



GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

15 June 2013

Edinburgh

Min. 1 Reading

During Meeting for Worship we heard part of Minute 36 of BYM 2011 on Quaker responses to the challenge of climate change.

Min. 2 Welcome

We welcome 1 attender to this GM.

We will record the total numbers of all present and add them to these minutes.

East Scotland	7
North Scotland	1
South East Scotland	27
West Scotland	<u>13</u>
Total:	48

Min. 3 Reporter

We appoint Gisela Creed and Alastair McIver from West Scotland AM to report this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend*. We ask South East Scotland AM to report on the next GM.

Min. 4 New members and deaths

We record the following new members since our last meeting:

Raine Herbert (W)
John Galilee (SE)
Alastair McIver (W)

We record the following deaths:

Barbara Organ (W)
John Wray (W)
James Wickens (N)

Min. 5 Dates and venues for 2014-15

We confirm the following GM dates and venues for 2014-15:

West – 8 March 14 (already agreed)
South East – 14 June 14
North – 13 Sept 14
West – 15/16 Nov 14
East – 7 Mar 15

Min. 6 Report from Trustees

Robin Davis, Clerk of Trustees, has presented a report on the work of GM Trustees. Their main task has been to advise GM on how to fulfil its objectives and to ensure that it operates in right ordering. Specifically, they have overseen the employment of our Administrator, assisted the Treasurer in producing the Annual Report and Accounts, and developed various policies including on safeguarding children and vulnerable groups. The GM treasurer organised a conference in October 2012 for AM and LM treasurers which was generally felt to have been helpful.

Discussions have been taking place between Trustees and Friends House staff on the Scottish Advocacy Project, and they expect to report to a future GM on this.

Philip Bryers served as Clerk of Trustees from the start in 2008 until March this year. We record our thanks to him for his role in establishing the role of the Trustees so capably. And we thank Robin Davis for his report.

We agree that Minutes of Trustees' Meetings, subject to requirements of confidentiality, be posted on the GM website.

Min. 7 Financial Report for 2012

We have received the examined annual report and accounts for 2012 from our Assistant Treasurer, Duncan Wallace. Total receipts were £21,264, payments £18,263, giving a surplus of £2,960. This is largely accounted for by the inclusion of the new GM Fund for Healing, a restricted fund.

We authorise the Clerk to sign the Report.

The report and statement of accounts is attached to these Minutes.

Min. 8 Parliamentary Liaison Function Group

Elizabeth Allen has presented a report on the work of the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group. The Function Group suggested that GM submit a letter to the Scottish Parliament regarding voting rights for prisoners in the forthcoming Referendum on Independence. The Clerk submitted a letter to this effect, as did other groups and individuals, and a thoughtful debate took place in Parliament as a result of this lobbying.

A meeting with Roseanna Cunningham MSP, Minister for Community Safety, will take place in the Autumn.

The Function Group have set up an email group on Trident which has members from some but not all local Meetings. They are proposing that they prepare a letter for consideration by GM in September to MPs and MSPs, which could be followed up by Meetings taking action locally. We agree to this.

They have considered the Living Wage, and have asked whether we pay our employees the Living Wage. The Clerk has confirmed that the remuneration of our Administrator is above this level.

The Function Group believe that there are issues relevant to the forthcoming referendum which are relevant to Quakers as a faith community. They are preparing a set of Advices and Queries for the use of local meetings. They are proposing that this be the topic for the afternoon of GM in March 2014, followed by a special issue of Scottish Friend. We agree to this.

We also need to reflect carefully on what might need to happen after the vote, whatever the outcome, in terms of national reconciliation. Can we find ways of helping discussions in our local areas be reflective rather than simply combative?

Regarding the Scottish Advocacy Project, Robin Davis has reported that Trustees are taking the matter forward in liaison with Friends House staff. They propose working with the Function Group to prepare a more detailed business case which would be the basis of a consultation with Area Meetings and BYM Trustees and staff with a view of bringing a report and proposal to GM in November. We accept this proposal.

Min. 9 Iona Community

Don Stubbings, who is a member of the Iona Community, has told us something about the activities of the Community, which consists of approximately 300 members and 700 associate members, roughly half of whom are ordained and half lay members. The Community is undertaking youth work in Glasgow and has forged links with the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland. In recent years the Community has encountered financial constraints following the assumption of responsibility for the buildings by Historic Scotland. They have recently celebrated the 1450th anniversary of the arrival of St Columba in Scotland.

Min. 10 Pilgrimage for Peace and Economic Justice

Jane Pearn has requested that we send a message of support for this pilgrimage, from Iona to London, organised by Hexham Quakers and Northumbrians for Peace. We agree to this and ask the Clerk to send the following message:

“As Friends from all parts of Scotland gather for General Meeting in Edinburgh, we are mindful of the pilgrims who by now have passed through Scotland and are presently in Northumberland.

Like you, we believe the possession of Weapons of Mass Destruction can never be right. At a time when our government claims it cannot afford to support its citizens in need, to spend billions on nuclear weapons is a profound distortion of priorities.

We support your act of witness to a more positive, inclusive society and send loving greetings and encouragement to all - walkers, organisers and supporters along the route.”

Min. 11 Scottish Quaker Tapestry Panel

We have considered the future of the Scottish Quaker Tapestry Panel, currently being looked after by Philip Bryers. We agree to request that it be kept on display in Edinburgh Friends Meeting House, and available to borrow by Meetings across Scotland. To assist with portability and security, we agree to purchase a suitable carrying case, as recommended by the Quaker Tapestry Project in Kendal. We will also take out any necessary insurance.

Min. 12 Appointments

Nominations Function Group have brought forward the following names and we agree to appoint them:

GM Treasurer and GM Trustee (ex-officio)

John Phillips (2nd triennium) Jan 2014 to Dec 2016

Northern Friends Youth Events Charitable Trust

Pauline Browell-Hook (2nd triennium) Jan 2014 to Dec 2016
Anthea Mason (1st triennium) 15 June 2013 to Dec 2015

Parliamentary Liaison Function Group

Margaret Mortimer (1st triennium) 15 June 2013 to Dec 2016
Robin Waterston (1st triennium) Jan 2014 to Dec 2016

Retreat York – GM Representative Member

Constance Tonge (2nd triennium) Jan 2014 to Dec 2016

Scottish Churches China Group

Margaret Anderson (3rd triennium) Jan 2014 to Dec 2016

Scottish Churches Housing Action

Kate Arnott (2nd triennium) Jan 2014 to Dec 2016

Scottish Churches Racial Justice Group

Rachel Frith (3rd triennium) Jan 2013 to Dec 2015

Convenor of Nominations Function Group

Alyson Buchan (to complete 1st triennium) Jan 2014 to Dec 2015

Min. 13 The Transition Movement

We have welcomed Eva Schonveld and Jane Lewis to our afternoon session to speak about the Transition Towns Movement and the project in Portobello.

Eva explained that the Transition Movement started from a concern about climate change and peak oil, but has developed to include broader social concerns. Our economy is heavily dependent on oil and oil derivatives, while oil is getting more and more expensive to produce. Too often we don't see where our "stuff" comes from. The Transition Movement sees the answer to this as living more locally, although local groups express this in different ways. More information is available online at www.transitionnetwork.org.

Jane described how the Portobello Group came into existence following a successful campaign against a local supermarket development in 2005. The first working group was a food group which is developing a community orchard, has run local food stalls, produced a re-usable shopping bag and experimented with food sharing. They were funded by the Climate Challenge Fund to develop their work around food as well as a range of energy-saving projects including a community-owned wind turbine.

PEDAL (Portobello Energy Descent and Land Reform Group) is now a limited company run by a board of directors, and although its government funding has now ceased and it no longer has paid staff, it is continuing various projects.

We were encouraged in groups to visualise initiatives to make better use of food, transport, and energy and to reduce waste.

We thank Eva and Jane for their lively and inspiring presentation.

Min. 14 Closing Minute

We record our thanks to South East Scotland Friends for being our hosts at this GM, and look forward to meeting again in Perth on 7 September when our speaker will be the BYM Recording Clerk, Paul Parker.

Robin Waterston
Clerk