

SESAME

Number 170 : March 2012

Kelso Events/ Sustainability/Holloway/Feb. AM Minutes



The Friends World Conference will take place in April at Kabarak University near Nakuru, Kenya. Nakuru was established during the colonial era as part of the White Highlands. It stands on the 'Lunatic Express' railway from Mombasa to Kisumu and is the capital of the Rift Valley Province.

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Deputy Editor: Alan Frith

Published by South East Scotland Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Material for the next issue should be sent to the editor Alan Davies at 49a Lockharton Avenue, Edinburgh EH14 1BB, (email: a.davies@ed.ac.uk) at the latest by **Tuesday 24 April**, for distribution week commencing **6 May**. The Editor reserves the right to condense articles. If possible please submit articles by email, sending as an attachment as well as in the body of the email, or on CD-ROM typed in Word™ accompanied with hard copy. Email versions of SESAME are available in PDF and Word™ format. Contact the Editor.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Saturday 31 March 2012 at 11.30 a.m.

Kelso Quaker Meeting House, Abbey Row, Kelso TD5 7JF

Our next Area Meeting for Worship for Business will be held on Saturday 31 March 2012 at Kelso Quaker Meeting House. We will begin at 11.30 to allow for the arrival of the bus from Edinburgh. (*See below*)

Our morning session will include further reflection on Sustainability and Economic Justice. In the afternoon, beginning at about 2, we hope to have a first indication of our accounts for 2011, hear from the Festival Committee, and have a report from General Meeting held on 3 March, the afternoon session of which focused on the relationship between local action and the work carried out on our behalf by staff at Friends House. We hope to finish around 4.30 p.m.

Please bring your own lunch.

The Meeting House is wheelchair disabled accessible and has an induction loop in the Meeting Room.

As always, all members and attenders are most welcome to take part.

Kate Arnot Clerk

SE Scotland Area Meeting

Bus 52 leaves Edinburgh Bus Station at 9.10, arrives Kelso 11.10. A Kelso Friend will meet the bus - it's about a 5 minute walk.

For those arriving by car - there is plenty of free parking in The Knowes car park, which is behind the church opposite the Meeting House. For those with limited mobility, it is possible to park in the courtyard.

Return buses are at 16.05 (involves a change) and 17.15.

If you would prefer to break your journey - Christine Vincent operates a small B&B close to the Meeting House. She is fully booked on the Saturday but can cater on Friday for a maximum of 3, if two share. Price £45 per night. Phone Christine on 07711 157060. Alternatively, there may be accommodation in Friends' homes available. Please phone 01750 21226 for more information.

Future Area Meetings:

Saturday 12 May, at Kirkcaldy, 2 pm - 5 pm

Saturday 30 June, at Polmont, 2 pm - 5.30 pm

Sunday 16 September, at the Open Door, South Edinburgh, 2 pm - 5.30 pm

Saturday 20 October, at the Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh, 11 am - 4 pm

Saturday 8 December, at 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh, 2 pm - 5.30 pm

News of Friends, Meetings, and Issues

Meeting for Worship at Faslane, 2012

Please be in touch (about 10 days in advance) if you wish a seat in a car from Edinburgh. You will need to bring: something to sit on; something to eat; and weatherproof clothing. Dates for the year are:

13 May; 24 June; 12 August; 14 October; 11 November

Alison Burnley

EVENTS AT THE QUAKER MEETING HOUSE, ABBEY ROW, KELSO

Friday April 20, at 7.30 pm - Travellers' Tales

Local poets Pim Claridge and Robert Leach read poetry inspired by journeys. Includes an open mic session

Saturday May 5: 10 am – 3 pm - Book Sale

Discover treasures and stock up for the summer holiday

Friday May 11 at 7.30 pm - Give a Kidney – you only need one!

Matilda Mitchell shares her experience of being a 'live' kidney donor.

Wednesday 13 June at 7.30 pm - A Summer Evening of Music

Chamber ensemble –John Harris and friends

Wednesday 11 July at 7.30 pm - 'Great architects who have graced the Borders'

Illustrated talk by architectural historian Marianne Butler

Free admission to all these – voluntary donations welcome

Eldership and Oversight Introductory Days 2012

Introductory days for Eldership and Oversight are to be held in nine different meeting houses throughout the Yearly Meeting in 2012. These days are organised jointly by Quaker Life and Woodbrooke. Those closest to our AM area will be on Saturday 12 May

in Newcastle and 16 June in Glasgow.

For further information about registering for one of these days please contact Mark Holland, Educational Administration, Woodbrooke, 1046 Bristol Road, Birmingham B29 6LJ - 0121 415 6785 or mark.holland@woodbrooke.org.uk

For more information on Eldership & Oversight generally, please contact Michael Booth, Support for Meetings officer, Friends House, at michaelsb@quaker.org.uk or 020 7663 1023.

Next Sesame Copy Deadline

AM Saturday 12 May: deadline Tuesday 24 April

Living Sustainably: A Threshing Meeting

Friends from four different local meetings met at 7 Victoria Terrace on Saturday 10 March to take part in a threshing meeting on the issue of environmental sustainability and our corporate response to Britain Yearly Meeting's commitment to becoming a low-carbon community.

We started the day with a showing of Pam Lunn's Swarthmore Lecture – 'Costing not less than everything: Sustainability and spirituality in challenging times'. Friends were then asked to write their responses to the lecture on post-it notes, which were stuck up on the wall and shared with all present.

Following lunch, the group settled into the threshing session – giving all participants the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas, frustrations and inspirations on the issues at hand. A number of recurring themes arose:

- To enable more people to engage with the issue of environmental sustainability, we must re-frame the message to make it positive. People can feel disempowered and defensive when confronted with a negative rhetoric, asking for people to cut back on *x*, stop doing *y* and work harder at *z*.
- As a geographically dispersed group, building our community ownership of these issues and formulating a corporate response is vital, but very difficult. How we promote awareness and encourage a wider number of people to get involved is a key question.
- We need an overarching strategic vision – something that everyone can understand and work towards together. BUT, the steps towards this final goal must be small, achievable and inclusive, allowing everyone the opportunity to contribute.
- Better communication is fundamental to the success of this work. We need to share resources, ideas, experience and enthusiasm both within and between our local meetings.

Following the conclusion of the threshing meeting, Don, Phil and Rachel spent some time drawing the threads together and then offered a possible way forward to be taken to area meeting for consideration on the 31 March in Kelso:

- A group should be set up that spans the area meeting and is charged with coordinating our response to minute 36 from Britain Yearly Meeting in 2011. Don Stubbings, Rachel Fitzgerald and Phil Lucas are happy to form the core of this group and to coordinate the appointment of other Friends on to it.
- All local meetings in the AM will be asked if they would like to appoint either a Friend to participate in the group, or someone to act as a correspondent. In this way, we hope to invoke a sense of collective ownership.
- In the early stages of the group, we would propose to concentrate on improving our communication, on discovering what it is we are already doing, and on celebrating our achievements. A regular 'green issues' slot in *Sesame* could assist with this, if it were agreeable to the editors. [Yes! — *Eds.*]
- From this foundation, the group could move on to establish an overall aim for the area meeting and to look at the small, practical and time-limited projects that will hopefully encourage more people to get involved.

Rachel Fitzgerald, Phil Lucas, Don Stubbings

Richard Holloway

Leaving Alexandria: a memoir of faith and doubt (2012)

Edinburgh: Canongate

In 1903 the Anglican Society of the Sacred Mission acquired Kelham Hall in Nottinghamshire as their mother house. There, they trained boys and young men for the priesthood, one of them Richard Holloway who was to become Bishop of Edinburgh. He arrived at Kelham in 1948, aged 14, from Alexandria, a small town in the west of Scotland.

Hoping to be a priest one day, I had been sent here from a Scottish back street, and I fell in love with the place and the high purpose it served ... Our life was military in its discipline and dedication but it was also full of kindness and laughter. (: 4)

The book tells of his six years at Kelham, followed by National Service, two years in Ghana as personal assistant to the Bishop of Accra, ordination and a curacy in Gorbals and a visit to the USA where he first met his future wife, Jean. Somewhat later, after a year at Union Theological Seminary in New York he became in turn Rector of Old St Paul's in Edinburgh, Rector of The Church of the Advent in Boston and Rector of St Mary Magdalen's in Oxford. Shortly after taking the Oxford position, he was elected Bishop of Edinburgh, a post he held for 14 years.

Richard Holloway's career has been very much in the lad o'pairts tradition, full of challenging and responsible appointments. His extreme liberal positions on gay rights and women's ordination and his readiness to speak truth to power, especially the power of conservative Anglicanism, has made him both hero and villain and he makes very clear in the book his distress at his Church's fixation on sexuality.

But impressive, interesting and sometimes amusing as his outward career has been, a modern turbulent priest at the heart of the Anglican establishment, this is not really what the book explores. His career, both institutional and polemical, are the

external manifestations of the inner life but it is that inner life that Richard Holloway hopes he has laid bare. For him, that inner life has been one of faith and doubt: these, not certainty, are for him what true religion is about. Nor is it about institutions, a paradoxical position for a man who has been at the centre of one of those institutions and who, as he admits, enjoyed 'the queenly role' of being a bishop. Strange too to read of a bishop who challenges the Apostolic Succession by virtue of which he himself is a bishop. God, he came to see, does not tell us what to do:

wasn't it better to leave God out of the debate and find good human reasons for supporting the approach we advocated without having recourse to divinely clinching arguments? (:327)

Holloway disarmingly quotes a friend who accused him 'of leaving no thought unpublished' (:302). This urge may have got him into trouble, as happened with his book *Godless Morality: keeping religion out of ethics* (1999) but we should be grateful to him for allowing us this access to a thinking priest. Trouble indeed there was: the then Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, pronounced against the book (and had the effrontery to do so in Dundee!) and the Archbishop of South East Asia declared Scotland a heretical province.

It was too much for the Scottish Church: 'many of its members had become unsure of me as their Primus' (:332). And so, at a time of his own choosing, he resigned as bishop and moved on to a less institutional retirement, writing, walking in the Pentlands, acting as Chair of the Scottish Arts Council and Chair of the Ethics Committee of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority.

Quakers may have a Richard Holloway in their own Meeting, someone we can easily and comfortably find sitting next to us in Meeting. Like Gramsci he believes in the pessimism of the will and the optimism of the intellect. He has no need, it seems, of external certainty, his God is within: if, indeed, he believes in God at all:

I was less sure whether God was also just a human intervention, but I was quite sure religion was (: 343)

The Anglican Church has always been a very broad church, encompassing both High Church (Anglo Catholic) and Low Church (evangelical). That is said to be its strength, the strength that allows it to accommodate the High Richard Holloway and the Low George Carey among its bishops. The Church gains but so do the bishops for being given space to follow their own religious path. For Richard Holloway that path has been one of faith and doubt: it has been a lonely path and the sometimes painful honesty with which he has been able to follow through his own contradictions have added lustre to the man and through him to his Church. And now in his book's fine analysis of his journey since first leaving Alexandria he shows us that, like faith, uncertainty and doubt are part of the human condition.

Alan Davies

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Minutes of Area Meeting held on Sunday 26 February 2012, at the Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, Edinburgh

Minute 1: We welcome two attenders both attending Central Edinburgh LM: Alan Sayle and Lynne Barty.

Minute 2: Apologies

The following Friends are prevented and send their apologies: Maureen Anderson; Caroline Evens; Daphne Foster; John Forster; Marilyn Higgins; Rachel Howell; Pat Lucas; Phil Lucas; Meg Murray; Ron Murray; Laurie Naumann; Jane Pearn; Rufus Reade, Rosie Roberts.

Minute 3: Signing of the AM minutes of 14 January:

The minutes of 14 January 2012 have been published in *Sesame*. A copy has been signed by the clerk and entered in the Minute Book. Minutes 8b and 8c are amended as follows

Minute 8b: "Khyberuktum KhaMwep" is **Khyberukhtum Kha** and

"Mr. Khan" should be **Dr. Emel Khan**

Minute 8c: **Leti (Juliet) Hawthorn** (not "Howell")

Minute 4: Advices 27 & 28 were read during our opening worship.

Minute 5: Matters arising

a) Further to Minute 6 of 14 January 2012, we note that Quaker Week 2012 will be from Friday 28 September to Sunday 7 October.

b) Further to Minute 7c of 14 January, we recognise that our Nominations Committee has a difficult task to carry out. We ask Friends to assist them in their work by making themselves available and so spreading service as widely as possible.

Minute 6: Remit of Trustees

John Phillips, Clerk to Trustees, has spoken to the proposed Terms of Reference for Trustees which detail

- General remit
- Membership
- Conduct of meetings
- Functions of the Committee
- Authority (finance, employment, property)
- Reporting

This document updates changes to committees and relates to current structures. There are **no new** powers nor responsibilities.

We accept the proposed remit which is attached to these minutes. We thank Trustees for their work.

Minute 7: Membership Matters

a) We have received a request from **Alastair** and **Gill Reid**, previously of Central Edinburgh LM, now of 57 Ottoline Drive, Troon, KA10 7AN, to transfer their membership to West Scotland Area Meeting. We agree to this request and ask Janet Grimwade to action this.

b) Further to Minute 10c of 26 November 2011, we have received a written report on the visit by Rachel Howell and Anthony Buxton with **Alan Sayle**. We warmly welcome Alan into membership of the Religious Society of Friends and ask Don Stubbings to do so on our behalf and inform Central Edinburgh Meeting. The report

signed by all 3 is attached to these minutes.

c) Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting has asked us to welcome **Sue Sierra** as a sojourning member (QF&P 11.28). We do so gladly welcome her and ask Sara Martin to do so on our behalf.

d) We record the death of our Friend, **Agnes Coats** who died on 12 January after a period of increasing ill-health. Her funeral was held on 20 January at Borders Crematorium, Melrose, and a memorial meeting was held on 23 January at Millar House, where Agnes had lived for 20 years. We ask Tweeddale and Kelso Friends to write a Memorial Minute for a future AM and to consult with Isobel Khan.

e) Memorial Minute: Further to Minute 10e of 26th November 2011, we have received a Memorial Minute in respect of our Friend, **Joan Tansley**. This is attached to these minutes and we ask that it be published in *Sesame*. QF&P 4.29 was read to clarify whether it is in right ordering for this Area Meeting to consider a Testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend.

Minute 8 : Tabular Statement

Janet Grimwade has presented the Tabular Statement for 2011 to us. We have 254 members, a decrease from 265 in 2010. We also have 352 attenders, 261 adults and 91 children. There was one marriage within the Area Meeting.

Kelso has 16 members and 33 attenders (30 adult and 3 children).

Central Fife has 14 members and 21 attenders (12 adult and 9 children).

East Lothian has 9 members and 8 attenders, all adult.

Central Edinburgh has 135 members and 188 attenders (137 adults and 51 children).

South Edinburgh has 51 members and 62 attenders (45 adults and 17 children).

Penicuik has 10 members and 23 attenders (16 adult and 7 children).

Tweeddale has 8 members and 5 attenders, all adult

Polmont has 11 members and 12 attenders (8 adults and 4 children).

We thank Janet Grimwade for her work and Don Stubbings for checking the Tabular Statement which is attached to these minutes.

Minute 9: Work with Children and Young People in South East Scotland Area Meeting

Mary Jane Elton has told us of the work happening with children

and young people in our AM. We were first invited to play the universal game of scissors, paper and stone to give us a flavour of an activity within children's gathering.

There is a varied picture within the Area Meeting for children. Numbers fluctuate and often the Meeting doesn't know which children will come when.

Central Edinburgh and South Edinburgh both have all-age Meetings for Worship. These are very nourishing but, for other meetings, this would depend on the ages of the children and time of Meetings.

Toolkit Day on 24 March at 7 Victoria Terrace will be facilitated by Madeleine Harding and Helen Chambers of Quaker Life.

For children and young people, we offer opportunities for different activities, helped by 7 Victoria Terrace being a Fringe venue and having vibrant, cultural activities in Edinburgh.

Young people attend Summer Shindig (for 11 to 16 years), Link weekends (Scottish wide) for 13 to 18 years and also Junior Yearly Meeting.

We thank Mary Jane for her report and all those who take part in children's activities and work.

Minute 10: Nominations and Appointments

Our Nominations Committee has brought forward the following names for appointment to serve from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2015:

a) As Overseers, **Michelle Gunn** and **Madeleine Harding** (both Central Edinburgh)

b) As Trustee, **Ann Forsyth** (Central Edinburgh)

c) As a member of Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House Management Committee: **Evelyn Graham**

These names being acceptable, our Friends are duly appointed as above.

d) Request for Release: **Caroline Evens** as Elder with immediate effect. We agree to this request and thank Caroline for her service (and continuing service as Treasurer of AM).

Minute 11: General Meeting 3 March 2012

a) General Meeting is to be held in Perth on 3 March 2012. We appoint Alison Burnley, Margaret Mortimer, John Phillips and David Turner to represent us.

b) We further appoint John Phillips to write a report of the day for *Scottish Friends Newsletter* (and for *The Friend*).

Minute 12: Meeting for Sufferings

Janet Grimwade has reported on Sufferings which focussed on Advocacy [her report was in the last *Sesame*]. Highlighted is that advocacy requires knowledge and information. Our processes are often slow but modern media demands swift responses.

SE Anglia Area Meeting offered money to BYM to fund a specific post but Sufferings will have to return to this.

As a privileged body, Friends have the opportunity to offer a loyal address on the occasion of Elizabeth Windsor's 60th (Diamond) Jubilee. The address will be given to the next meeting of Sufferings on 31 March (it has to be submitted prior to this date). We have heard that our status as a privileged body dates back to the time of Charles II, and is directly related to our early struggles and privations.

Minute 13: October and December Area Meetings

Friends may remember that both October and December Area Meetings are to be held at 7, Victoria Terrace. The October AM, on 20 October, is scheduled to be an all-day AM, beginning at 11 a.m.; December is to begin at 2 p.m. The Clerk is unable to be present on 20 October and is requesting that Area Meeting in October begin at 2 p.m. and that 8 December begin at 11 a.m. (7 Victoria Terrace is available on 8 December from 11 a.m.).

This request is agreed.

Minute 14: Communication among Edinburgh Meetings

The Clerk has set out her difficulties as Area Meeting Clerk in dealing with communications and circulation of information to seven meetings or groupings in the Edinburgh area. (These are: Central Edinburgh, South Edinburgh, Edinburgh Midweek, Barony Street, QLGF (Quaker Lesbian and Gay Fellowship), Edinburgh University, Portobello/Musselburgh).

Some communications can readily be dealt with through the AM own email circulation list. However, this is more difficult for Edinburgh-specific material. There is a large, and increasing, volume of such communications. It is not part of the role of the Managers at 7 Victoria Terrace to sift and distribute such materials.

Whilst it is possible to continue with the present arrangements, this leaves responsibility with the AM clerk, and we have considered the opportunity to adopt an alternative, more inclusive and focused approach.

We note that QLGF is the name by which the Quaker Lesbian and Gay Fellowship is known.

We recognise that while the current arrangement is not perfect, it is an acceptable way of handling the flow of information for now.

Minute 15 Edinburgh University Chaplaincy

Sara Martin has reported on her role as Edinburgh University Chaplaincy Quaker contact. Those attending Quaker Meeting for Worship at Edinburgh University mainly do not attend other such Meetings for Worship in Edinburgh. 2 years ago Edinburgh University Quaker Society was set up with, now, 80 on an e mail list.

Societies Fair is a 2-day opportunity, attended by thousands of people and it would be good if more Friends could participate.

We ask Sara to send her report to *Sesame* and are pleased that this opening is thriving with also a wide range of activities. We thank Sara for her work and service.

Minute 15: AOCB

Being Salt and Light Study Worship Sharing Group – 3 Mondays in March

'Being Salt and Light: Friends living the Kingdom of God in a Broken World' is the theme of the Sixth World Conference of Friends – a once in a generation event. The conference organisers have prepared a fascinating booklet of short personal reflections from Quakers around the world on different aspects of the theme, plus questions, for our own reflection and sharing. This booklet provides a way of preparing together and participating, even without travelling to Kenya for the conference itself.

Closing Minute 34 Friends from four local meetings attended all or part of this Meeting for Worship for Business. Our next Area Meeting will be on Saturday, 31 March 2012 at Kelso Quaker Meeting House, beginning at 11.30 (to fit buses from Edinburgh). We aim to finish at 4.30.

Kate Arnot

Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

Minute 8 of our February AM refers to a **Memorial Minute** in respect of our Friend, **Joan Tansley**. This will appear in the next issue of *Sesame*.

Quaker Meetings for Worship in South East Scotland**Every Sunday**

Central Edinburgh:	7 Victoria Terrace	9.30am & 11.00am
South Edinburgh:	Open Door, 420 Morningside Road,	10.30am
Polmont:	Greenpark Community Centre	10.45am
Kelso:	Quaker Meeting House, Kelso	10.30am

Every Wednesday

Mid Week Meeting:	7 Victoria Terrace	12.30pm- 1pm
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First Sunday in the Month

Penicuik & Peebles:	Valleyfield House, 17 High St., Penicuik	11.00am
	<i>Children welcome, bring and share lunch.</i>	
Portobello:	Old Parish Church Hall, Bellfield Street	7.30pm

First Tuesday in the Month

Edinburgh University Common Room, Muslim Prayer Rooms	1pm- 1.30pm
(opposite the Weir Buildings) at Kings Buildings: <i>contact Sarah Martin 07818050853 or sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk for more details</i>	

Second Sunday in the Month

Tweeddale:	Tweedbridge Court, Margaret Blackwood House, Dukehaugh, Peebles <i>All welcome but please phone to confirm. 01721 721 050 or 01896 850 389.</i>	10.30am
Central Fife:	Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (in Kirk Wynd opposite the Old Kirk)	10.30am
East Lothian:	East Linton Community Hall	11.00am

Third Tuesday in the Month

Edinburgh University Common Room, Muslim Prayer Rooms	1pm- 1.30pm
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Fourth Sunday in the Month

Tweeddale:	Tweedbridge Court, Margaret Blackwood House, <i>Details as Second Sunday above</i>	10.30am
Central Fife:	Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy <i>as above</i>	10.30am
Portobello:	CHANGES Community Health Project 108 Market St, Musselburgh, East Lothian EH21 6QA	10.30am
Barony St Meeting	33 Barony Street, Edinburgh	7.00 pm

Last Sunday in the Month

East Lothian:	East Linton Community Hall	11.00am
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Distribution of Sesame & Scottish Friends Newsletter

The current practice is to distribute one copy of *Sesame* and the Scottish Friends Newsletter to every Member and Attender household. Contributions to the costs of *Sesame* are always warmly welcomed by the Area Meeting Treasurer, Caroline Evens. An email version of *Sesame* is more ecological and is free! A large print version is available on request.