



GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

10 Sept 2011
Glasgow

Min. 1 Reading

During Meeting for Worship we heard extracts from “*Fireflies*” by Rabindranath Tagore, containing images of light and eternity.

Min. 2 Welcome

We welcome 3 attenders to this GM. We also welcome as a visitor Thomas Wilson of the Congregational Federation.

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

East Scotland	8
South East Scotland	19
North Scotland	8
West Scotland	<u>30</u>
Total:	65

Min. 3 Reporter

We appoint Eva Deregowska from North Scotland AM to report this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend*. We ask West Scotland AM to report on the next GM.

Min. 4 New members and deaths

There are no new members since our last meeting.

We record the following deaths:

Grace Field (E)
Allison Elliman (N).

Min. 5 Iona Community Board

Alastair McIntosh has reported to us on his role as our representative for the last 3 years on the Iona Community Board. It is a sounding board, an ecumenical board with representation from many of the Scottish Churches. The founder of the Iona Community, George MacLeod, is believed to have had a Quaker family link, and there have been connections between the Community and Quakers ever since.

The mission of the Community is to make the link between the inspiration from Iona and its historic Abbey, and the lives of people living in deprived communities in Scotland. It has links with many parts of the world and operates in a decentralised manner. The values of the Community include peace, social witness and economic justice.

Its ability to look clearly and with vision at the shadow side of life is of great importance in our world, and we are urged to become involved as much as we are able with the work of the Community.

We thank Alastair for his report and for his work on our behalf.

Min. 6 Summer Shindig

Bronwen Currie has reported on the Northern Friends Summer Shindig, the residential event for 11-16 year olds from Scotland and the North of England.

It took place with 48 young people at Loretto School on the theme of "Got any Change?". Sessions included serious discussions on poverty and homelessness, as well as joyful activities and learning to live in a community based on Quaker worship and values. Two young people from Ramallah in Palestine attended this year also.

For many young people this event may be their only opportunity to really experience Quakerism in practice. It can lead to deep and lasting connections. The depth of spirituality and worship especially in Epilogues can be profound. We ask Friends to promote the event to young people in their Meetings.

Min. 7 Scottish Government Consultation on same sex marriage

The Clerk has reported that the Scottish Government has launched a consultation on same sex marriage.

We agree that GM should make a submission to this consultation on the basis of the policy agreed at Yearly Meeting in York in 2009. We ask the same sex marriage working group to prepare a draft submission for consideration by GM in November.

Friends wishing to give input to this process are encouraged to read the online consultation document and send any comments to Phil Lucas.

Min. 8 Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network

We have heard a report from Elizabeth Allen and David Turner on the work of the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network. The network was set up by GM over a decade ago to assist Friends with a concern for criminal justice and related issues in Scotland to work more effectively together. It has been involved in a wide variety of aspects of the justice and penal system as well as organising meetings on a range of issues.

Criminal justice is one of the priorities of "A Framework for Action". Across Britain, the responsibility for this work comes under the QPSW Crime, Community and Justice group. Much of their work involves responding to legislative proposals at Westminster which do not cover Scotland. Scottish Quakers have no effective mechanism at present for their views on legislation before the Scottish Parliament to be heard.

QPSW have accepted that their Crime, Community and Justice Group should be the correct vehicle for considering legislation to the Scottish as well as the Westminster parliament.

This GM would be the correct body for submitting representations arising from this.

We see it as important that our Friends' historic interest and involvement in this field in Scotland should be continued. We agree to ask Elizabeth Allen, David Turner, Philip Bryers, Eva Deręgowska, Martin Mansell and Mike Nellis (subject to consent) to help discern and report to GM how we can best move forward on this matter, recognising the key role of QPSW and the devolved position in Scotland.

In addition, we believe there would be value in Friends being represented on the Scottish Joint Faiths Advisory Board on Criminal Justice, and we ask the Clerk to make such a request to them.

Min. 9 Prisoner Week

David Turner has told us of the plans by the Chaplaincy Advisory Group for a resource pack for Prisoner Week to raise awareness of the issues facing prisoners in the later period of a prison sentence and in the critical days following release. The estimated cost of production of this pack is £2000. We agree to contribute £100 towards this cost.

Min. 10 Reflections on Yearly Meeting Gathering

The Clerk has read part of the Epistle from Yearly Meeting Gathering. It includes the sentence "With joy, our Yearly Meeting has made a commitment to becoming a low carbon sustainable community."

The Swarthmore Lecture "Costing not less than Everything" by Pam Lunn is commended as a valuable resource for study at individual and local level.

Yearly Meeting also agreed a substantial revision of chapter 16 of Quaker Faith and Practice on marriage, reflecting the discernment from 2009 on same sex marriage.

Meeting for Sufferings will be reduced in size, and from June 2012 GM will have only one representative.

Min. 11 Appointments and Representatives

Nominations Function Group have brought forward the following names and we agree to these appointments:

GM Assistant Clerk (to complete the triennium) Sept 2011-Dec 2012

Martin Burnell

Representative Friends Pool 1 year Jan – Dec 2012

Alison Burnley, David James, Pamala McDougall, Margaret Peacock

Triennium Jan 2012 – Dec 2014

Sue Mansfield

Consultative Group on Archives Sept 2011– Sept 2014

Rhoda MacKenzie (SE Scotland)

Martin Hall (North Scotland)

ACTS Church Life Network Jan 2012 – Dec 2014

Margaret Boland

Parliamentary Liaison Jan 2012 – Dec 2014

Alex Cole-Hamilton.

We note that the Parliamentary Liaison member of Communications & Outreach FG will identify opportunities for GM to engage with the current political agenda by regular liaison

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with the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office, and will communicate relevant information to the GM Clerk and the convener of the Communications & Outreach function group.

Min. 12 Experiment with Light

John and Diana Lampen have led us through an introduction to the Experiment with Light, and its modern development in the thinking and work of Rex Ambler. He had begun by asking whether a process is available to us today to rediscover the life and power which energised and transformed early Friends.

John and Diana have led us through a letter by Isaac Pennington in 1677 which describes his experience of waiting in the Light and submitting to Truth. In small groups, they have given us an initial taster of some of the principles underlying the Experiment with Light.

This has been a powerful and moving experience for many of us. We thank John and Diana for their work with us this afternoon.

Min. 13 Closing Minute

We record our thanks to West Scotland Friends for being our hosts at this GM, and look forward to meeting again in Edinburgh on 12-13 November when our speakers will be Tony Weekes and Annie Miller on “Economics and the Quaker Way”.

Robin Waterston
Clerk