

SESAME

Number 205: September 2016

Creating a Just Scotland – *a symposium* / Portobello & Musselburgh: new venue / Polmont's Party / Friends on trial, 1918 / Friends *not* tried, 1665 / New Books / July AM Minutes / 'Living our faith in the world' – *event for Teenagers in April '17*

For
GOD
did not give us a spirit of *timidity*,
but a spirit of
POWER
&
LOVE
&
self-control.

(2 Timothy 1:7 R.S.V.)

Published by South East Scotland Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Material for the next issue should be sent to Alan Frith (email: ar.frith@btinternet.com) or by post to 10, East Parkside, Edinburgh EH16 5XJ, to be received at the latest by **Thursday 3 November**. The Editors reserve the right to condense articles. If possible, please submit articles by email, sending as an attachment *and* in the body of the email. An email version of *Sesame* is available in PDF format. Contact the Editors.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Our next Area Meeting is on Sunday, 18 September, starting at 2.00 pm and finishing in time for tea at 5.00 pm. It will be hosted by South Edinburgh Local Meeting, at The Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 5HY.

The Area Meeting Annual Report and Accounts for 2015 will be presented by Mark Hutcheson, AM Treasurer, and John Phillips, clerk to AM Trustees. We will have the opportunity to ask questions about the report and accounts and to discuss the issues raised, in small groups, as well as together as Area Meeting in session.

We will return to the consideration of our response to East Lothian LM's minute, "*... about the prominence and sale of red poppies at the Edinburgh Meeting House which we felt gave out the wrong message, especially whilst we are acting on our concern about growing militarisation in schools ...*"

When we first discussed this in January, we were not of one mind about the issues involved. Now is the time to consider it further, in prayerful reflection.

I hope to see you at The Open Door.

Elizabeth Allen

Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

DRAFT AGENDA

Worship

Introductions

Minutes of last meeting, 23 July

Matters arising

AM Annual Report and Accounts 2015

Membership matters

Central Fife LM memorial minutes for James Lewis and Douglas Nelson

AM Nominations Committee report

Returning to our discernment on the sale of red poppies at Edinburgh

Quaker Meeting House – a Local Meeting concern

Correspondence and notices

AOCB

Closing minute

5.00 pm Tea

CREATING A JUST SCOTLAND

Transforming our land and taxation policies

Scottish Quakers are committed to seeking a just society in which resources are shared more equitably. We are not alone; many others share this vision. The time seems right to join with others and call for change.

The Scottish Parliament has recently had devolved to it considerable autonomy with regard to taxation and economic affairs, and is looking, especially in the circumstances after 'Brexit', for still greater powers, either through the development of greater federal devolution or, if that does not emerge, through independence. While there are radical elements within the Holyrood parliament and Scottish society at large calling for the creation of a more socially and economically just society, they are working against an instinctive conservatism and against those stakeholders with money, land and power who do not wish to see any change. If such change is not initiated in Scotland at this critical time, when doors are wide open, there is the risk of traditional power bases exploiting inertia and caution to prevent it.

Mairi Campbell-Jack, Scottish Quaker Parliamentary Engagement Officer, and the General Meeting Parliamentary Liaison Function Group have arranged a symposium on tackling inequalities in Scottish society as part of the Edinburgh Independent Radical Book Fair 2016. The event will bring together a range of concerned parties including Scottish Quakers, other churches and faith communities, and local organisations working on economic justice.

Sally Foster-Fulton, head of Christian Aid in Scotland and former chair of the Church of Scotland Church & Society Council is the chairperson.

There are three speakers:

- **Richard Murphy**, well known academic political economist, who has proposed a radical reform of our taxation system in books such as *The Joy of Tax* and has been a significant influence on current Labour Party thinking.
- **Lesley Riddoch**, journalist, author of *Blossom – what Scotland needs to flourish*. Influential in making links between Scottish politicians and Nordic countries, with a view to learning lessons from their economic and political systems.

- **Andy Wightman** MSP, advocate of land ownership reform in Scotland, author of *Scotland – Land and Power: The Agenda for Land Reform* etc.

We hope to unite voices in Scottish church and secular society to lobby for radical change in Scottish taxation and land ownership policies, to create greater equality of opportunity. The symposium will provide an opportunity to clarify how best we can work together for these changes.

Elizabeth Allen

(Convenor, General Meeting Parliamentary Liaison Function Group)

Creating a Just Scotland – Transforming our land and taxation policies

Saturday 29 October, 10.00 am to 11.50 am

***Out of the Blue Drill Hall, 36 Dalmeny Street, Edinburgh EH6 8RG
[off Leith Walk]***

Admission Free – no ticket required

PORTOBELLO & MUSSELBURGH MEETING

From September, Portobello & Musselburgh Friends will be meeting every **2nd** and **4th** Sunday in the month, at the **Fisherrow Centre** [South Street, Musselburgh EH21 6AT] at 11 am (with children's meeting). The evening meeting on first Sunday of the month has temporarily ceased. It is hoped this will resume when a new venue can be arranged.

Kim Smith

Reading Quaker Faith & Practice

The reading suggested by the Revision Preparation Group for September is Chapters 8 and 28 – *The central managed work* and *Sharing the Quaker experience* – and for October, Chapters 1 and 4 – *Advices & Queries* and *Area meetings and local meetings*.

Polmont Meeting's 30th Birthday celebrations

On Saturday 1 October, we will be having a **birthday party** at the Greenpark Community Centre, Polmont. This will be a party/ceilidh with a bring-and-share tea, balloons, games, birthday cake... you get the idea! Invitations will be coming your way soon, but save the date meantime.

We are delighted that our hopes and plans for a **Peace Pole** for Falkirk are looking very positive. We are in the process of choosing a site from a number of options. The timescale is a little uncertain but we will be celebrating the Pole with a dedication and a peace vigil and would love to share this with Friends. Details to follow.

Mariot Dallas

Friends on trial

Mention was made in the last issue of Sesame of the 1918 court case in which three Friends acting in the name of the Society were sentenced to terms of imprisonment, and I have been asked for more information about it. The following account of the background and the two trials is by John W. Graham (1859-1932), from Conscription and Conscience; A History, 1916-1919. It appeared in 1922, when the participants could be referred to in the present tense. (Ed.)

It was not unnatural that the Government, in the course of its attack upon liberty and upon the opponents of war, should eventually find itself engaged in an official attack upon the Society of Friends. In contrast to the unseen sufferings and sordid hardships hidden behind prison walls, this had a dramatic value. When Regulation 27C under the Defence of the Realm Act was promulgated, the Society of Friends announced they would disobey it. The Regulation ordered that no pamphlet or similar publication dealing with the war or the making of peace should be issued without being first passed by the Censor. It was felt in the Meeting for Sufferings, in December 1917, that to submit to this would be to give up the whole case for liberty of speech. As the point has constitutional importance, the carefully drawn Minute the Meeting passed is here given: —
 “The Executive body of the Society of Friends, after serious consideration, desires to place on record its conviction that that the portion of the recent

regulation requiring submission to the Censor of all leaflets dealing with the present war and the making of peace is a grave danger to the national welfare. The duty of every good citizen to express his thoughts on the affairs of his country is hereby endangered, and further, we believe that Christianity requires the toleration of opinions not our own lest we should unwittingly hinder the workings of the Spirit of God.

“Beyond this there is a deeper issue involved. It is for Christians a paramount duty to be free to obey, and to act and speak in accord with the law of God, a law higher than that of any State, and no Government official can release men from this duty.

“We realize the rarity of the occasions on which a body of citizens find their sense of duty to be in conflict with the law, and it is with a sense of the gravity of the decision that the Society of Friends must on this occasion act contrary to the regulation, and continue to issue literature on war and peace without submitting it to the Censor. It is convinced that in thus standing for spiritual liberty it is acting in the best interests of the nation.”

This Minute received the official endorsement of the following Yearly Meeting.

The Government and the Press were frankly informed of this action. Friends' committees continued to issue pamphlets on behalf of the Society. One of these, called *A Challenge to Militarism*, a leaflet not more extreme nor more obnoxious to the Government than other writings, and consisting of information about the men in prison, was the one selected for attack. In February 1918 two ladies were arrested for distributing it at the doors of a Labour Congress at the Central Hall. They were shortly released and the summonses were deferred. When, on April 18th, their trial came on, Harrison Barrow, as acting chairman, and Edith M. Ellis, as secretary of the Service Committee, gave evidence to the effect that the Committee was responsible. The case against the ladies was dropped until proceedings should be taken against the authors. The responsible author, as in Friends' official papers generally was the Service Committee itself, and it acted as agent of the Yearly Meeting. It would never do to arraign the twenty thousand members of the Society of Friends, who were ultimately responsible. Many of the members of the Committee were already in gaol. The persons prosecuted were the Chairman and Acting Secretaries of the Service Committee, two of whom had given evidence in the trial

of the ladies. The personality of these three Friends showed with great clearness that the most valuable elements in the citizenship of this country were impugned by the persons conducting national affairs. Harrison Barrow, the chairman, is one of the most useful and distinguished citizens of Birmingham, who in 1914 had withdrawn from a prospective Lord Mayoralty on account of his attitude to the war. Miss Edith M. Ellis is the daughter of the late John Edward Ellis, M.P., for a while Under-Secretary for India. Arthur Watts of Manchester represented the active public service of younger Friends, and had fought military training in Australia. The issue was whether a Christian body owed allegiance to what it believed to be its highest duty when it conflicted with the law of the State. The court interrupted Harrison Barrow's defence by adjourning till next day, May 24. The Yearly Meeting happened to be in session at Bishopsgate at the time, and passed a minute in support of the defendants. John Henry Barlow, the presiding officer or "Clerk" of the Yearly Meeting, was present as a witness to read the Minute. This he was not allowed to do, but Harrison Barrow, who was defending the case, was able to read it for him. The prosecution worried a good deal about the question of authorship, which was clear. When the Alderman retired to consider the verdict, and the court was abandoned to the usual buzz of conversation, John Henry Barlow's clear and commanding voice was heard asking for Friends in court to devote themselves to silent prayer. The Guildhall court suddenly became a Friends' Meeting. This is the moment which I hope, some day, some artist will preserve in a great picture. A few words of vocal prayer that we might follow Christ all the way were heard. The usher's habitual cry, "Silence in the court," on the Alderman's return, brought out the incongruity of the whole situation. Harrison Barrow and Arthur Watts were sentenced to six months' imprisonment and Edith M. Ellis to £100 fine and fifty guineas costs, and in default to three months' imprisonment. An appeal was lodged, and the prisoners admitted to bail. Meantime at the hour of the trial, the Yearly Meeting at Devonshire House had adjourned its business and sat rapt in reverent and prayerful silence, while the trial was in progress not far away.

The appeal was heard at the Guildhall on July 3rd, in Quarter Sessions. The bench endeavoured to shut out the public, and were plainly hostile to Harrison Barrow's defence all through. But the ability and gentle dignity of the defendant were equal to the occasion. John Henry Barlow read the Yearly Meeting's Minute, confirming its previous decision not to submit to

this regulation. It was easy to show that other critics of the Government had been privileged—both the Liberal and Labour parties had made their criticisms uncensored, and so had Lord Grey of Fallodon [*the former Foreign Secretary*]. No weight was allowed to this plea. Finally, Sir Alfred Newton and his colleagues listened attentively to Harrison Barrow's personal statement. Edith Ellis followed, and the court was visibly impressed as, with the timbre of her woman's voice, she told in calm words of her immutable conviction. Arthur Watts spoke with something of the fire of youth in fealty to the service of liberty and peace. But Sir Arthur Newton "could hardly contain his indignation" at the way in which the defendants "deliberately flouted the authorities and gloried in it." The appeal was dismissed with costs, and all the defendants went to prison. Edith Ellis refused to pay her fine. She spent three months in prison, which, to one delicately nurtured, turned out to be a serious strain on her health, then and afterwards. The same was true in a less degree of Harrison Barrow.

At the close of the sitting rose a barrister, engaged by a few Friends who approved of the war, to say that they were law-abiding subjects, whose views were not to be identified with those of the defendants. The critical moments of human affairs are often marred by incidents which spoil their artistic completeness. This act, however, showed that the Quaker testimony was not held merely as a tradition, but had been considered afresh, not without some divergence of view.

The Perils of Attending Meeting in 1665

Thomas Ellwood (1639-1713) first experienced Meeting for Worship at the home of the Peningtons, Isaac and Mary – see Q.F. & P. 19.15. He knew many of the first generation of Quakers, and was also a friend of the poet Milton. This account is taken from The History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood, written by Himself, first published in 1714. (N.B. "First month", as mentioned near the beginning, was not January but March; until the adoption of the Gregorian Calendar, the year, in England, began on Lady Day, 25 March, which, with the adjustment of eleven days, became 6 April, still the start of the year for HM Revenue & Customs.)

There was in those times a meeting once a month at the house of George Salter, a Friend of Hedgerley, to which we sometimes went; and Morgan Watkins being with us, he and I, with Guli[*elma Springett; Isaac Penington's*

step-daughter, who later married William Penn] and her maid, and one Judith Parker, wife of Dr. Parker, one of the College of Physicians at London, with a maiden daughter of their's, neither of whom were Quakers, but as acquaintances of Mary Penington were with her on a visit, walked over to that meeting, it being about the middle of the first month, and the weather good.

This place was about a mile from the house of Ambrose Bennett, the justice who the summer before had sent me and some other Friends to Aylesbury prison [...]; and he, by what means I know not, getting notice not only of the meeting, but, as was supposed, of our being there, came himself to it, and as he came caught up a stackwood stick, big enough to have knocked any man down, and brought it with him, hidden under his cloak.

Being come to the house, he stood for a while without the door and out of sight, listening to hear what was said, for Morgan was then speaking in the meeting. But certainly he heard very imperfectly, if it was true which we heard he said afterwards among his companions, as an argument that Morgan was a Jesuit—*viz.*, that in his preaching he trolled over his Latin as fluently as ever he heard any one; whereas Morgan, good man, was better versed in Welch than in Latin, which I suppose he had never learned: I am sure he did not understand it.

When this martial Justice, who at Amersham had with his drawn sword struck an unarmed man who he knew would not strike again, had now stood some time abroad, on a sudden he rushed in among us, with the stackwood stick held up in his hand ready to strike, crying out, "Make way there"; and an ancient woman not getting soon enough out of his way, he struck her with the stick a shrewd blow over the breast. Then pressing through the crowd to the place where Morgan stood, he plucked him from thence, and caused so great a disorder in the room that it broke the meeting up; yet would not the people go away or disperse themselves, but tarried to see what the issue would be.

Then taking pen and paper, he sat down at the table among us, and asked several of us our names, which we gave, and he set down in writing.

Amongst others he asked Judith Parker, the doctor's wife, what her name was, which she readily gave; and thence taking occasion to discourse him, she so overmastered him by clear reason, delivered in fine language, that he, glad to be rid of her, struck out her name and dismissed her; yet did not she remove, but kept her place amongst us.

When he had taken what number of names he thought fit, he singled out half a dozen whereof Morgan was one, I another, one man more, and three women, of whom the woman of the house was one, although her husband then was, and for divers years before had been, a prisoner in the Fleet for [*non-payment of*] tithes, and had nobody to take care of his family and business but her his wife.

Us six he committed to Aylesbury gaol, which when the doctor's wife heard him read to the constable, she attacked him again, and having put him in mind that it was a sickly time, and that the pestilence was reported to be in that place, she in handsome terms desired him to consider in time how he would answer the cry of our blood, if by his sending us to be shut up in an infected place we should lose our lives there. This made him alter his purpose, and by a new mittimus sent us to the House of Correction at Wiccomb. And although he committed us upon the Act for banishment, which limited a certain time for imprisonment, yet he in his mittimus limited no time, but ordered us to be kept till we should be delivered by due course of law; so little regardful was he, though a lawyer, of keeping to the letter of the law.

We were committed on the 13th day of the month called March, 1665, and were kept close prisoners there till the 7th day of the month called June, 1666, which was some days above twelve weeks, and much above what the Act required.

Two New Books

A Little History of Religion by Richard Holloway (Yale University Press, hbk, ISBN 978-0-30020883-2 - £14.99) A brisk 237-page trot through the history of faith in forty chapters. Ch. 32 is about us: "The Society of Friends may be one of the smallest denominations in the world but its influence is enormous. It remains Christianity's conscience ..." – which some might think debatable.

Treatise on Toleration by Voltaire, tr. Desmond M. Clarke (Penguin Classics, pbk, ISBN 978-0-241-23662-8 - £8.99) "New" in that it is a new translation of a newish (2000) edition of a work first published in the 1760s: Jean Calas was falsely accused of murdering his son and executed in 1762, because "feeble minds ... impute crimes to anyone who does not think as they do" - this is Voltaire's counterblast against fanaticism.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 23 July 2016 at St Andrew's Leckie Parish Church, Peebles

2016/07/01 Worship

During opening worship *Quaker Faith & Practice* 21:08 has been read to us. It urges us to accept ourselves as a whole, and offer that whole to God, so that we may be used with all our faults and weaknesses. The knowledge that we are usable can be a source of strength and love.

2016/07/02 Introductions

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

2016/07/03 The minutes of our last meeting, held on 4 June 2016 at Kelso Quaker Meeting House, have been signed and entered in the minute book.

2016/07/04 Matters arising

Further to minute 2016/01/08, *Our Prison Ministry*, in an email to the clerks, Margaret Mortimer our former Quaker Prison Chaplain pointed out that Area Meeting has made no decision about continuing the practice of donating funds to newly-admitted prisoners on remand, who request financial assistance. To help us understand what is involved in administering this, Margaret has summarised the procedure, as follows:

Procedure for donating funds to newly admitted prisoners on remand.

Receive emails from prison chaplain asking for financial help for specific prisoners.

Take cash to cashier in the prison – open weekdays and weekends; afternoons are busy, so mornings are best.

OR:

Send postal order to the prisoner who can then send it to cashier – either way, cash is immediately available for prisoner, and the prisoner number is needed.

The chaplaincy always supplies this.

Cashier provides a receipt for paid-in cash; this is then passed to AM Treasurer for recompense.

Where postal orders are used, use receipt slip for sending to AM Treasurer.

Keep a record of sums spent for AM Treasurer's information.

We agree to continue with this practice and ask our Nominations Committee to bring forward the name of a Friend willing to take this on

until a new Quaker Prison Chaplain is appointed.

We note that following a visit of the Church of Scotland Chaplain at Polmont Young Offenders Institution, Polmont Meeting will donate £75 per year to assist prisoners.

2016/07/05 Central Edinburgh Meeting minute on STIR report

We have received the following minute from Central Edinburgh LM:

Central Edinburgh Meeting: Minute 2016/07/11 (STIR report)

We have discussed, as a Meeting, the recommendations of the STIR report – attached to these minutes – regarding the holding of Area Meeting.

We can see many positives in the recommendations and suggestions: it is helpful and pleasurable to visit other parts of our Area Meeting.

It would be helpful for Edinburgh Friends to have evening meetings in Edinburgh.

It would be helpful for reports to be included in Sesame and not revisited in Area Meeting itself.

We have some concerns: Does this mean that, with General Meeting, we would have 8 full-day meetings a year? Would these proposals lessen the import and impact of our Quaker Business Meeting? It is precious.

We are concerned that we as a Meeting are losing our “inclusivity” by Friends moving away, leaving an “elderly” Meeting without support for the Friends within it. We feel that we have lost our ballast.

Who will provide the “all-age” input and care?

Are we getting hung-up on numbers? Jesus emphasised “two or three in my name...” A Friend has commented that agenda-setting a year in advance could lead to inflexibility and staleness, and the blocking of the movement of the Spirit.

We have been exhorted by a visiting Friend from Northumbria to be bold in upholding these proposals – and we also wish to take care of what we have.

We note that the minutes of the last Area Meeting have not yet been made available to us though Sesame. It has been difficult to have an informed and prayerful session without them.

We have felt rushed in our consideration of these important issues – not by our Meeting but by Area Meeting’s timetabling.

We thank our Area Meeting’s Clerks for their work, and ask that Area Meeting considers our response and reflects Area Meeting’s considerations back to us, as we regard this as the beginning of a conversation.

We note this minute and its relevance to our next item of business.

2016/07/06 Implementation of STIR Report (Minutes 2014/10/13, 2014/11/04(b), 2015/10/06, 2016/02/06 and 2016/06/04 refer)

Clerks' draft proposals for a new AM structure

As requested in minute 2016/06/04, our clerks have produced draft proposals based on the STIR report, for a new AM structure. These were circulated in advance and paper copies have been made available at this meeting. We have discussed these proposals and agree to implement them, with slight amendments, as detailed below.

We have reminded ourselves that to implement these changes with comfort, we need to allow for flexibility.

From January 2017, there will be 7 Area Meetings per year: 4 full-day Saturday meetings and 3 weekday evening meetings.

Saturday Area Meetings

These will be held out of Edinburgh. They will be all-age meetings.

At various points in the day, there will be opportunities for worship, including all-age worship.

The agenda of each meeting will reflect the elements of the trefoil, as in the following guide.

'Housekeeping'

Governance and business matters – such as annual report and accounts, tabular statement

Nominations

Membership matters

Community building (This list is a guide, it is not prescriptive.)

Welcoming one another

Children and young people's programme

Life of our Meeting – including news from Local Meetings, Elders, Overseers, Children and Young People

Our life within BYM – including our involvement with Meeting for Sufferings, Quaker Life, Quaker Peace and Social Witness

Social event – such as a meal or ceilidh

Witness

Sharing how we are living out our faith in the world

Each of the three elements will be planned as discrete, bounded events with Friends easily able to attend any or all, as they are able. Participation at any of the events will be welcomed and encouraged.

We encourage the planners to incorporate the three elements of the 'trefoil', without over committing themselves.

Involvement of the host Local Meeting

The Local Meeting hosting Area Meeting will be invited to provide an assistant clerk for that event and to have particular input into the Witness and Welcome elements of the day. Financial assistance will be available for smaller meetings hosting Area Meeting, if required. We encourage small meetings to 'buddy up' and share the hosting of Area Meeting.

Planning Meeting for full-day AMs

This will take place at the beginning of year. The AM clerking team, and representatives of each of the four Local Meetings hosting Area Meeting that year will attend it. AM clerks will prepare an agenda, including a check-list of what needs to be considered and what actions need to be taken.

Weekday evening Area Meetings

These will be held in Edinburgh and will last about one and a half hours. They will start at 7.30 pm, to allow Friends who have been at work that day to attend.

They will be open to all and the following 'core representatives' will be expected to attend:

The clerking team

The treasurer/ assistant treasurer

Representative of Trustees

Representative of Elders

Representative of Overseers

Representative of Nominations Committee

Representative of each Local Meeting

The agenda may include any Area Meeting business matter.

Proposed provisional 2017 dates

23 January – *evening*

18 March – *full day*

15 May – *evening*

24 June – *full day*

15 August – *evening*

23 September – *full day*

25 November – *full day*

We ask our clerks to check the availability of venues for meetings on these dates.

Communications strategy for AM

The STIR report recommended that we review our communications within Area Meeting and agree a communications strategy. Some Friends present felt that our current communications are satisfactory.

We agree to ask our Local Meetings to discuss their needs for communications within Area Meeting and whether or not these are being met. We ask them to report back to Area Meeting. We will return to this matter.

We understand that General Meeting for Scotland is carrying out a communications review and that David Sterratt is responsible for the website part of that review.

Guidance for visitors to applicants for membership

The STIR Report recommended that guidance notes be drawn up.

We have heard that currently a guidance leaflet for visitors to applicants for membership, drafted in 1997, is being used. We ask John Eccles and Phil Lucas to update this leaflet.

2016/07/07 Membership matters

Further to minute 2016/06/07 (d), Area Meeting Overseers suggest Marian Grothey and Rufus Reade [as visitors, and we] appoint these Friends accordingly [...]

[Two further applications have been received and visitors appointed.]

2016/07/08 Minute from Edinburgh Central Meeting recording deaths

We have received the following minute from Edinburgh Central Meeting:

2016/07/06 Recording of deaths: *It is with sadness that we record the deaths of two members of our Meeting: Marjorie Farquharson was a Friend, very involved in our Meeting, who worked tirelessly for human rights. She died on 13th May. We shall miss her quiet humour and diligence. We send our loving greetings to her partner Irina, and to all her family, with thanks for a life well-lived. Our dear friend, Charlotte Green sadly passed away on 11th June 2016. Her commemoration was held at Warriston Crematorium on Wednesday 29th June 2016. Charlie was a much-loved Attender at our Meeting, and we shall miss her very much. We send our supportive greetings to her mother, Sharen, and to all her family, with thanks for the contributions she made to our*

Meeting – both as a whole, and to many of us personally.

We note this minute.

2016/07/09 Area Meeting Nominations Committee report

Appointments

Nominations Committee has brought forward the names of the following Friends:

To serve from July 2016 to end of June 2019:

- a. Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Ruth Follan**, Central Edinburgh
- b. Fresh Start Board – **Peter Dean**, Central Edinburgh
- c. Safeguarding Co-ordinator (deputy) – **Marian Grothey**, Central Edinburgh
- d. Co-representative, Edinburgh Interfaith Association – **Henry Thompson**, Central Edinburgh
- e. Trustee – **Kate Arnot**, Polmont

To serve from July 2016 to end of June 2017:

- f. Treasurer – **Mark Hutcheson**, Penicuik

These names being acceptable to us, we appoint these Friends accordingly.

Release from Service

Festival Committee - Kim Smith (Portobello & Musselburgh) has asked to be released from service. We agree to this request and thank Kim for her service on the Festival Committee.

Completion of Service

We note that Henry Thompson (Elder, Central Edinburgh), Rhoda MacKenzie (Pastoral Care & Oversight, Central Edinburgh), Sandy Gilchrist (Archives, Tweeddale), Pat Lucas (Archives, East Lothian), Tony Gross (Fresh Start Board, Central Edinburgh) have completed their terms of service.

We thank these Friends for their service to Area Meeting.

We thank Don for his report and Nominations Committee for its work.

2016/07/10 Cornwall Area Meeting's minute on decriminalisation of possession of drugs for personal use

We have been asked by Meeting for Sufferings to consider a minute from Cornwall Area Meeting held on 12 September, 2015, as part of the discernment process. An extract from this minute was circulated with the draft agenda for this meeting.

Our Assistant Clerk, Alastair Cameron has summarised the issue, as put forward by Cornwall Area Meeting. They are urging a more humane policy for drug users and their problems, whereby drug dependency would be treated through health care, not punishment. They are asking Britain Yearly Meeting to support decriminalisation of drugs for personal use and to issue a statement to that effect.

In pairs, then together as a full meeting, we have considered Cornwall Area Meeting's concern. Our discernment has been helped by hearing from members of our meeting with knowledge and expertise on aspects of the issue.

We support the approach put forward by Cornwall AM, believing that an emphasis on harm and demand reduction is the right approach, without further penalising people who are already vulnerable. The matter should be viewed as a public health, rather than a criminal justice, issue.

We believe that a programme of awareness-raising and education is needed, in part to counteract the characterisation of drug use in our press and media.

Much work needs to be done, including arriving at a clear definition of 'personal use': we believe this is possible, and necessary.

We ask Meeting for Sufferings to work towards preparing a public statement reflecting the need for change.

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings and, for information, to Cornwall AM.

2016/07/11 Quaker Life Representative Council report

Mary Woodward attended the spring Quaker Life Representative Council at Woodbrooke in April, the theme of which was "Sharing our end of life stories – discovering Quaker understandings of dying and death". Mary has helped us to reflect on this today.

Mary took from the meeting:

- the need for community in helping people deal with dying and bereavement;
- and the importance of living with the knowledge that we will die, helping people talk about related issues such as power of attorney.

Portobello & Musselburgh Local Meeting has set up a death café event and a death and dying information meeting: Mary is happy to advise others.

Mary has left us with three questions to help encourage consideration of these issues within our meetings:

What is the worst funeral you've ever been to?

What is the best funeral you've ever been to?

*What do you definitely want and definitely **not** want at your own funeral?*

We thank Mary for her contribution.

2016/07/12 Meeting For Sufferings

A written report of Meeting for Sufferings held on 2 July, 2016 has been submitted for publication in *Sesame* [and appeared in the last issue].

2016/07/13 Minute from Edinburgh Central Meeting, on waiving letting charges for the Friends and Neighbours' Group

We have received the following minute.

2016/07/07 FAN group.

Sue Proudlove and Tony Wilkes have spoken to us of a project with which they were involved before coming to Edinburgh – FAN.

FAN stands for Friends and Neighbours, and the idea was developed by a Cardiff Quaker, Gill Saunders, a few years ago. There are now 17 local groups operating in Cardiff, and more across South Wales (and a few beyond). The concept is to welcome anyone new to a city (refugee, asylum-seeker, migrant or whatever) to meet with others, including long-standing 'locals', for an hour's simply-structured session rather like creative listening – group members take it in turns to choose a topic for the week, then everyone has an opportunity to speak without being interrupted or questioned. There is time for chat over tea/coffee too. It has proved a very good way for people who may be learning English as a second language to improve their language skills while also getting to know other members of their new community. It's supportive and inclusive. It works well as a way of increasing understanding between people of different cultures, languages and faiths. There is a website: www.thefancharity.org

Tony and Sue would very much like to try setting up such a group at the Meeting House – Gill Sanders has already given advice and support, and offered to visit.

We warmly welcome this idea and wish to participate in it.. We feel it needs careful planning and resourcing, and it would become an important piece of work and witness in the city centre. We ask South-East Scotland Area Meeting to provide free accommodation for it, in the Meeting House.

We ask interested Friends to contact Sue and Tony directly, and we ask such Friends to work together in exploration and identifying needs.

We thank Central Edinburgh Meeting for this minute. At the meeting of Edinburgh Meeting House Management Committee on Wednesday 13 July 2016 a decision was made to waive lettings charges to enable the FAN group to use the Meeting House. We concur with this decision.

2016/07/14 Correspondence and notices

We have received flyers from Malcolm Edmunds, Ilkley Meeting, about his new book, *Our Wonderful World and what we can learn from it*, available from the Quaker Bookshop. These have been placed on the table.

Pat Lucas has reminded us of the General Meeting enquirers weekend, to be held at the Conforti Institute, Coatbridge, 2-4 September, 2016.

As Custodian of Records, Pat Lucas has reminded us that any old minutes no longer in use, should be brought to Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House for archiving.

We note that Portobello & Musselburgh Meeting will be at Fisherrow Centre, Musselburgh on 24 July and 28 August. On 14 August, it will be at the Old Parish Church, Portobello.

2016/07/15 Closing minute

25 members and two attenders representing eight Local Meetings have attended all or part of this Area Meeting, as indicated below:

Central Edinburgh 9	Central Fife 3	East Lothian 3	Kelso -	Penicuik 1
Polmont 1	Portobello & Musselburgh 3	South Edinburgh 2	Tweeddale 3 + 2As	

We next meet at the Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 5HY on Sunday 18 September at 2.00 pm.

(Signed)

Elizabeth Allen, Clerk

'Living our faith in the world' – an opportunity for 13- to 17-year-olds 8-13 April 2017, Embercombe, nr Exeter, Devon

13- to 17-year-old Quakers, and their friends, can apply for a place on the 'Living our faith in the world' event: a fantastic opportunity to live simply, live sustainably and make a difference in the world. It will be fun and life changing. Applications are open until 1 December after which places will be confirmed.

Details from cypadmin@quaker.org.uk or www.yqspace.org.uk/bym-events or call 020 7663 1013.

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: SEE NOTE ON PAGE 4	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: Fisherrow Community Centre, South St, Musselburgh EH21 6AT. <i>Children welcome.</i>	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

North 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 kimsmith@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.