



GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

14 June 2014

Edinburgh

Min. 1 Reading

During Meeting for Worship we heard a reading from Quaker Faith and Practice 23.52 in which Deborah Haines writes of the need to develop our own unique social witness in obedience to God.

Min. 2 Welcome

We welcome 3 attenders to this GM plus Major Alan Dixon of the Salvation Army as visitor and our afternoon speaker, Sarah Richards of Northumbria AM.

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

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|---------------------|-----------|
| East Scotland | 5 |
| North Scotland | 4 |
| South East Scotland | 21 |
| West Scotland | 8 |
| Total: | 38 |

Min. 3 Reporter

We appoint Margaret Boland 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:

Anna Mitchell (SE)
Heather Burns (W)
Vérène Nicolas (W)
Paul Mahon (W)
Alice Mahon (W)

We record the following deaths:

Bill Forbes (SE)
Daphne Ogg (W)

Min. 5 Dates and venues for 2015-16

We confirm the following GM dates and venues for 2015-16:

West – 7 March 15 (already agreed)
South East – 6 June 15
North – 12 Sept 15
West – 14/15 Nov 15
East – 5 Mar 16

Min. 6 Annual Report from Trustees

Robin Davis, Clerk of Trustees, has presented a report on the work of GM Trustees. They met four times over the last twelve months, much of their time being taken up by consideration of the proposal for a part-time post to support parliamentary engagement. Meetings were held with the convener of the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group and with the Recording Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting in the course of developing detailed proposals reported separately to this meeting.

Trustees have kept financial matters under review and have arranged for General Meeting to have its own insurance cover, rather than relying on Area Meeting policies. The mileage allowance has been increased from 25p to 30p/mile. Our administrator, Bronwen Currie, was granted three month's leave to become an Ecumenical Accompanier in Palestine/Israel and arrangements made to cover her duties have been successful.

We thank Trustees for their work and Robin Davis for his report.

Min. 7 Proposed Parliamentary Engagement post.

We have received minutes from the four Area Meetings which are broadly supportive of the proposed part-time post and a report from our Treasurer indicating how it could be funded. The Clerk of Trustees has reported on the discussions which Trustees have had with the convener of the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group and with Paul Parker acting on behalf of Yearly Meeting Trustees.

The role of the post will be to help Quakers in Scotland influence decision-makers in the Scottish Parliament on devolved matters of particular importance to Quakers and to keep BYM informed of issues arising in the Scottish Parliament which may be of relevance to the whole Yearly Meeting. The post will be based in Edinburgh, but will be part of the Communication and Services Department at Friends House. It will work to priorities agreed with the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group and formal statements setting out the views of Quakers in Scotland will continue to be issued over the signature of the Clerk to General Meeting.

It is proposed that the post be established on a trial basis for an initial period of three years, with General Meeting contributing £10,000 pa (approximately half of the total cost) and Britain Yearly Meeting covering all remaining costs. Our Treasurer suggests that for the first year the General Meeting contribution be composed of £4000 drawn from reserves, with £6000 being raised through Area Meeting quotas. We ask our GM Treasurer to consult with AM Treasurers on ways in which fundraising may be increased.

There will be a formal review of the post after two years, but we ask the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group to monitor it on an annual basis. We agree to support the establishment of this post on the basis recommended by our Trustees and ask them to take the necessary action in conjunction with Friends House with a view to an appointment commencing as soon as practicable.

Min. 8 WW1 commemoration service in Glasgow Cathedral

Barbara Potter has told us of the discussions she has had with staff at Friends House and with the minister of Glasgow Cathedral regarding the invitation to the Religious Society of Friends to be represented at the service to be held in Glasgow Cathedral on Monday 4th August to commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of WW1.

We are uneasy about the nature of the commemoration and agree we should not be represented at this service. We hope Friends will participate in commemorating the introduction of conscription and of the right to resist this. We agree to return to this matter at our next GM.

We thank Barbara Potter for her investigations with Glasgow Cathedral.

Min. 9 ACTS Anti-Human Trafficking Group

Clunie Conochie, who has represented us on this Group for the last three years, has reported on its work. During the last year, the focus has been on the impact of the 2014 Commonwealth Games on trafficking and the sex industry in Glasgow. Support was given to the proposal by Rhoda Grant MSP to make the purchase of sex a criminal act, although this did not get enough cross-party political support to proceed. The Scottish Government has announced that it will bring forward legislation on Human Trafficking based on a proposal by Jenny Marra MSP and the Group will monitor the proposals and lobby for changes as the bill goes through the various parliamentary stages.

The Group has produced two leaflets and given talks to church groups and has assisted in the development of resource material.

We thank Clunie Conochie for her report.

Min. 10 Impressions of Church of Scotland General Assembly

Martin Burnell has reported on this event. His first impression was of how impressive the Assembly sounded in full voice when they sang. Martin felt that some of the sessions would have struck chords with Friends but in others he felt slightly uncomfortable.

The Church of Scotland faces declining numbers and Martin felt that we could benefit from listening to their ideas on how to tackle this and attract more younger people. More information on this event can be found at <http://tiny.cc/quaker1>

Min. 11 Appointments

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

GM Outreach Function Group Members

Julia Gordon (N) (1st triennium)

Jun 2014 to Dec 2016

Roz Currie (SE) (1st triennium)

Jun 2014 to Dec 2016

Representative Friends Pool

Sue Mansfield (E) (2nd triennium)

Jan 2015 to Dec 2017

Margaret Mortimer (SE)(1st triennium)

Jan 2015 to Dec 2017

World Day of Prayer Scottish Committee

Margaret Roy (W) (1st triennium)

Jun 2014 to Jun 2017

ACTS Group on Human Trafficking

Marion Fairweather (W) (1st triennium)

Jun 2014 to Jun 2017

Church of Scotland Ecumenical Relations Committee

Alison Burnley (SE) (1st triennium)

Jun 2014 to Jun 2017

GM Representation on Meeting for Sufferings

(NOTE: these nominations are forwarded as Nominations to The Recording Clerk for appointment at YM 2015.)

Representative, Jane Pearn (SE) (2nd triennium)

Alternate, Kevin Franz (E) (2nd triennium)

We also agree not to replace our representative on **The Retreat** until the outcome of the current management review is known and to discontinue the position of **parliamentary advisor**.

Min. 12 Proposed donation to Prisoners Week (Scotland) Trust

Consideration was deferred until the September GM.

Min. 13 Religious Leaders Forum (Interfaith Scotland)

We agree to use the next issue of *The Scottish Friend* to ask Friends who would be interested in ecumenical and interfaith engagement to make themselves known to the convener of the Nominations Function Group (Alyson Buchan) and to reconsider this appointment at our next meeting.

Min 14 Afternoon session on an experimental approach organising to Quaker Business Meetings.

Sarah Richards shared with us how Northumbria Area Meeting has revitalised their AM Meetings for Worship for Business. Previously their attendance had been around 30 out of 280 members with the perception that AM being boring was the reason for this. After much consultation they made the following changes beginning in 2012:

They introduced an AM working group to carry the business between AM's, they cut the number of meetings to four a year, they have a theme and or a speaker and AM is held for the whole of Sunday.

Their main aim was to reduce time spent on business at AM so as to free up time for community building activities and to enable people acting under concern to have space to share.

In AM groups we discussed how a system similar to this might work or not in our own AMs. We found this a fruitful experience and thank Sarah for her interesting session on this subject. For further information please refer to Northumbria AM's website - tiny.cc/quaker2

Min. 15 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 Inverness on 13 September when our afternoon session will be a regional gathering organised in conjunction with Meeting for Sufferings.

Martin Burnell
Clerk