which is listening to God. Discernment requires testing in groups but we should be aware of the dangers of parochialism and imbalances of power.
2. *Quaker community*. Communities can suffer if too burdensome and energy is used to run them instead of to liberate Friends. Why are we here today? We need to be clear if our structures change that our community is strengthened.
3. *Our witness*. Are we witnessing to what we have discerned in our community?

Michael then mentioned some of the problems experienced in Wales including the influx of newcomers with their own cultures, geographic distances, language and border problems. GM for Scotland has some similarities in developing contacts with parliamentary and ecumenical bodies and the need for administrative assistance. The opportunity for change is there to help transform and energise. BYM governance and the change of role of Meeting for Sufferings is happening now and gives us a chance to explore changes for ourselves but which may be painful for some. GM for Scotland is old and well established and some may resist change. The paper presented today and the re-writing of chapter 5 in QF and P is stage one of a process of change. Michael suggested we could request a GM representative on M for S; think about an annual report to Meeting for Sufferings on the work of GM and to request assistance if required. We need to be patient with the process and with each other, but ask ourselves if the proposals in the paper are the way we want to go, or just part of it.

We then had a lengthy discussion in which the following points were raised –

1. We heard there is no requirement to appoint Friends from Scotland to central committees (except QCCIR). Is this important and should we be asking for this?
2. A recognition of the positive changes in Scotland as a result of devolution and the hope these might expand throughout Britain by influence of Quakers. However, we must not be complacent about the changes we claim.
3. We should be cautious about appointing yet more representatives on committees, which could be a strain on time and resources. We could consider asking if one or two present MM representatives could also represent GM to avoid more appointments.
4. Paper communications and meetings can be time consuming. We should be asking if they are really necessary.
5. Why are we timid about change? Should we not be more adventurous?
6. Should we be looking at different ways of allocating business items between levels of meetings? RECAST recommended flexibility.
7. We are not expected to attend all meetings but we are expected to trust those who are present.

8. Let's not worry about the future. Opportunities come for service at different times in our lives, like retirement.

9. Some have a difficulty with the word 'subordinate' as it describes GM for Scotland to BYM. Some would like to use 'constituent' instead.

We agree to forward the paper with a covering letter to Meeting for Sufferings as a basis for dialogue between M for S and GM for Scotland.

We thank John Melling and Michael Hutchinson for all the work they have done in preparation of the paper and for the inspirational way they have presented this topic to us today.

**Min 18 - Minute of Thanks**

We record our thanks to Glasgow Friends for the catering and hospitality, which has been appreciated.

Pamala McDougall

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pamala McDougall". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

GM. Clerk