

SESAME

Number 202: April 2016

The First Quaker M.P. / Equipping for Ministry / Ecumenical Accompaniers / Elders & Overseers / Being Friends Together / Welgate Garden / Archives / Militarisation / NFPB / A C.O.'s Story / 'Religion and the Middle East Conflict' / Preparing for YM / A Poem / An Allegory / Meeting for Sufferings / AM February Minutes / "... For Truth and Peace ...", 1659



THE PRESENCE IN THE MIDST – JAMES DOYLE PENROSE, 1916 (see page 5)

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SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

The next Area Meeting will be held at Edinburgh Meeting House on Saturday, 9 April, 2016, starting at 2.00 pm and finishing by 5.00 pm.

We have a full agenda, including several reports: some will be presented in a traditional way, others not so. Don Stubbings and Eoin Rutter recently attended the BYM Sustainability Gathering at Swanwick and found the experience energizing and inspiring. They hope to engage our hearts and minds by sharing their experience in a creative way. Mary Woodward will be asking us to discuss three of the questions Elders and Overseers grappled with at their conference:

What got you through the door of your first Quaker Meeting?

What brought you back for a second time?

What keeps you coming back?

Richard Williams, our Assistant Clerk, Membership, will present the Tabular Statement for 2015. This is the statistical picture of our meetings in South East Scotland. Each year Tabular Statements from across the country are amalgamated by staff in Friends House to give the overall number of meetings, members, attenders, men, women and children.

This will be my first time as your Clerk. As you know, Phil Lucas finished his devoted service as clerk of this Area Meeting on 31 March. I am sure you will all want to join with me in thanking him for the considerable work he has done on our behalf.

I hope to see you at Area Meeting, Friends.

Elizabeth Allen,
Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

DRAFT AGENDA

1. **Worship**
2. **Introductions**
3. **Minutes of last meeting, 27 February 2016**
4. **Matters arising**
BYM Sustainability Gathering – *appointment of Eoin Rutter (attender at South Edinburgh LM) by between meetings procedure*
5. **Meeting for Sufferings: brief report** – *Kate Arnot*

6. **BYM Sustainability Gathering** – *Don Stubbings, Eoin Rutter*
7. **Tabular Statement 2015** – *Richard Williams*
8. **Membership matters**
9. **Appointments and release from service:** AM Nominations Committee report
10. **Eldership & Oversight Conference report** – *Mary Woodward*
11. **Festivals Committee** – proposed charities to be supported
12. **GM provisional dates** for 2017, and March 2018
13. **Correspondence and notices:**
 - a) Quaker Concern – Over-population website
14. **A.O.C.B.**
15. **Closing minute**
5.00 pm Tea

EDITORIAL

Different Visions

Following the discussion at last Area Meeting, we offer two allegories of discernment – J. Doyle Penrose’s vision of a dimly-seen Christ, come to teach his people himself, and Anna Levin’s very different image [see p. 24] – also, as we prepare for the Election, two different expressions of where discernment leads us. Edward Burrough, writing in the time of turmoil between Richard Cromwell’s resignation as Lord Protector on 25 May 1659 and Charles II’s arrival at Dover exactly a year later, felt free to offer, on Friends’ behalf, “Good Counsel and Advice” about what a Government should be [see p. 31], but, by the 1830s, this seemed unQuakerly to some [see p. 4]; the account of attitudes changing at a Monthly Meeting is taken from the series of histories that was one of Joseph Rowntree’s many legacies. (No space here to comment on the disgusting decision by those directing the Reform Trust that bears his name to give £50,000 to Alastair Carmichael’s legal battle *against* truth and integrity – our Friend Alastair McIntosh does so at <http://bellacaledonia.org.uk/2016/03/28/frenchgate-a-case-of-quaker-agency-capture/> however.) Upholding our living past underlies the formal work of the Archives Group [p. 13], and the stories we share of family history [pp. 17-18 & 19-20]; Mary Woodward has been busy on our behalf in work on Eldership & Ministry [pp. 6-8 & 9-11]; there is much on opposing war; also a poem [p. 21] and news of a garden [p. 12].

The First Quaker M.P.

Before 1832, the requirement for Members of the House of Commons to swear allegiance to the Crown prevented Friends from standing for Parliament; and exclusion from public affairs came to be seen by some of them as a good thing, removing a temptation to worldliness. Edward Pease, a founder of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, was one such: a traditional Friend, who deplored "luxurious customs" creeping into the Society, such as "the introduction of pictures and fancy articles in the home", "the use of silver forks" and "a water goblet to each person". His son Joseph, however, thought differently:

The passage of the Reform Bill in 1832 unexpectedly gave Joseph Pease an opportunity to serve his country in Parliament. No such opportunity had come to any English Friend since John Archdale had been refused the privilege of affirmation upon his election to the House in 1698. Joseph Pease had won the confidence of the people by his devotion to their best interests, by his foresight and energy, by the purity of his life and by the expansion of industrial prosperity in South Durham and Cleveland where his business talents had been employed. He had exhibited in his life and dealings the traits of character which the voters of the Southern Division of the County of Durham wished to have in their member of Parliament, and they made the request to him that he should serve them in this public way. Edward Pease, the father, with his fear of the contaminations of public life, strongly opposed [...] the idea of having his son stand for election to Parliament, expressing his "decided opinion" that unless his son was "wholly regardless of all parental counsel, the advice of all [his] best friends, the domestic happiness of [his] family, [his] duties as a husband and a parent and a member of the Society of Friends, [he] could not for a moment entertain the idea of yielding under any contingency to become a representative of [his] countrymen in Parliament." (*Diaries*, p. 65) Jane Gurney, the mother of his wife, [...] also used all her efforts and set forth her strongest arguments to convince her son-in-law that he was taking a dangerous course. Many concerned Friends also joined in the effort to persuade Joseph Pease to give up his intentions. His Monthly Meeting [= (now) Area Meeting] discussed the problem in an almost interminable session, with Jonathan Backhouse, a brother-in-law, urging Friends to rise to the vision of an opening door for public service. Finally, "Father Pease", with his good sense, yielded to his conviction of his son's sincere motives and publicly advised him to follow his own light and act upon his own clear judgment.

Joseph Pease refused to make any personal canvas[s] for the election. He

asked no man to vote for him; he went to no expense in the election; and he announced in advance that, if elected, he should unflinchingly maintain his practice and profession as a member of the Society of Friends. He made great sacrifices in business as well as in domestic comfort and enjoyment to follow this call of duty, but he took the course because he was profoundly convinced it was a genuine call.

He was admitted to Parliament in 1833 on his affirmation, the first instance of it kind in English history, and he continued to represent his constituents for a period of nine years. The public station to which he was raised brought no diminution of his religious life. He always wore the plain Quaker coat, and though by nature and breeding a gentleman, he always refrained from employing titles of address and used the simple Quaker form of speech. He continued to attend mid-week meetings and to carry on all the spiritual and philanthropic activities to which he had been devoted, making frequent speeches in Parliament on social and political reforms. He laboured with much zeal to promote the British and Foreign Bible Society, the British and Foreign School Society, and the Peace Society, of which he became President after the death of Joseph Sturge. He did much to advance education within the Society of Friends, especially in connection with Flounders Institute [*a Quaker teacher training college in Leeds*], and he exhibited in all his broad activities an intelligent as well as a consecrated spirit. In later life he became blind, but the misfortune did not lessen his zeal or activity. He was successively appointed an Elder and recorded a Minister, and he steadily grew in grace and enlarged in his sphere of service until his death, which occurred in 1872.

Rufus M. Jones, *The Later Periods of Quakerism*, 1921

Despite having been elected in 1832, Joseph Pease was not immediately allowed to take his seat on account of his refusal to swear, and a special committee considered the issue before deciding affirmation was admissible. (His refusal to take his hat off in the Chamber was also a problem.) As an M.P. he joined the campaign against slavery, and supported the secret ballot for elections and the removal of bishops from the House of Lords.

The Presence in the Midst

(which gave its title to Peter J. Eccles's 2009 Swarthmore Lecture on discernment) was painted a hundred years ago by James Doyle Penrose of Watford Meeting; the meeting house depicted is Jordans, in Buckinghamshire. A print of it hung at Watford in the '70s (the original is at Friends House); obstreperous children cited it as authority for standing on the furniture. The artist's sons Lionel (the geneticist) and Roland (the artist and critic) were both C.O.s in the First World War, serving with the Friends Ambulance Unit.

Equipping for Ministry – Part One

Equipping for Ministry is a two-year part-time course at Woodbrooke, which aims to offer participants space, time, and encouragement, to work out what their ministry is and how to carry it out: how to live as a Quaker in today's world. Some participants will already have a clear idea of their ministry [e.g. prison chaplain]; others, no idea at all, but know very clearly that they are being called to take part in the course.

I fit into the latter category. Twelve years ago I was immensely privileged to be a student at Pendle Hill, the Quaker study centre in Pennsylvania – modelled on Woodbrooke and founded twenty-five years later. There I underwent radical transformation: a painful process, but a richly rewarding one: as a result, my life changed completely and I moved to Scotland where I became part of South East Scotland Area Meeting.

I had been considering for a year or two whether Equipping for Ministry [EfM] was for me, but without having any clarity about it. Last summer I took part in a Woodbrooke course on prophetic ministry, and on the Sunday morning woke with the clear knowledge in my head that I had to apply for EfM – so I did, and was accepted for the 2016 intake.

The structure of the course is a flexible sandwich: an induction weekend and a closing weekend are the bread, and two week-long residentials are the main filling. The garnishes are short courses, chosen from the Woodbrooke brochure. Usually, three are to be done in each of the two years, and they have to be chosen from four main categories: *Experience of the Spirit*; *Engagement with the World*; *Evolving Tradition*; and *Contemporary Quaker Faith Community*. During the two years one also undertakes a project, which can take a wide range of forms, and which is often completely different from one's initial ideas. Decisions don't have to be made alone – each course participant is allocated a tutor to listen, guide, and generally support them over the two years; the Woodbrooke staff associated with EfM are very engaged and supportive; and I now know from experience the other course participants rapidly create a loving and caring community to whom one can turn at any point.

I have been to Woodbrooke a number of times, and usually find I am the only Scot on any course: to my delight, I discovered among the EfM-ers two fellow-Scots and one honorary one, who lives in Lancaster. This has meant that we can meet up from time to time to share experi-

ences and encourage each other face-to-face rather than electronically, which is always a joy! My tutor is also an honorary Scot, and blessedly lives in Glasgow – which means I can wield my bus pass and visit him when the need arises: again, face-to-face tutorials are a blessing.

The induction weekend was very intense and richly rewarding. One could not possibly get to know everyone in depth, but we were often talking in small groups and also sharing in the larger circle, as well as receiving advice from those EfM-ers who were at Woodbrooke for their closing weekend, and took time to display their projects for us and take part in ‘speed dating’ to pass on important advice. We were introduced to using the library, and encouraged to dip our toe in the scary water of moodle, Woodbrooke’s online learning platform. I am most grateful to the William Gunn charity for giving me the money for a tablet, so that I can take part in online fora and conversations, and explore the study materials without having to be sitting at my pc at home: I can also read books and course material on the bus, with or without free wi-fi!

Taking part in EfM requires time and commitment, which is not always easy to find in our busy lives. I became very clear over the induction weekend that, for me, EfM means learning to DO less and BE more (a thing I had discovered at Pendle Hill, but rather lost in the busy-ness of creating a new life in Scotland), and that this applies both to my internal life and my outer one, and also involves taking better care of myself.

I try to set aside one day a week for EfM, which may take many forms – one week, it was re-organising my bookshelves to get all the ‘holy’ books in the same place and in the process releasing into the world ones I no longer needed; another, it was reflecting on the final presentation of one of my fellow-students from Pendle Hill, which I rediscovered while sorting out books and papers, and which was one of those lightning-flashes that shed a blinding light on something one has been pondering – something I think it is going to be a major part of my two years’ work. The week-long residential is at the end of March: I’m really looking forward to it, and seeing where I get led next! To close, here is a prayer offered to us by a fellow-student, Jennifer Ried from Berlin, who spoke it in both German and English:

*In meinem Herzen möchte ich eine Stille finden
die allem erlaubt zu sein was ist*

*In meinem Händen möchte ich eine Leere halten
die allem Raum gibt was Gott hineinlagen mag.*

"In my heart I want to find a stillness
which allows everything to be

"In my hands I want to carry an emptiness
which gives space to everything that God wants to give to me."

Mary Woodward

Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine & Israel (EAPPI) provides protection by presence, monitors human rights abuses, supports Israeli and Palestinian peace activists and advocates for an end to the occupation.

Ecumenical Accompaniers

Working as Human Rights Monitors

Based in the West Bank and Israel in 2017:

20 vacancies for 3 months' service

living allowance + benefits

Deadline for applications: Friday 29 April 2016

For more information and to download an application pack please check our website: www.quaker.org.uk/applyeappi.

(Please note that we will not be sending hard copies of the application pack and we can only receive electronic forms).



**Ecumenical
Accompaniment
Programme
in Palestine
and Israel**

Phil Lucas, who served as an Ecumenical Accompanier in 2010, adds: *The need is great and increases all the time, and the London office in Friends House is particularly keen to recruit volunteers from the UK's 'Celtic fringes'. If you may be interested and would like to explore what is involved, please get in touch with me. There is an upper age limit now of 70.*

Elders & Overseers at Woodbrooke, 4-6 March 2016

At the beginning of March I represented our Area Meeting at a weekend conference for Elders and Overseers at Woodbrooke. Its title was "Abundant Life – Re-Sourcing our Meetings", its brief to consider an IDEA:

Receiving Inspiration

Deepening our understanding of Eldership & Oversight

Empowering us to act when we got home

Offering Activities to energise our Meetings

When we were asked, at the start of the weekend, to consider *Where have we found inspiration and abundant life as individuals and in our Meetings?* and *How can we support and sustain abundant life?* my heart sank and I felt completely unable to contribute; but by the end, I was revitalised by the realisation that I do have a lot of knowledge and experience, *and* have gifts recognised and previously unrecognised, and was inspired by encountering resources and ideas to carry home to energise and sustain both myself and my Local and Area Meetings.

Our sessions were spent both as a large group and in smaller ones; many conversations continued over meals. I re-realised how energised I am by community, and how much I learn from other people's experience; and that I need to find this in my everyday life.

The best bits: conversations at a deep level with Friends old and new; making connections especially with other Scottish Friends; the loving support and encouragement of each other, and the people running the weekend; learning more about Friends World Committee for Consultation; and a session on "knowing your gifts" which both affirmed and surprised me.

Less good? Two sessions in each of which we did two different things, leaving my head feeling like exploding from all that had been put into it in a short space of time: the session on gifts followed these and was a blessed and uplifting restorative.

What would I like to see in our AM? More opportunities to learn from each other and get to know each other in the things that are eternal.

What are the outstanding things I bring back with me?

- *The need for nourishment and nurture*, not just for myself, but for us all;
- We are all responsible for the spiritual and physical life of our Meeting – Elders and Overseers are appointed to have a particular care for these things but we all need to care for them and support and uphold them;

- We need to spend time getting to know each other both as people and in “the things that are eternal” – only that way can we grow as a Quaker community;
- There are lots of interesting ways of doing this, and it needn’t be an Elder or Overseer who leads us in this – there are many excellent resources available and lots of guidance on how to use them.

Other good things:

Mention was made of ‘Being Friends Together’ [*see opposite*], which was introduced by a very enthusiastic Alastair Fuller. The annual subscription to this is £35: some were concerned at this cost and/or the usefulness of the resource to a small Meeting; he said that a subscription could be taken out and shared by a number of small Meetings, or by an Area Meeting to share among all the LMs. I know that some of our LMs already use it, but wonder whether the smaller Meetings might be interested in joining together to subscribe. Alastair also said it is part of his job to come to visit LMs and AMs to explain the resource and to help Meetings discern where they want to explore/grow/learn. Would our AM be interested in this?

Many Friends in Scotland are unable to get to Woodbrooke courses because of the distances and travel time involved. I asked Simon Best, Head of Learning at Woodbrooke, about the possibility of bringing events here, to reach more people than are able to get to Selly Oak. He said that, in addition to ‘Woodbrooke on the Road’ *days*, it is possible for someone to come and do a full weekend – Maud Grainger has done a residential one for West of Scotland, at which Young Friends took care of the children’s programme, thus enabling all Friends who wished to to be fully engaged in the event. It might cost AM a lot less to do things that way; would enable people to experience a Woodbrooke weekend when their situations make it difficult or impossible to get down to Birmingham; and could encourage learning, growing, and sharing within our AM.

Often when I go to Woodbrooke I find I am the only Scot in a group: I was delighted to encounter Friends from all three of the other AMs. We all appreciated having the opportunity to begin to know each other, and have started to explore ways of keeping in touch and meeting up in future, thus increasing our sense of connectedness to and support for our work as Elders and Overseers in Scotland.

Most important of all

Don’t be discouraged: ministry from one of the course participants re-

minded me of this, which I received as a gift from a fellow student at Pendle Hill, and now pass on to you -

*Start where you're at;
Step out in faith;
Do what you can;
Not what you can't;
Expect god to help*

Mary Woodward

Being Friends Together

In 1899, John Wilhelm Rowntree said: "We must place within the reach of all our adult members advanced religious teaching similar in aim to that which we have seen to be needful for our children. ... We are but seeking a rich and well-tilled soil from which every type of ministry shall spring with a robuster growth". Since 1903 Woodbrooke has been offering courses in Birmingham to meet this need.

The learning project being evolved by Woodbrooke and Quaker Life aims to support Quaker meetings at home in their ongoing development as living communities of faithful people. I recently attended a workshop to explore the online resource, which is primarily for the use of groups but in which individuals can find much of interest. The material is organised in four main themes (community, spirituality, tradition, testimony); in addition, there is help with preparing for Yearly Meeting and reading *Quaker Faith & Practice*. I do recommend you have a look at it: <http://together.woodbrooke.org.uk> Thanks to John Fox, who has paid the £35 annual subscription, we can get the full use of the link: when asked, you enter John Fox's email address **foxarch@btinternet.com** and the password **cordat8472**. Eventually, I hope, Local Meetings may want to have groups exploring the various themes.

Rachel Frith

Reading *Quaker Faith & Practice*

The suggested reading in Q.F. & P. for April is Chapters 12 & 17 (Caring for one another and Quaker funerals and memorial meetings); for May, it is Chapters 16 & 22 (Quaker marriage procedure and Close relationships).

Welgate Garden

Morebattle, Kelso, TD5 8QN

Welgate Garden is just round the corner from the village shop in Morebattle. It is the old manse garden – the house itself is next the Kirk, square and white – and has recently joined the Quiet Gardens Movement. This is a charity which, as its publicity material puts it,

encourages and nurtures the provision of local venues which offer a ministry of hospitality and prayer. These may be in homes, hospitals, churches, prisons or schools. They provide space and opportunity for rest, refreshment, stillness and reflection in a context of natural beauty. For whole or half days, some Quiet Gardens provide this quiet space, whilst others offer led meditations or teaching on Christian spirituality.

Affiliated Quiet Gardens, hosted by those adhering to the Christian faith, are open to people of all faiths or none; they offer treasures of contemplative prayer and silence in a welcoming and receptive environment.

Welgate is formally open to welcome visitors every Friday and Sunday for those who care to seek peace and quiet. If we are here, a cup of tea or coffee can readily be provided. We trust visitors not to help themselves to cuttings: there are usually small plants next the greenhouse, or we can provide cuttings if asked. There should be a wooden bowl in the greenhouse for contributions, but payment is not a requirement.

The house belongs to my husband, Douglas Hall, and me; our telephone number is 01573 440 687. The Quiet Gardens scheme is inter-denominational and worldwide, although there are no more than a dozen participating gardens in Scotland.

We do not have any events planned for the moment, but in the full flush of Spring we may collaborate with local churches to offer some kind of special day. Any such occasion will be advertised in *Sesame* nearer the time.

Matilda Mitchell

Further information on Quiet Gardens from The Quiet Garden Trust, Clare Charity Centre, Wycombe Road, Saunderton, Buckinghamshire HP14 4BF

Tel. 01494 569057

Email: info@quietgarden.org Website: www.quietgarden.org

Area Meeting Archives Group

The AM Archives group has been at work for four years. What we inherited at the start were 22 large boxes of various papers gathered out of cupboards and from under beds in Friends' homes, as well as boxes under the stairs at Victoria Terrace (on a pallet, as the floor tended to be damp!)

We met as a group monthly, and can now say all these documents have been recorded and catalogued; although we had to discipline ourselves against the temptation to read much of the very interesting materials until all were properly dealt with! Those belonging to General Meeting for Scotland were transferred to the GM Archivist, Paul Burton, in Glasgow, and those from before 2004 belonging to SE Scotland (8 boxes' worth) were catalogued and taken to the National Records of Scotland. These included minute books of the Scottish Domestic Bureau for refugees 1939-46. (How nothing changes!)

With Area Meeting's agreement, we gifted a first edition of George Fox's Journal to the National Library of Scotland and Eliza Wigham's stereoscopic box to the Museum of Edinburgh. We updated the file of deceased Friends and produced guidance for clerks and conveners on how to deal with documents.

Documents still at Victoria Terrace

In the Meeting House available for research is a small collection on the history of early Friends in Edinburgh and the Pleasance. The archives records box contains lists of Quaker records at the National Records of Scotland as well as a list of all the archives remaining at Victoria Terrace from 2005 onwards.

Things to remember – a note to conveners and clerks

Archives are 'Papers that document the origin, functions and development of a meeting'. Therefore if there are no archives, a Meeting does not exist in historical terms. Archives include minutes of business meetings and committees, and newsletters. Please do not lose them or stack them away to be forgotten when you no longer use them. Bring them to the Meeting House and we will welcome and take good care of them.

Please print minutes out on archival paper (available at the Meeting House) and index them for easy retrieval now and in the future. Guidelines should be passed on with the minutes.

Pat Lucas

Militarisation in our Society

This is an outline of my experience of the Woodbrooke course, 12-14 February 2016, and my personal take on what I learned while attending it.

In one sense it is probably true that this bit of the planet that we call 'ours' is *only* ours by virtue of the efforts of the military over many centuries. However if the society we live in is indeed truly 'ours' we must surely all take responsibility to shape it, consistent with our values.

This of course is what the military are also keen to do, consistent with their own principles.

The military are indeed more visible in civil society today. They are also by all accounts gaining in influence. This change has not occurred of its own accord but in direct response to a system devised to promote better relations between the armed forces and the civilian population. The engine of change is the Armed Forces Covenant (2011). I must admit that before I attended this course I had never heard of it. Indeed to me the word *covenant* seemed to hint at some kind of cult. And perhaps in some sense it is. However in its own words "the Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation that those who serve or have served, and their families are treated fairly." Personally I am most uncomfortable with the notion that *servicing your country* is the exclusive remit of the armed forces, a notion implicit in this quotation.

Since it was launched in 2011, all local authorities have been invited 'voluntarily' to pledge themselves to the Military Covenant. Those who sign, do so on the understanding that they will receive a substantial sum of government money to make previously unaffordable improvements in the local community. Cash-strapped councils have not been slow to see the advantage. Does anyone recall being consulted by their local council prior to the promise being put in writing?

Certainly there was a time when the military did indeed have a poor reputation for caring for the surviving casualties of war: it was well known that ex-military personnel frequently experienced real difficulty in reverting to civilian life. This was hardly surprising since the consequences of trauma and injury are bound to make life hard and increase the difficulty of integrating into civilian life. Such facts, of course, were very bad publicity.

By way of honouring their part of the 'Covenant', Local Councils began to address these issues of disadvantage by giving military personnel extra

points on the housing list. However it did not take long for the remit of the Armed Services Covenant to move from tackling the issue of social disadvantage experienced by the military and ex-military, on to a new agenda of promoting the armed services and their values in civilian life. Local authorities saw it as their duty within the terms of the covenant to provide opportunities to promote, advertise or otherwise 'celebrate' the forces and their weaponry on particular days of the year. The original Armed Forces Day started in America, formally known as Veterans Day; an annual event of this kind was first held in the UK in 2005 as an extension of 'Veterans Awareness Week'. It was at first a slow process, but by almost imperceptible degrees, the honouring of veterans began to be replaced by a focus on recruitment. Preparation for conflicts to come!

To use a military term, this change of approach might be called 'mission creep': the gradual subversion of a day of remembrance into a means of recruitment.

As part of the deal established via the Armed Forces Covenant, local authorities, having signed the pledge and taken the money, now began to make places available for the celebration of Armed Services Day. These events were permitted to take place in town squares or other public spaces. Typically, uniformed soldiers will be on show with weapons to mingle with the local community. Is this a celebration of war? We are told not. Is it a recruitment device? It is hard to see how it could be otherwise, even if supposedly unintentionally.

Through the good offices of local authorities, unprecedented access by the military into schools is now a commonplace at both primary and secondary level. 87 % of secondary schools have been visited by the military at least once; many are visited more frequently. The presence of the armed forces is now becoming an fixture of the educational environment.

What business do the military have in our schools? We are told that it is to encourage local communities to accept and support the armed services. To this end, the military charity SSAFA [Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen Families Association] have promoted the introduction of 'dress down' days, perhaps now better described as 'dress up' days or 'Camo Days', when primary school kids are invited to attend school dressed in camouflage kit, looking for all the world like little soldiers. What effect do you suppose such exposure will have on young minds? Whatever your views on the matter, 'Camo Days' are now in effect an unavoidable part of the school

programme, often attended by armed forces personnel with weapons on display. Are parents informed or consulted? What exactly are our children studying on these 'Camo Days'? It is *not* called "educating for violence", though many of us might think that would be a fair description.

According to the military, recruitment is not mentioned during school visits; but the effect must surely be much the same. The increased visibility of military men and their weapons in a school playgrounds sends out a message that we all stand with the Armed Forces and presumably approve of what they do.

By way of explaining their role in the classroom, the military like to claim that they are in the business of helping children develop 'Character', and acquiring 'British Values'. But this begs the questions: *What kind of character? What kind of values?* I know from experience that what you are supposedly taught, is not necessarily what you learn. Nevertheless, young minds, especially those of the *very* young will find it hard to make informed decisions, if no other option or point of view or role model is ever presented. Classes in ethics and the process of decision making would introduce a child to critical thinking, and if the principle of balance is always followed, and some alternative to warfare and violence is presented, a school might be able to provide the balanced education we hope our children will receive. A visit from AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project), Veterans for Peace, or from the Quakers, or a class in Non-Violent Communication would supply the need for balance in education which is both essential and also a legal requirement.

A child who is subliminally recruited at a tender age, by exposure to the excitement and glamour of the armed forces, is the same child who will later be asked to follow orders without question, right or wrong, without reference to personal ethics. A child who is raised in this way may become an adult more inclined to support a political decision to go to war. Are we a warrior culture? Is this what is called a British Value? Who in our society is entitled to pronounce on this topic? A collective ethic or set of public values is always going to be hard to sustain without undermining the principle individual liberty.

For me, one of the strangest things I learned at Woodbrooke was that the vehicle for delivering the Military Covenant was in fact the time-honoured British Legion. This is the organisation that has for many years attracted enormous trust and respect, and for many people in the post-war gener-

ations the British Legion appeared beyond reproach. Yet now it seems that Remembrance Day and the poppy appeal have been transformed into means of recruitment. How did this come about?

The Military Covenant as I have now learned, was indeed the brain child of the British Legion. The almost sacred symbol of the red poppy has been usurped and progressively subverted to become both a both a saleable commodity and also a flagship of recruitment. An upbeat comment on a recent British Legion calendar reads: "There are lots of events throughout the year including commemorative and remembrance events and those that are just plain fun ..."

How do we as Quaker respond? What actions are we called to take? There are many threats to democracy and a free society but to me this one seems particularly insidious.

Simon Jackson

Northern Friends Peace Board

As the tram whisked me past it on the way to the Board's first meeting of 2016 at Nottingham Meeting House on 5 March, Old Market Square was awash with soldiery in various patterns of camouflage – a recruitment event for 148 Field Company, REME. Having not long since read Simon Jackson's article, I was struck by the *lavishness* of the occasion: not just a single stall, but enough of them to fill the square, with vehicles and a helicopter as well (a dummy, evidently, for passing that way again in the evening I saw it being dismantled).

It being the first meeting of the year, there were a number of new members to welcome; although, since we were at the southernmost edge of the Board's area, there were also several absences – only two of the Scottish reps were present. After the opening worship and introductions we talked in groups about our own work for peace and then Philip Austin, the NFPB co-ordinator, gave an overview of how the Board functions to disseminate information and support concerns: issues that had been mentioned included work in support of refugees and public events to raise awareness of militarisation.

Robert Keeble, a co-opted member from Leeds, spoke of the experiences of his four great-grandfathers in the 1914-18 war: James Scott, whom he had known in old age, had been a military chaplain on the Western Front and, though physically unscathed, was traumatised by his experiences; two

were conscientious objectors, Hubert Peet and George Ewan, the former a journalist (he later edited *The Friend*), the latter a warehouseman for the Co-Op, and both spent time in prison; and lastly Walter Keeble, who family legend says volunteered on the first day of the War, but must already have been some sort of reservist, for within weeks he was in Flanders, where, on 8 November 1914, he was killed at the age of 28, leaving a widow and a young family. His son Stanley, then aged two, grew up to be a C.O. in the next war, and later the founder of the Peace Tax Campaign (now called Conscience). It was interesting to hear these stories and good to be reminded of the tradition of which we are a part: Robert linked his own opposition to Trident to war resistance a century ago.

Trident, indeed, was our next agenda item. Sam Walton of QPSW updated us on what is being done at Friends House, Laurence Hall told us of work by Young Friends, and we heard about the activities of ICAN (International Coalition Against Nuclear Weapons) and of Scientists for Global Responsibility; the group set up at our November meeting to focus on engaging with people in Barrow (where the boats are built) also reported.

After two regular items, the Members' Forum and the Trustees' Report, we heard from Sam Walton again, about peace education, and militarisation (on which two workshops are to be held in Scotland in May). The final item was a session to reflect on the coming year and its challenges, including the EU referendum, TTIP, and rising global violence.

The Board meets next in Edinburgh on 18 June.

Alan Frith

100 Years Ago

From a report of **Robert Long**, Secretary to the Northern Friends Peace Board, for the period January 25th to April 8th 1916:

The introduction of the Compulsory Military Service Act has led to a certain change in the character of our work during the period under review. The Secretary has been unable to travel widely as it has been necessary for him to remain in the office constantly dealing with requests for advice and help. [As well as supporting Friends in Leeds he] is also connected with the No Conscription Fellowship in Leeds and is constantly attending the Tribunals watching the cases of Friends and others. In several cases he has been able to bring men into touch with the Ambulance Unit. With regard to the wider work, names of conscientious objectors have been received from and sent to various

Northern Meeting Committees, attempts have been made to give advice and help by letter and at an early stage in the campaign. A circular letter was sent to the more important centres advising Friends what was being done in other localities. Mention should also be made of a circular letter sent to all Meeting in January offering help in conveying the concern of Yearly Meeting to Friends everywhere. There was a satisfactory response. ... The feeling is growing that the increased fellowship with those who have been brought into touch with us from their attitude on Military Service is desirable and arrangements are being made for two experimental week-end at the Hays Farm near Clitheroe.

"I renounce war" - a C.O.'s story

Several years ago, as I walked past a stall at a peace rally in London's Hyde Park, I noticed a photograph of my grandfather on the cover of a book: *I renounce war, the story of the Peace Pledge Union* by Sybil Morrison. The picture had been taken in 1953 at a May Day rally in Glasgow, when he was 65.

John Searson, my grandfather, was born in Glasgow in 1888. He became a librarian and when war broke out he was working in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. In 1915 he married my grandmother, Bessie Ferguson, and the two of them set up house in Mill Street, Rutherglen. When he was called up for military service in 1916, he registered as a conscientious objector.

Why? The simple answer is because he could do no other. He had a strong moral compass, which came from his Christian faith and the ethos and teachings of the Socialist Sunday School he had attended in his youth. As a young man he had joined and become active in the Independent Labour Party. He was clear that he would not kill his fellow workers at the dictates of the state. He believed that political problems needed political solutions and peace had to be worked at. With courage he followed the leadings of heart and soul and registered as a conscientious objector on political and moral grounds.

He was called before a military service tribunal. These were brutal bodies, making harsh judgments about men who followed their conscientious, most of whom had their applications turned down. However, my grandfather was intelligent, diligent and very articulate, and must have made a good case for himself as he was given exemption; and sent to shovel coal in Dalmarnock Power Station. He was dismissed from the library service.

Following his conscience and bearing witness changed his life. There is no going back when you stand up for your beliefs against the forces of society. You become an outsider. His local community treated him as a coward. The

family was split: his brother volunteered and served on the Western Front; his cousins were conscripted and sent to Salonika; my grandmother was told by her mother that she had married a bad man. Family letters of the time make no mention of my grandparents. Clearly they were being shunned. On the other hand, my Great Aunt Jenny, his sister, supported his conscientious objection and challenged her minister while he was preaching in support of the war. She was thrown bodily out of the kirk and never set foot in it again.

After the war, in 1919, my grandfather applied for reinstatement in the library service. His application was denied and it was ten years before he became a librarian again. It was no accident that his first job on returning was working in the rat-infested basement of the Stirling Library, Glasgow.

My grandfather's witness against war was part of a deep and meaningful life-long commitment to work for peace and justice. It was not an act to avoid military service. The effects of it rippled on for generations. My first understanding of peace and the need for justice came from him. Because of him, I am a Quaker.

Elizabeth Allen

RELIGION AND THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT: *INTERFAITH REFLECTIONS ON ISIS, SHIA/SUNNI DIVISIONS AND THE REFUGEE CRISIS*

(A follow-up to the 'Faith Responses to ISIS' event of 5 December 2015)

Dr Thomas Pierret (*Islamic & Middle East Studies, Edinburgh University*)
FAITH & CONFLICTS: ISIS NOW - AND SUNNI/SHIA RELATIONS

Aurangzeb Haneef (*Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam*)
HOW ISLAMIC OR UN-ISLAMIC IS ISIS? IS THIS A RELEVANT
QUESTION?

Rev. Brian Cooper (*Churches & Interfaith Secretary, Uniting for Peace*)
CHRISTIAN REFLECTIONS ON EUROPE'S RESPONSE TO THE
MIGRATION CRISIS

OPEN FORUM FOR QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION ON THE ISSUES

SATURDAY 9 APRIL - ANNANDALE STREET MOSQUE

7:00 to 9:00pm

Free Admission

ALL Welcome

There is nowhere for people to sleep

There is nowhere for people to sleep.
Voices murmur, the sibilants and stops of different tongues.
They stand or crouch in the muddy fields and wait.

A baby whimpers, a soft voice shushes,
Tendons crack with the weight of a drowsy child.
There is nowhere for people to sleep.

Shadowed eyes strain for first light, new hope.
Limbs stiffen and chill, weight is shifted.
They stand or crouch in the muddy fields and wait.

Fingers and toes are white with cold,
Heads hollowed out with exhaustion.
There is nowhere for people to sleep.

He thinks of his home and bed and warmth.
He pictures the rubble, the one wall left.
He stands in the muddy field and waits.

She remembers her brother who disappeared.
Her nightmares are full of his screams.
She is glad there is nowhere to sleep.

A six year-old's hungry, the food all used up,
Her dress wet and torn; she wants to ask
Why they crouch in the muddy fields and wait.

Each person a story, each story unique.
A brother or mother, a daughter, a friend.
And there is nowhere for people to sleep.
They stand or crouch in the muddy fields and wait.

Jane Pearn

This poem, written for an arts festival event in aid of Unicef, was inspired by (and the repeated lines are taken from) Miranda Barty-Taylor's appeal to us last year for help for refugees—see Sesame 198 and 199.

My Quaker journey – whose squid is it anyway?

*Thoughts on concern and discernment, inspired by the discussion at Area Meeting,
27.2.16*

Is it a ship? It's always felt more like a flotilla to me. And a rag-bag one at that, sails of all shapes and sizes and colours and styles and states of dis-repair. I'd watched the flotilla from a distance for a long time, felt a longing to be part of it, loving the spirit between the sailors and the voyages they made together.

A few trips on board gave me a profound sense of belonging, yet it took longer than I expected to join. I flittered about, close by but clumsy and insecure of my sailing, worried I'd appear foolish by tying the wrong knot or using the language in a way that betrayed me. The sailors spoke in acronyms and shared reference points. Yet they sailed companionably alongside me, gave me a wave. I watched and learnt, and slowly I was becoming part of the flotilla.

On my own boat I held my course, I'd learnt more than I'd realised and could feel the wind and read the stars and find the right way forward. Get it right and the wind fills your sails, it's exhilarating, effortless. I found my own group within the larger flotilla and sailed with them full of joy.

The sailors sent me to the white island and I returned with my small boat laden with precious supplies, insights fast and sleek as common dolphins came with me, leaping in the bow wave. I went there time and time again, and was gifted a golden telescope – fitted to my own boat. Through it I could see so far and clear: the gannets diving, the details of their yellow heads and precise black wing tips; otters on the shoreline, rolling in the kelp and munching on butterfish. I showed all this and more to my fellow sailors, and they cheered.

I was sailing at last! Racing home from the white island into the heart of the flotilla, sailing well, seeing far, knowing I'd got something valuable to contribute. I tweak my sails and catch the wind, picking up speed, surging through the swell, spray sparkling, everyone waving, faster and lighter and...

Thwack. There's a thud. And a lurch that nearly throws me overboard. My boat isn't moving any more. I look round to see that a giant squid has got my boat embroiled in its enormous tentacles. It's not letting go.

"Um... help!" I call out to the sailors.

"Oh dear," they say "Never seen anything like that before, better get you

to the supply ship”.

But I can't get to the supply ship, there's a giant squid with suckers the size of dinner plates thwacked onto my hull.

“Hmm, better get you into harbour,” they say.

But I can't get into harbour, I can't steer – tentacles the size of ferry ropes are snagged around my propeller.

“Um, I'm a bit scared. I think it might be dangerous,” I say.

“No, I don't think so” a sailor replies “ After all, no one else has got one...”

The flotilla was sailing on. Is this it? I wonder. Is this journey over? Am I left alone here with this squid? Will I never get back to the white island?

But some sailors waved. Others threw supplies. Some slowed down and brought their boats alongside, a few came over to have a look at the squid and towed me into harbour. They were listening, but – exhausted and overwhelmed – all I could do was blurt out: “There's this squid...and it's BIG ... and it's got lots and lots of tentacles ... ”

“Hmm, this may be a case for a marine biologist rather than a sailor,” suggested one. So we sent a seagull searching for a marine biologist.

“Fascinating” he said “but nothing is known about giant squid – mysterious creatures ... ”

“Maybe we need an aerodynamic engineer to devise a way to sail a small craft with a large squid attached?” suggested another. And off went the seagull again to bring an engineer.

“Interesting,” said she said. “Perhaps we could apply for funding – the next round in 2 years time, and undertake a 10-year study to assess...”

... but what do I do in the meantime? I wondered, and everyone had to sail on to catch the tide.

I sat in my boat and thought about what I'd really wanted to say, and it was this ...

Look, there's this squid. It's very big and very heavy and my boat is small. I'm going to need a bit of help to sail with this attached. Can some of you sail close by, just in case it capsizes me? Can someone shove a tentacle out of the way while I trim the sails? I'm not really looking for experts but fellow sailors. Can anyone come on board and just sit with me here in silence on a still, starry night? Can you help me figure: why? Is there a reason? Is there a message – is it a messenger?

And whose squid is it anyway? Is it just my squid, or is it for all of us, no more mine than the gannets and dolphins and otters were? Is it, just like

them, something that has been shown to me so that I will show it to you?

Anna Levin

(If any sailors can help please get in touch!)

Spiritual Preparation for Yearly Meeting 2016

Two preparation sessions have been arranged: on Sunday 17 April from 1.30 – 2.45 pm, and on Tuesday 10 May from 7.30 - 9.00 pm, both at 7 Victoria Terrace. Information about the preparation activities is available on www.quaker.org.uk/ym which also gives details of suggested reading. Paper copies have been sent to all Local Meetings. These sessions are for those who think they might go to Yearly Meeting and those who want to support the process, as well as those who are going. While it is helpful to come to both sessions, coming to one enables those who are going to meet.

Janet Grimwade

Meeting for Sufferings, 6 February 2016

Introduction

During our opening worship, extracts were read from the Epistle¹ of the Friends World Committee for Consultation World Plenary meeting held in Pisac, Peru, 19-27 January 2016, including these words:

*Although God can fill our hearts, God has no hands but ours to heal this broken world.*²

Annual budget

The Church Government Advisory Group declined to suggest any changes to *Quaker Faith & Practice* as regards how our annual budget is determined, as *Q.F. & P.* is about general principles, rather than detailed specifications which would require too-frequent updates. We agreed with this, and heard, with respect to documenting the current budget process, that the “Operational Plan” is the current core of the process, but this changes too often to be usefully documented, even informally.

Refugee sponsorship

At first several statements of support were made for asking Quaker Peace & Social Witness to lend our names to the Citizens UK effort to encourage the government’s consideration of a Private Sponsorship system. However, “serious reservations [were also] expressed both about the scheme itself and the impact this could have on existing work with and services for refugees”³. QPSW are initiating efforts to clarify both the status of the organisation so far taking the lead in this, Citizens UK, and the views of the

main charities already working to support refugees and asylum seekers. Our representatives are aware of considerable interest within the Area Meeting in participating in such a scheme, and will actively monitor QPSW's progress in this area.

Yearly Meeting 2016

Yearly Meeting will be in London, 27-30 May 2016. We are requested to register⁴ and to make use of the Spiritual Preparation for Yearly Meeting guide⁵. Area Meeting Elders will shortly be publicising two local sessions for those considering attending Yearly Meeting, to provide an introduction and support for those considering doing so for the first time, and to work with the two parts of the preparation guide.

Vision: Our Faith in the Future

Scottish and Welsh representatives met in a 'house group' to return to the new Vision document⁶ and our consideration of the state of our Area Meetings. A few of the comments that stayed with me:

- Meeting for Worship for Business – “A Meeting for Worship with an agenda”
- “Right Ordering” – in life as well as in our Meeting for Worship for Business
- Membership (historically) implied accepting the Discipline; does it still? What obligations does Membership carry with it?
- Concerns need to be at least $\frac{3}{4}$ baked: AMs are told if they send one on to Sufferings, they have to be clear what they are asking Sufferings to *do*. Likewise if an LM sends a concern to AM, both should be clear what endorsing it *means* in practice. “I don't want AMs just dropping a dead pigeon on the doorstep of Friends House”.

Henry S. Thompson

1. <http://fwcc.world/plenary-2016/epistle-from-2016-friends-world-committee-for-consultation-world-plenary-international-representatives-meeting>
2. A paraphrase of part of a poem attributed – controversially – to St. Teresa of Avila, *Christ Has No Body*
3. <http://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-feb-2016-agenda-papers-final-minutes-package.pdf>
4. <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/bym/>
5. <https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/ym-2016-spiritual-preparation.pdf>
6. <http://old.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings/our-faith-in-the-future>

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

**Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 27 February 2016
at Edinburgh Meeting House**

2016/02/01 Worship

During opening worship, *Quaker Faith and Practice* 13.09 has been read to us. This stresses the importance of the local worshipping group as the source from which concerns spring and its role in discerning what is truly a concern in the full Quaker sense. We have also been reminded that, as we meet, a demonstration against the renewal of Trident, reflecting a well-tested concern of ours, is taking place in London.

2016/02/02 Introductions

We have ensured those present know each other's names and meetings. The attendance will be recorded in the concluding minute.

2016/02/03 Concerns and the role of local and area meetings in corporate discernment

Michael Hutchinson, clerk of West Scotland Area Meeting and a previous assistant recording clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting, has led us in a consideration of Quaker concern and the role of local meetings in fostering concern and discerning which issues it is appropriate to support and take forward.

We have explored what the words *discernment* and *concern* mean to us, and found much shared understanding. In exploring our experience of concern, we have shared our understanding about what it means to have a concern laid upon one, an understanding challenged by our current theological diversity.

Michael suggests the underlying issue is faithfulness to our discipline and our need to keep worship, community and business in balance (*cf.* the three-legged stool referred to in Ben Pink Dandelion's Swarthmore Lecture). Our structures were put in place to help us keep this balance, but we now lack an educative system to help keep these structures working as they should. Michael's experience is that if the worship and the community work, then it is much easier for the business to work.

We need to find ways to make the discipline work in our fluid modern situation. We need to find ways to get to know each other more deeply. We need to listen well together, we need to give things the time they need and we need to leave self behind. Quaker discipline is about the process rather than the end result.

We express our warm thanks to Michael for sharing his wisdom and understanding of Quaker discipline with us and for facilitating our session so helpfully.

2016/02/04 The minutes of our last meeting, held on 10 January 2016 at the Open Door, South Edinburgh, have been signed and entered in the minute book.

2016/02/05 Matters arising

a) Correction to minute 2015/11/13a

Due to a communications error, **Susie Reade** (South Edinburgh LM) and **David Hume** (Tweeddale LM) were, at our last meeting, wrongly appointed as overseers when the intention of our nominations committee was to nominate them as **elders**. The error has been corrected in the minutes and Susie and David have been informed that they have been appointed as elders for the same period.

b) Our prison ministry (minute 2016/01/08)

Following the report given at our last meeting by Margaret Mortimer, it emerged that the Area Meeting has not supported this area of work financially during this past year for equipment purchased and small financial grants to new prisoners. We ask our treasurer to make this good up to a total not exceeding £500.

c) Britain Yearly Meeting 2016 (minute 2016/01/13b)

We note that the Spiritual Preparation document for BYM 2016 has now been published and hope that those planning to attend will meet to prepare and will invite those not able to attend Yearly Meeting to join them in this. We ask the Central Edinburgh Meeting elders to convene the first preparation meeting on behalf of the AM [*see page 24*] and encourage local meetings some way from Edinburgh also to undertake some preparative work.

2016/02/06 The future of our Area Meeting

(Minutes 2014/10/13, 2014/11/04(b) and 2015/08/07 refer)

Alastair Cameron, convener of the Short Term Review (STIR) group, which has been reviewing the life and working of our Area Meeting, has reported on the group's findings. He began by remarking on how this morning's session on discernment and concerns has proven to be a good preparation for the group's report.

The STIR group was set up just over a year ago to develop a vision of how AM can work with LMs to be more effective in four areas:

- Nurture individual and corporate spirituality;
- Reflect Quaker testimony in action;
- Meet the needs of members and attenders; and
- Offer service to the community.

The group's main conclusion is illustrated diagrammatically by a trefoil, the leaves indicating the three functions of Area Meeting: community, witness and 'housekeeping'. In the middle where these intersect, is our spiritual nurturing. The trefoil structure is perceived as being out of balance, with 'housekeeping' edging out the other two elements and it is suggested that the nurture of spirituality is best achieved when all three are in balance.

The group's research indicates that for most people the key encounter with Quakers is the local meeting, but also found a strong sense of the importance of the Quaker world beyond the local. Our attention is drawn to the need to explore *a)* how children and young people fit into the life of both local and area meetings and *b)* how we communicate within and between meetings.

Following this introduction, we divided into facilitated groups to explore the STIR group's report and to begin to find ways to respond to its findings.

At the end of our session, we came together as a gathered meeting, for worship sharing. The clerks noted what was said.

Flip chart sheets and notes from the group work and notes of the worship sharing will be shared with the STIR group to help it do further work on the future of our Area Meeting. We ask the STIR group to report back to a future AM, with practical suggestions for the way forward.

We thank the STIR group for its report and Alastair for presenting it.

2016/02/07 Meeting for Sufferings Report

Henry Thompson has reported on the most recent Meeting for Sufferings, held on 6 February, 2016. Henry quoted St Teresa of Avila: 'God has no hands but ours.'

Ways of addressing the refugee crisis were addressed. Meeting for Sufferings was uncertain whether it was right to support the work of a voluntary refugee sponsorship system as currently understood and was unable to find a way of committing Quakers to action at this moment.

The theme of Britain Yearly Meeting was considered, as was the right

handling of Quaker concerns from local meetings onwards.

2016/02/08 Membership matters

- a) **James Garry**, who has been attending Central Edinburgh and Penicuik meetings for some years, has requested that his membership be transferred from West Scotland to South East Scotland Area Meeting. Work on this is ongoing.
- b) **Sue Proudlove** and **Tony Wilkes** have requested that their membership be transferred from South Wales to SE Scotland AM. The transfer of membership is in hand.
- c) [An application for membership was received and visitors were appointed]

d) Record of deaths

Due to an oversight, we failed to record last year in the Area Meeting minutes the deaths of Alan Davies (Central Edinburgh meeting) and James Lewis (Central Fife meeting).

We now record that Alan Davies died on 26 September 2015. A Memorial Meeting for Worship was held in the Meeting House on Monday 5 October, and was very well attended by his family, friends, colleagues and Friends. James Lewis died on 9 July 2015 and his funeral was held in Markinch Parish Church on 16 July.

We ask the two local meetings concerned to provide memorial minutes for these Friends.

2016/02/09 Appointments and release from service

1) Appointments

Our nominations committee has offered the following names for appointment:

- a) University of Edinburgh Quaker chaplain, *to serve for a third triennium from January 2016 to end of December 2018*: **Sarah Martin** (Portobello & Musselburgh)

We appoint Sarah accordingly

The following all to serve from April 2016 to end of March 2019:

- b) Trustee – **David Somervell** (South Edinburgh)
- c) Quaker Life Representative Council co-representative – **Mary Woodward** (Portobello & Musselburgh)
- d) Elder – **Megan Davies** (Central Edinburgh)
- e) Elder – **Phil Lucas** (East Lothian)
- f) Elder – **Sarah Martin** (Portobello & Musselburgh)
- g) Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Beth Cross** (Portobello & M'burgh)

- h) Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Mary Jane Elton** (Portobello & Musselburgh) – *second triennium*
- i) Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Jane Angel** (attender at Central Edinburgh)
- j) Staffing Link – **Marilyn Higgins** (Central Edinburgh)
- k) Representative for Edinburgh Interfaith Association – **Lynne Barty** (attender at Central Edinburgh)

We appoint all these Friends accordingly.

2) Release from service

We note that Rachel Frith (Central Edinburgh, Library Committee), Jean McAuslin (Tweeddale, Pastoral Care & Oversight), Stasa Morgan-Appel (South Edinburgh, Pastoral Care & Oversight) and Jane Pearn (Kelso, STIR group) have asked to be released from service. We release them accordingly.

We also note that Kim Smith (Elder, Portobello & Musselburgh) and Mark Hutcheson (Trustee, Pencuik) have completed their terms of service. Mark continues to serve on the trustee body, ex-officio as Area Meeting treasurer.

We record our thanks to all these Friends for their service

3) Conference representatives

We note that Philip Revell has had to withdraw from representing us at the Yearly Meeting Sustainability Commitment Gathering at Swanwick from 18 to 20 March, as he has been invited to attend a climate justice conference in Malawi at that time. We had agreed to send two representatives to the Gathering and ask anyone interested in replacing Philip to contact our clerk as soon as possible.

2016/02/10 Request for bursary support

We have received a request via Madeleine Harding for bursary support to be offered to a young Friend to enable her to attend Summer Shindig this year. We agree to offer this support and ask our treasurer to arrange an appropriate amount.

We note that Area Meeting is not the appropriate forum in which to discuss bursaries. The normal system is that AM overseers should be approached in the first instance and they should take the request to the AM treasurer.

2016/02/11 Correspondence and notices

- a) We have received an appeal from European and Middle Eastern

Young Friends for help in supporting Friends to attend their European All-Age Gathering next summer in Bonn. We agree to send £500 to EMEYF for this purpose.

- b) We have been invited to appoint representatives to attend Ackworth General Meeting on Saturday 14 May. Any interested in doing so are asked to contact our clerk.
- c) The newsletter of the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility, to which we subscribe has been received and is available for anyone interested.

2016/02/12 AOCB

Phil Lucas

This is Phil's last meeting as AM clerk, although his term of service is not complete until the end of March. We thank Phil most sincerely for all the work he has done on our behalf, while serving in this role.

2016/02/13 Closing minute

35 members and 5 attenders representing 7 Local Meetings plus one visiting member have attended all or part of this Area Meeting, as indicated below:

Central Edinburgh 18 + 2As	Central Fife 2 + 1A	East Lothian 3	Kelso 2	Penicuik -
Polmont 3 + 1A	Portobello & Musselburgh 3	South Edinburgh 4 + 1A	Tweeddale -	Other Area Mtg 1

(Signed)

Phil Lucas, Clerk

“ We are not for Names, nor Men, nor Titles of Government, nor are we for this Party, nor against the other, because of its Name and Pretence; *but we are for Justice and Mercy, and Truth and Peace, and true Freedom, that these may be exalted in our Nation; and that Goodness, Righteousness, Meekness, Temperance, Peace and Unity with God, and one with another, that these things may abound, and be brought forth abundantly:* such a Government are we seeking and waiting for ...”

from *To the Present Distracted and Broken Nation of England,*
Edward Burrough,
The Twentieth Day of the Tenth Moneth [sic], 1659

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

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

Every Wednesday

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

Penicuik: Valleyfield House, 17 High St., Penicuik <i>Children welcome, bring and share lunch</i>	11.00 am
Portobello & Musselburgh: Old Parish Church, Bellfield St. EH15	7.30 pm

First and Third Tuesdays in the Month

Edinburgh University Common Room, Muslim Prayer Rooms (opposite Weir Buildings) at Kings Buildings: contact Sarah Martin 07818050853 or sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk for details	1 – 1.30 pm
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Second Sunday in the Month

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
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Second and Fourth Sundays in the Month

Portobello & Musselburgh: Old Parish Church, Bellfield St. Portobello	11.00 am
Tweeddale: Nomad Beat, 10-11 Cavalry Park, Peebles <i>All welcome, but please phone to confirm 01721 721 050 or 01896 850 389</i>	10.30 am
Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am

Fourth Sunday in the Month

N. Edinburgh Meeting: Broughton St Mary's Church, Edinburgh	7.00 pm
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Fifth Sunday in the Month

Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am
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Last Sunday in the Month

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
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Distribution of *Sesame* and *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, Mark Hutcheson. An email version of *Sesame* is more ecological and is free; if you would prefer to receive it this way, or to change the address to which a paper copy is sent, or if you would like to get one by post and currently do not, please contact Kim Smith at kimdsmith@yahoo.com. A large print version is also available on request. Published by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, South East Scotland Area Meeting, Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL. Scottish Charity No. SC019165. Printed by Footprint UK, Riverside Works, Edinburgh Road, Jedburgh TD8 6EE.