

SESAME

Number 206: November 2016

Trustees' Report 2015 / Wills and funeral arrangements / The 1652 Country / Meeting for Sufferings / The AM Library / Opportunities for Service / Festival Committee / Undertaking Quaker Work / 'Living our faith in the world' – *young people's event* / Shindig (*ditto*) / Migration / QLRC / A Just Scotland / NFPB / Inazo Nitobe / September AM Minutes



A nineteenth century engraving of Swarthmoor Hall – see page 7

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SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

The next Area Meeting will be held at the Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh on Saturday 19 November 2016 at 11.00 am and finishing at about 4.30 pm. As usual tea and cake will be provided at the end of the meeting, but please remember to bring a packed lunch.

The recent Short-Term Review Group (STIR) identified one of the elements of Area Meeting as 'housekeeping', and, yes, we do have some of that to do at this meeting.

In small groups in a facilitated workshop session, we are going to discover our Spirit-given gifts and how we are putting them to use.

One of the gifts we can give each other is to recognise and encourage each other's gifts and to be ready to hear when our own gifts are identified. (Minute 34, BYM 2016)

Did your local meeting do anything for Quaker Week this year? If so, we should like to hear about it.

I hope to see you at Area Meeting, Friends.

Elizabeth Allen

Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

DRAFT AGENDA

Worship

Introductions

Minutes of last meeting, 18 September, 2016

Matters arising from minutes

Membership matters

Festival Committee report

Appointments and release from service

Representation at Quaker events

Discovering our gifts

Meeting for Sufferings report

AM Library

Area Meeting dates for 2017

Enquirers' weekend report

What we did for Quaker week

Notices

Closing Minute

The work of Area Meeting trustees

John Phillips and Mark Hutcheson reported to Area Meeting on 18 September 2016; this is an edited summary.

1. SESAM Report & Financial Statements 2015

This was circulated to Friends before the meeting. The AM's formal report for 2015 had been agreed by the trustees, with financial statements (*i.e.* annual accounts) put together by the accountant who does general book-keeping, assisted by the AM treasurer's team. The presentation of both documents has to follow quite strict rules laid down by the Scottish charity regulator, OSCR, to whom we have to submit them each year. Following the presentation, Elizabeth Allen as AM clerk was authorised to sign them on the meeting's behalf.

2. The Trustees' Report

Those serving as trustees at the present time are:

Kate Arnot (<i>Polmont</i>)	Brian Mayes (<i>C. Edinburgh</i>)
Ann Forsyth (<i>C. Edinburgh</i>)	John Phillips, CLERK (<i>C. Edinburgh</i>)
John Harris (<i>Kelso</i>)	Rufus Reade (<i>S. Edinburgh</i>)
Mark Hutcheson (<i>Penicuik</i>)	David Somervell (<i>S. Edinburgh</i>)
Liz Law (<i>C. Edinburgh</i>)	

Trustees meet every three months to try to take care of all sorts of "business" matters, usually involving lots of background papers. Three items have a regular place on the agenda: issues brought by the Treasurer; matters to do with 7 Victoria Terrace; and matters to do with Kelso meeting house. By contrast, the items that come before AM in session are determined by the AM clerks and are designed to be of interest and of importance to all members of the AM.

The annual report aims to give an overview of the life of the AM over the past year, with emphasis on the ten worshipping communities that comprise the AM and on the matters that have occupied members of the AM during the year, as well as matters to do with the AM's financial situation. Copies of the Report and Accounts for 2015 can be obtained from John Phillips.

3. Financial overview

The Area Meeting's accounts combine information from all Local Meetings with that for the Area Meeting itself. The main sources of income

are:

- Donations from Members and Attenders (44%)
- Legacies and grants (one main legacy was received in 2015) (17%)
- Income from the meeting houses (lettings, catering, sales, use as a Fringe venue) (32%)
- Activities in Local Meetings (6%).

The main items of expenditure are:

- Grants payable to external organisations (29%)
- Activities supported by AM and by LMs (11%)
- Salaries (26%), and the running costs of the meeting houses (25%)
- Various professional fees and insurance (9%).

Income and expenditure: In 2015, the income from donations and the legacy exceeded expenditure by £11,000. That seems very good, until one remembers that we received an exceptional legacy of £32,000, which we really ought to have saved (or “put into our AM reserves”), implying that actually our **expenditure exceeded our income** by £21,000, a situation that must not continue. There was a similar situation last year. Friends were asked: Can we manage to increase our regular income from donations; or, instead, decrease our expenditure?

Our reserves are still low following the windows work at Victoria Terrace, at around £25–30,000; ideally they should be at £100,000 to meet possible emergencies.

4. Salaries and pensions

We pay all employees the Living Wage or higher, including those who come in to clean the Edinburgh meeting house, and the AM is becoming accredited with the Living Wage Foundation. We are enrolling in a new pension scheme that is approved by the Pensions Regulator, so that all employees who choose can be enrolled in a pension to which the AM makes contributions.

5. Donations made during 2015

AM’s major donations each year are to Britain Yearly Meeting, to support Quaker work and witness in the UK and abroad, and to General Meeting for Scotland, to support Quaker witness in Scotland, particularly the work of the Scottish Parliamentary Liaison Officer. Our donations to BYM have for several years fallen below the guideline sum set

for us – in 2015 we sent £27,904 (£112 per member), compared with the £38,000 that was requested. In future years BYM is likely to request around £50,000 for an Area Meeting of our size. We sent £6,186 to General Meeting in 2015 (£25 per member), and GM is also likely to request an increase. How can we encourage Friends in SE Scotland to increase their support for our Quaker work?

6. Building work at 7 Victoria Terrace

About two years ago our architect discovered signs of dampness on the highest rafters within the loft space at 7 Victoria Terrace, resulting from slight damage to the flat galvanised zinc roof – a small area above the slates that is rarely visited! It is thought to date from the 1950s, and it needs to be replaced using a lead covering. Trustees have been awarded a government grant of £47,000 to undertake this work.

7. Building work at Kelso meeting house

Like 7 Victoria Terrace, Kelso meeting house is owned by the Area Meeting. The timberwork of the windows urgently needs work, and the condition of the pointing (last redone years before we purchased the building) is damaging the stonework. Members of Kelso meeting are obtaining estimates for a phased programme of window replacement.

8. Flats on the staircase at 6 Upper Bow

There are five residential flats opening off the staircase at 6 Upper Bow. When AM bought the meeting house from the Boys' Brigade in 1987, we purchased the Top Flat for the use of our Wardens/Managers, and Flat 3F2 for the use of our Assistant Warden/Manager. The other three flats are owned by Quakers, with two of them currently occupied by Friends who are members of Central Edinburgh meeting. One of the one-bedroomed flats is likely to be put up for sale in the next few months and AM has been offered first refusal. Trustees would welcome hearing from any Friends about whether we should pursue an interest in this.

John Phillips
September 2016

The relation of each to all, through God, is real, objective, existential. It is an eternal relationship which is shared in by every stick and stone and bird and beast and saint and sinner of the universe. On all the wooing love of God falls urgently, persuadingly.

Thomas R. Kelly, 1943

Planning Ahead

Writing your will. Thinking about your funeral.

Elders feel it would be valuable to remind Friends how important it is to make a will, so that their wishes can be followed. It is also helpful for the family or friends after a death, when decisions have to be made rather quickly about the funeral – that they will know how you had wanted the funeral to be conducted – eventually!

Similarly, it is really helpful if a will has been written; even if it is quite short and straightforward. Those who are close to you are then completely clear about your wishes. There are funeral preference forms available in the meeting houses and also online on the Scottish Friends' website.

To find the form on the net, go to quakerscotland.org and then **Find a meeting** [at the top of the screen immediately below "*Quakers in Scotland*"]; select **South-East Scotland Area Meeting** [in the grey box on the right of the screen] and then click on the form in the box headed "Documents". (It is available as a PDF or a Word document.) There is a safe storage place in Edinburgh meeting house where a copy of your personally filled-in form in a sealed envelope can be kept. The convenor of the Quaker Funerals arrangements committee keeps a list of forms deposited. You can of course alter the document or write a new one as ideas or circumstances change.

Sometimes, especially when you are the only member of your family attached to Quakers, it is a help to those close to you to have clear guidelines of what matters particularly to you. You can ask a friend to help you or an overseer or elder. Members of the funerals committee can give advice and answer any questions you may have. The funerals preference form can look daunting but not everything is necessarily relevant to you anyway, and it might give you peace of mind that this task is done.

Cathy Bell and Kerstin Phillips
Members of the Funerals Committee

At 11.00 am on Monday 21 November, there will be a gathering at the Tontine Hotel, High St, Peebles EH45 8AJ to celebrate the life of Peter Norris, long-standing attender of Penicuik and Tweeddale meetings, who died on 29 October. All are welcome – for more details, contact Alison Moore, clerk, Tweeddale LM.

In the footsteps of George Fox

“And the power and the presence of the Lord being so much there with us [*at Swarthmoor Hall*], it was as a means to induce many, even from far, to come thither ... ” *Q.F. & P.* 22.22

We were nine, and we came nearly two hundred miles, but we might have described our reasons otherwise – relaxation after a period of stress, a rest from foreign holidays, a chance to go away with friends or pursue family history, a mild interest in Quaker history, a follow up to Wiston ... Whatever our reasons, we arrived for our weekend at the Hall on Friday afternoon to a warm welcome by the staff.

Their plan for us was that we should visit places associated with George Fox’s visit to the area in 1652. Day One was to Brigflatts Meeting House, with a talk by the warden, followed by Sedburgh parish church. The yew tree under which Fox preached is no longer there but his visit is recorded in a cross-stitched picture in the church. A picnic lunch on Firbank Fell came next. At Kendal we were welcomed again – this time with a short introduction to the Tapestry. The way ‘home’ was the old route from Kendal to Ulverston. Day Two was a guided tour of the Hall, followed by meeting for worship at Swarthmoor Meeting House. The afternoon destination was Pendle Hill. Although we parked half way up and had been assured that it was no more difficult than going upstairs, most of us sympathised with Fox’s description of ‘going up with much ado’ and were content to let Sue and Tony represent us. We saw another early Meeting House at Settle, welcomed by the former warden. On Monday morning we visited briefly the burial ground where Margaret Fell lies.

There seem to be regular opportunities for Young Friends to do this pilgrimage but I think we older Friends from Central Edinburgh felt we too gained from the experience.

Rachel Frith

For information on booking, go to <http://www.swarthmoorhall.co.uk/> or call 01229 583204. Prices start from £39 per night for a single room or £48 for a double or twin; all rooms are en-suite and some have access to self-catering facilities. A five-day version of the “In Fox’s Footsteps” tour runs in May (8-12) and August (21-25) 2017, as well as short courses, conferences and retreats – see the website for details.

Meeting for Sufferings, 1 October 2016

This meeting was almost entirely taken up with information being shared with/via Meeting for Sufferings; what follows are a few summaries of things Friends may find interesting and which some may wish to pursue further.

All the papers for the meeting are available online at

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-october-agenda-papers-package-2016-v1>

where much more detailed information about these and other matters are available.

The new Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting (Deborah Rowlands) and the Recording Clerk (Paul Parker) reported on a recent visit to Philadelphia and Baltimore Yearly Meetings, which was clearly a very valuable trip for all concerned. A few highlights:

- In response to a financial crunch and a wide-ranging review (sound familiar?), Philadelphia YM concluded “we can't go on the same way” and laid down *all* central committees, replacing them with a framework for time-limited efforts, called ‘Collaboratives’ and ‘Sprints’, largely carried out by Friends from constituent Area Meetings;
- Responses to racism (in the nation at large) and a lack of diversity (in the YM itself) were high on the agenda at Philadelphia, under the title *Undoing Racism*
- The situation of “Young Adult Friends” (YAF) (18--35ish) was a concern at both YMs, with the Epistle of YAF at Philadelphia describing anger and frustration at their marginalisation, leading to the creation of structures outside the ‘official’ ones:

<http://www.pym.org/pym-young-adult-friends-epistle-2016/>

We received our annual report from Quaker Peace & Social Witness Central Committee, presented by its Clerk Charlotte Seymour-Smith and by the relevant ‘civil servant’ Helen Drewery, now styled Head of Worship & Witness (see my July report for details on the restructuring of the staff at Friends House).

Mention was made of two new booklets on ‘The New Economy’, which are available via

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/economic-justice/new-economy>

and may be of interest to those looking for insight into what many Friends see as the failure of our current economic structures.

Some sobering remarks were offered about the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI): “EAPPI is an international World Council of Churches programme. EAPPI UK/Ireland is a joint project of church partners, implemented by QPSW.” The situation in Israel/Palestine for Ecumenical Accompaniers is dire, under constant review, with careful risk management processes. “The problems [EAPPI] are having is a sign that it's successful.”

QPSW, using legacy funding, is about to appoint someone to a one-year post from December tasked with identifying appropriate national-level work that is best *for us* in the areas of Forced Migration in general, and help for refugees in particular. They will liaise closely with Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN). Some actual actions, maybe, but mostly planning/reporting. For those Meetings and individuals wanting to do something *now*, the advice was to work through QARN.

I have previously reported on the Vibrancy project – this is now under way, but only south of the border. Four pilot ‘local development workers’ have been appointed for a year in Devon, Cornwall and West Somerset; the North West; Wales and Southern Marches; and Sussex, Surrey and Kent. Rachel Matthews is the Vibrancy in Meetings Programme Co-ordinator at Friends House. She described the goal of the exercise as supporting local meetings to thrive, defining vibrancy as “being full of life”. See http://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/pages/vibrancy_in_meetings.html for details.

Our attention was called to the Ammerdown Invitation, issued by an *ad-hoc* group including Friends who have some very interesting things to say about the nature of (national/worldwide) security and how to go about getting it. For an introduction as well as a detailed exposition see <http://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/> [The ‘short’ version of the Invitation was reprinted in *Sesame 198* (October 2015).]

A minute from GM Scotland was received which raises important issues in connection with this AM's concern regarding militarism in schools. The granting by the previous Chancellor of the Exchequer of monies from fines levied against the banks to the Ministry of Defence for the introduction of

cadet forces in 500 state schools throughout Britain bypasses Scottish oversight of education in Scotland, as well as parliamentary oversight by both Westminster and Holyrood.

This is particularly concerning (and may come as news to AM as it did to me), because it means that there is no straightforward way to ask the Scottish government/parliament for equal time, as it were, for peace education.

Henry S. Thompson,
South East Scotland AM representative

THE AREA MEETING HAS A LIBRARY!

Many of you will know there an extensive library at the Meeting House at 7 Victoria Terrace. There are hundreds of books available for borrowing as well as reference books, magazines and journals.

To buy new books, withdraw unread ones and generally maintain the library there is a library committee appointed by Area Meeting. They are now about to retire – en masse! Many of these Friends have been working “lovingly” on our behalf for well over ten years.

The library is so full they can't get any more books in and feel a need to thin the stock. But also the nature of our Area Meeting has changed. Perhaps 30 years ago, more than 75 % of Friends lived in Edinburgh and frequented the Meeting House – either for meetings for worship, other meetings or events – so had the opportunity to borrow a book or two. We now have nine local meetings – six of which are beyond the city boundaries. Kelso has its own meeting house and library, and several local meetings have a small collection of books to borrow. Fewer Friends are using the library at Victoria Terrace and many of us use the Internet in a variety of ways – reading and buying online, or buying e-versions.

So this raises a number of questions: What is the library for? How can it be used to maximum effect for Friends? How do we make more space for new books? What new books? And most importantly – who is going to manage the library?

These questions will be brought before Area Meeting in November.

The library is currently looked after by Brenda McGovern, Jim Pym, Rhoda MacKenzie and Peter Arter. Don Stubbings is the treasurer.

Don Stubbings

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE IN AREA MEETING

Quakers are a do-it-together Society. A thing get done only if we do it – and, I have to say, there is a lot to do. But, as the old saying goes, “many hands make light work”. The job of finding Friends to do this work is given to the meeting’s nominations committee, but recently we have been struggling. Some of the posts we are particularly keen on finding Friends for are:

1. Second Assistant Clerk of Area Meeting
2. Treasurer team members
3. Meeting House Management Committee
4. University Chaplain (central Edinburgh campus)
5. Festival Committee – a convenor is especially needed
6. Library Committee

Perhaps you feel you would like to do one of these jobs or something entirely different. Why might you put your name forward?

One of the questions the STIR Group asked of committee members was “What do you enjoy about being on this committee?” Here are some of the answers:

- *It has been a trigger to become more involved, and has shifted my priorities, bringing me closer to the essence of “helping one another up with a tender hand” [Isaac Penington, Q.F. & P. 10.01] and stripping away unnecessary stuff.*
- *Making contact with people I don’t know*
- *It is a spur to get to know people better, or keep in contact*
- *Meeting with and learning from other overseers. They teach me a lot.*
- *It has deepened my spirituality and I appreciate the Quaker business method more since becoming an elder.*
- *You always get more back than you put in.*
- *It provides an outlet for my business skills in the service of AM.*
- *I enjoy the sense that I’m freeing up other members of AM by doing the things they might not be interested in.*
- *Learning from others and the fellowship with them.*
- *I’m interested in buildings, not in their own right but for what they do for the people using them.*
- *It’s part of my spiritual journey.*

- *It's a positive experience when meeting is gathered, a sense that it is moving forward in unity.*
- *It's a good fit between my skills/gifts and AM's needs*

The tasks to be done and the Friends doing them are in "Who does what in Area Meeting". This is updated quarterly. You should have been emailed a copy through SEScotlandAnnounce. If you feel you would like to be considered for a post, speak to a Friend who knows you well or to someone already involved with the committee / working group. They can suggest your name to Nominations Committee. If you feel you might like to do something but are not clear what that might be, speak directly to a member / correspondent on Nominations Committee.

Don Stubbings

The Show Must Go On!

Every August, the Edinburgh Meeting House at 7 Victoria Terrace becomes Fringe Venue 40. Our involvement in the Edinburgh Festival is probably one of the biggest pieces of Quaker outreach anywhere in Britain: for many people, going to a show at Venue 40 or to our tea room is the first contact they will have had with Quakerism, and it gives us an opportunity to show the public a positive, lively and outgoing aspect of our Quaker identity; to engage with an entirely different section of the public from those who might use our premises during the rest of the year; and to support the creativity and talent of numerous artists and performers, many of whom come back to us year after year because they appreciate our venue and our way of operating.

The Edinburgh Festival only takes place over three weeks in August, but the Festival committee meets all year round, generally once a month, to undertake tasks such as planning and putting together the programme, discussing and accepting the possible acts and shows of the different companies that apply to perform at Venue 40; planning the running and supplying of the tea room; and selecting and communicating with the national volunteers who come to us every year to help us run the venue.

We would encourage you to think about joining the committee as well as considering the tasks which are time limited during the year and can be done without attending committee meetings. Some of these include:

- Preparing the agenda and convening meetings
- Working with the treasurers – especially helpful during the Festival
- Training of volunteers to enable an effective running of the tearoom

- Finding enough places amongst members of area meeting to accommodate the volunteers who come from near and far
- Communicating with the local meetings to provide local volunteers
- Keeping the Venue 40 website up to date
- Maintaining Venue 40's presence on Facebook, Twitter and other media
- Producing the printed programme
- Planning the menu, ordering and maintaining stock for the tearoom
- Overseeing the running of the tearoom
- Organising the baking by local volunteers for the tearoom

It is very rewarding! It provides an opportunity to meet and work with new people, and to use and develop one's skills in areas such as finance, IT, networking, social media, catering, and the editing and production of our venue brochure. It is also a chance to contribute to the Society's interaction with the wider world through its presence and involvement in the biggest performing arts festival in the world.

If you feel you would like to be involved, or can suggest the name of someone who might be interested, please contact the Festival Committee or AM Nominations Committee.

Don Stubbings

Undertaking Quaker Work

Nominations, personal capacity building and Friends' needs

Before I begin, maybe I need to identify the difference in the view I am taking between needs, aspirations and habit. It can be related to positions and interests as used in conflict resolution, and even go as far as how "human needs" (Maslow's hierarchy of needs) relate to human rights. We live in a globalised environment and many of those taking decisions and promoting stances on established protocols have life experiences dramatically different from the generation twenty years behind them – tomorrow's decision makers.

As a woman over fifty, I have had relatively steady work, had subsidised tertiary education, and bought my first house in my twenties. Now I have a modest potential pension, a house that is fully paid for and income from an investment. Ms Average below forty is not so comfortable; potentially *much* less so. So what has this got to do with nominations?

The privilege of time! The advantage of security. The energy to attend, prepare and participate in models of working that need all those elements. Before those of you who are a bit nippy moan, may I add an assumption that

the essential spirit is taken as read. So, is being a Quaker (Friend or Attender) a faith, a hobby, a community, your *only* community, the key driver in your life? Are your activities within Friends, on the bench or in nominated or self selected roles, an obligation, duty or commitment?

Until we have come to terms with our own idiosyncratic motivations and try to fit our feet into others' shoes, we will continue to struggle with nominations and the ever reducing nucleus of those willing to serve. So what is in the mix – most of the people reading this will know, because you *are* the nucleus ...

Time: which part of the day and day of the week – what clashes, or competes for your attention?

Place: travel arrangements and costs, discomfort.

Process: is the meeting well clerked and well eldered?

Onlooker: do you feel part of the group or an observer?

Fresh blood: as a relatively new or younger Friend are you pounced on?

Culture: does it feel as if weighty Friends are hogging the floor?

Rhetoric and practice: "I know I've spoken already but ..."

Reports: written reports have been received but Friends are asked to attend a meeting to give same information and answer questions sometimes giving up considerable time. Then the time reduced owing to extensive agenda and further reduced when it becomes clear the majority present have not read the reports.

Socialising: for Area Meetings, the tea is usually a joy which travel arrangements may mean leaving early: is the labour of preparation and clear up proportionate? Is there a lot of waste?

Peace: As an active Friend are you able to worship without feeling nobbled before or afterwards?

Laying work down: whether it is a rota or group is there any mechanism to free capacity?

What else?

For central work for Quakers in Britain, a Quaker service information form is available to be filled in online or to print and complete. Anyone is able to offer service in this way. A database is improving monthly, hand in hand with the updated national website. I would like to see this in Scotland.

I have benefitted greatly from the privilege of service in a variety of ways for Quaker Peace & Social Witness. The process of a three year term with a maximum of two terms allows development and healthy turnover. Age, gender and demographics remains an issue, but the practice is good. A current con-

versation initiated by Friends House is looking at our business method; it needs to be looked at not in our personal light but in the light of all Friends' needs.

A final thought. Money as one type of resource is often discussed in relation to our work and worse property. Frequently I have heard Friends bewailing the loss of the industrialists of prior ages who left legacies and fortunes to good causes. I am of the class and culture that expects to pass on some financial inheritance; yet bearing in mind the section in *Advices & Queries* that deals with planning for death. I wonder if I am buying into the globalised capitalism that is destroying equality, removing simplicity, undermining justice and promoting negative peace only. Something for me to struggle with my own contradictions about.

Liz Law

Liz is on QPSW Central Committee, which includes being on Standing Nominations Committee for QPSW.

'LIVING OUR FAITH IN THE WORLD'

An opportunity for 13- to 17-year-olds

8-13 April 2017, Embercombe, near 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.

Reading Quaker Faith & Practice

The reading suggested by the Book of Discipline Revision Preparation Group for November is Chapter 24 – *Our peace testimony* – and for December, Chapter 27 – *Unity and diversity*. For January 2017, it is Chapters 14 and 25: *Stewardship of our material resources* and *Unity of creation*.

On Shindig and other things – a sort of poem

This is a sort of poem, that doesn't rhyme, on what Quaker life is to me: the title refers to part of the 2016 Shindig Song chorus: "Quaker life, Quaker life, Quaker life./ Everything at Shindig, makes me feel alive! ..." **Oliver Grothey**

Quaker Life.

*There is something about Shindig,
Something extra special,
Because Shindig is
More full of laughs, friendship,
Challenges, fun,
'Quaker banter', hugs,
Joy, sadness,
Sympathy, Games,
Love, interesting talks,
Craziness, acceptance,
Tears, diablos,
Friendship bracelets,
Common room madness,
Peace, hilarity,
Tiredness and liveliness,
Than any other week
In the year.*

*I remember back
All those years,
To when, for me, it started.
I can't have been older
Than six years old,
When I was feeling bored,
And my mum was
About to go to 'meeting',
And I did not know
What that meant,
So I was curious,
I asked if I could
Come as well,
And I'm so glad I did.
In all those years
Of going to Central,*

*It became a normal
Part of the week,
As normal as Allemanfun,
As normal as school
Then became.
When I was ten,
Almost eleven,
Way back then,
I went to
Nethy Bridge,
But didn't quite get it,
'what is happening?',
'who are these people?',
I didn't know
That I would still know them
In 2016,
And I didn't know
Why,
Why they were talking
About 'Shindig',
'what is this place?'
'this place called 'Shindig'?'
'I'll try it'
'but not this year',
After Nethy Bridge,
I was still a bit curious,
I had no idea
Just quite how much
I would come to regret
That decision,
To skip
What then could have been
My first year
At Shindig.*

*I still know now.
 Not long after Wiston Lodge,
 I went to Pitlochry two-thousand
 And-fifteen,
 Based a bit on the Braemar weekend
 The year before,
 The highlight of the weekend
 Was The Tree,
 It had space and was comfortable,
 You just had to go
 Round the back,
 On a small, overgrown path,
 That was not really suitable
 For many of the adults,
 The Tree itself was an old
 Overgrown one,
 That was so overgrown,
 That you couldn't really see outside from
 in it,
 You couldn't see the inside from out
 It felt special,
 It felt like it could be anywhere in the
 world,
 There was a long, mainly horizontal
 branch,
 And which sloped up a bit, to one side,
 That was just a metre and a bit,
 Off the ground,
 Getting on it was easy,
 As long as you know how to,
 And inside it Anna,
 Me, Nathan and Violet,
 And Nathan as well
 Spent a lot of time chatting,
 Mostly about Shindig,
 Or school,
 And I remember well,
 Me and Nathan sitting
 In The Tree late at night,*

*In the pitch blackness,
 Having a Shindig chat,
 That is when I met Nathan,
 And Corin
 And when Nathan and Corin,
 Decided to come to Shindig.
 On the twelfth of February
 To the fourteenth,
 Was the Weekend I loved so much,
 And that was because
 I 'got' Quaker life in a way,
 It was so fun and so relaxing,
 I remember Peter saying,
 Not to regret missing Shindig
 Those first two years,
 And I decided,
 Rather than regretting,
 To enjoy Link Weekend and the term
 ahead,
 And looked forward so much,
 To Shindig!
 We also had two halls as bedrooms,
 We played a lot of Ninja,
 And everyone had
 A lot of fun.
 Then Shindig was great,
 We had loads of fun,
 Remember Everything in the first verse,
 And A-Worth!,
 Pam Staff in a tree,
 Also Saul's Armageddon song,
 Or at least I think that's what it's called,
 And a great part of the week was,
 The Shindig Games,
 And of course the Thinking Tree ...,
 The Spectacular Six!
 (For the elucidation of some possible
 obscurities, and other information on
 Shindig, see page 39. Ed.)*

Migration Gathering – *Challenging Myths: Respond Positively*

This meeting, on Saturday 8 October at the Augustine United Church in Edinburgh, was part of the Peace and Justice Festival, highlighting the whole sorry consequence of our war-torn world, and bringing together immigrants themselves with a range of people, from those who care but don't know very much, to those who are materially and practically involved in helping: some as volunteers in welfare organizations and others whose work involves daily contact with immigrants. There were perhaps a hundred participants in all. We all learned a lot from each other through discussion: seeing moving photographic examples of those who are suffering right now, and having to live (if they are lucky) under canvas; listening *via* skype to a young volunteer helping in "the Jungle" – the camp in Calais – and hearing about the experiences of those who have been immigrants themselves. Speaking personally, I was overwhelmed by the urgency of the need for immediate action by us who are comfortable and well fed.

We were set the task of trying to find answers to the complex problems of a mass movement of people who are so desperate they are willing to risk their own lives and those of their children. Our eight groups were each given a different aspect of migration to discuss. Mine was asked to look at education; asylum; women's issues; discrimination; possible solutions; influencing government policy; children and young people, and employment. We were guided by four key questions, which were:

- What would an ideal Scotland look like?
- What are the first steps required to be taken to achieve this?
- What is the most important thing?
- Who can help us?

You can probably imagine that there was a lot of overlap in our collated responses. The main practical suggestions were the need to provide employment, language classes, housing, schools, psychological/physical and welfare services, spaces for gathering and sharing, better asylum conditions. Every group talked of the compassion needed to support people through their resettlement, the protection that will be important for some and the awareness raising amongst the general public and through sensitive use of the media world.

All spoke of the necessity of lobbying councillors, MSPs, MPs and anyone

who has influence and is representing the people of Scotland.

But the biggest question I have come away with is what more should *I* be doing?

I have just received an email from someone whose husband is a doctor and has gone over to help in Calais. The camp is being bulldozed right now and food supplies are already being disrupted. This is the nearest camp to Britain and we hear perhaps a bit more immediately what is happening. What is it like in other camps in Europe where people are being “kept” in conditions that I know I wouldn't want to be in?

A few of the organizations such as Refugee Survival Trust, City of Sanctuary, Home for Good, Positive Action in Housing need our help now. We need to lobby against the Arms Trade and actively support Fair Trade. There is so much that we can do and meetings like this one is certainly inspiring us all to do it.

Jenny Copsey

Quaker Life Representative Council: 14 – 16 October 2016

“Becoming The Change We Want To See”

What an extraordinary weekend this was. Exciting, emotional, informative and inspiring. I do not know where to begin! Perhaps with the Minute of the weekend by Jude Whitby and Jane Harries, as their words encapsulated the very essence of the Council.

We heard of Meetings taking action to make our commitment to Sustainability real and part of the life of our Meetings. There are many positive initiatives, but also pain, fear and many questions. We have heard of Meetings:

- *Taking action inspired by individuals*
- *Greening our Meeting Houses – refurbishing and solar panels*
- *Connecting with Nature – apple picking and labyrinths*
- *Taking care for what we buy and the energy we use*

BUT ...

- *The pain is too great – we are frozen in the enormity of the challenge*
- *Have we reached a plateau?*
- *We too often use negative and tired language: ‘Ought... should can’t’*
- *What is our distinctive Quaker vision? What can we bring?*

The Change we want to be:

Listening to Alex Wildwood, Bryony Rowntree and Rachael Harrison we were challenged to make a shift-change in our vision of the world and our place in it –

placing Sustainability and our responsibility to Nature, our fellow beings and the planet at the heart of our Quaker spirituality.

This implies...

- *Understanding and embracing our deep connection to Nature and the Universe – across generations and time*
- *Stretching the muscle of presence – practising a deep listening to the heartbeat of God – God the volcano, not our favourite uncle*
- *Accepting and embracing the broken-ness and pain: ‘Now is the time to hear the cry of the Earth’*
- *Developing a sense of Sustainability as central to our spiritual life: helping us to understand our place in the Universe and our connection with and responsibility for all living things*
- *Reconnecting with Early Friends and their vision of the world*
- *As stardust we return to stardust – yet in the short flare of our existence we are capable of great things – ‘God has no hands but ours’*
- *Sharing our gifts and talents – amongst and beyond Quakers*
- *Knowing that our energy need not fail – we can plug into our Quaker processes and shine light into the darkness to bring about our transformation*
- *Accepting that steps may be small, but accumulative; that challenges and contradictions remain*
- *In our present crisis, at the Great Turning, acting our age (not like adolescents) and speaking Truth to Power*
- *ABOVE ALL recognising that nothing happens without relationships and love – God’s love for us, our love for one another and for the Earth.*

How we get there:

How can we convey the enormity of this challenge to our local and area Meetings without discouraging people or putting them off?

- a. *We can tell our stories, conveying the essence of Rep Council as a microcosm of our Quaker communities. Include the big questions we grappled with but also the fun bits – the singing, the bonfire, the laughter and deep communication.*
- b. *We can pose some questions for Meetings to consider – such as:*
 - i. *In what ways is Sustainability central to the spiritual life of your Meeting?*
 - ii. *What is our Quaker vision for the world and our understanding of our place in it?*
 - iii. *How can we take small steps together, as Quakers and with others, to bring about the change we wish to see?*
- c. *We can encourage Meetings to set up and nurture small groups to take action.*

We don't have to do this on our own.

We go from here uplifted and encouraged, understanding both our broken-ness and our strengths.

The seedling bursts through the tarmac. 'Strength seeps in from everywhere, and amazing things happen.'

The highlight of the weekend for me was Alex Wildwood's workshop '*Self-actualisation, Life Purpose and the Evolutionary Shift*'. After two exercises, one very simple (15 minutes) the other more thought-provoking (45 minutes), I ended up with my Life Purpose Statement. It sounds so easy and for the most part it was. However, that cannot describe adequately the astonishment, awe and gratitude as well as relief that I felt when I realised what I had before me.

I was not alone. Everyone in the workshop felt the 'Wow' factor, and all those who had attended agreed in the Home Groups that Alex's workshop was one of the highlights of the weekend.

I am very happy to share the exercises with anyone that would like to have a go. I can also email the details or facilitate a workshop. If you are interested please contact me at katmccrea@btconnect.com or on 0778 365 8881.

Katrina McCrea

CREATING A JUST SCOTLAND –

Transforming our land and taxation policies, 29 October 2016

With Richard Murphy, Lesley Riddoch and Andy Wightman MSP as speakers, I was looking forward to this symposium on tackling inequalities in Scottish society, organised by the GM Parliamentary Liaison Function Group and Mairi Campbell-Jack, our Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer, as part of the Independent Radical Book Fair. Evidently I was not alone, as the room in the Out of the Blue Drill Hall was filled to capacity, with a fair number of Quakers and more non-Quakers. I was not disappointed, and, judging by the number of questions, nor was the rest of the audience.

Sally Foster-Fulton, head of Christian Aid in Scotland and former chair of the Church of Scotland Church and Society Council, chaired the symposium. In her commendably brief introduction, she urged us not only to listen, but to "let our actions speak" after the meeting.

Lesley Riddoch – journalist, broadcaster and commentator, and author of *Blossom: What Scotland needs to flourish* – spoke first, so she could leave to get to an event of the "Nordic Horizons" think-tank. Her talk, too, had a Nordic theme, contrasting aspects of Scandinavian society, government and taxation

with Scotland and the UK. She related how she had recently found a quote that had “hit her like a punch in the solar plexus”: “The Nordic way is that the market lives in society; the British way is that society lives in the market.” There, the priority is to decide about what type of society and public services are wanted, and then to set taxes to fund them. Higher taxes are acceptable because of the greater level of trust: people know “[the] contribution you make won’t be squandered on things like nuclear weapons”.

One reason for this higher level of trust, Riddoch argues, is that tax stays closer to home. Thus in Sweden people on incomes less than £35,000 *only* pay tax to their local council. In contrast, we have a “feudal” way of paying tax, with most going to Westminster before being handed back to Holyrood and then to local councils. Local government is closer to the people too: a Swedish council area will have an average population of 14,000, compared to 170,000 in an average Scottish authority, and it will run more services. The result is that local services are “attractive for the affluent and affordable for all”, leading to acceptance of taxes by the rich. She suggests that this greater trust in government in Nordic countries is related to the greater trust reported between individuals.

“Don’t you trust yourselves?” asked one of her Swedish friends. I would trust smaller authorities delivering more services, and collecting a greater fraction of tax. But there will still, somehow, have to be mechanisms to distribute income from richer to poorer areas.

The main message of Richard Murphy, radical accountant and author of *The Joy of Tax*, was that we need to “change the narrative” on tax. He tells people “I love tax”, since tax, via the NHS, saved the lives of his wife and son during a difficult birth. We should talk of tax “secrecy jurisdictions” rather than “havens”, a word with a more positive connotation than they deserve. This can be tricky: he himself referred to “tax havens” later in his talk. (A work colleague who had also been at the symposium, noted that “tax secrecy jurisdiction” doesn’t exactly roll off the tongue; he suggested the catchier term “tax hideout”).

Another – to my mind rather nuanced – change of language was “spend and tax” not “tax and spend”. This prefaced a somewhat technical discussion of the origin of money and how it has to be “spent into existence”. I am fascinated by this sort of question, but I needed more time to understand the arguments. My physics training means I expect there to be a ‘law of conservation of money’, but this is not how it works: money can be created by lending it, and can be printed *via* quantitative easing. Murphy illustrated that paper money is an IOU (*I promise to pay the bearer ...*) by ripping a £10 note in two.

Apparently his teenage son is a dab hand at sellotaping notes back together. According to Murphy, spending should be funded by a mixture of printing money (quantitative easing) and taxation; taxation is used to control inflation. Tax is also a tool in social policy, being used to redistribute wealth. It is a “consideration” in a social contract: there is evidence that if people don’t pay income tax, they are less likely to vote. This appears to be peculiar to income tax, leading Murphy to advocate a local income tax.

Murphy made a number of recommendations for Scotland: in any future referendum, a separate currency for Scotland should be proposed, since this would liberate Scotland to run its own economy. Scotland needs a strong tax authority because we need to get rid of tax cheats (*not* “tax avoiders”) to let honest businesses flourish. Individually, if we get accountants to prepare our tax returns, we can insist that they do not try to set up “tax efficient” arrangements. We can also support companies that sign up to the Fair Tax Mark (<http://fairtaxmark.net/>). I was pleased to discover that Bytemark, the firm that hosts the QuakerScotland website server, is a member.

Andy Wightman MSP – author of *Who owns Scotland?* and *The Poor Had No Lawyers* – talked on his specialist subject of land reform and taxation. It is good to tax land because land can’t move to a tax secrecy jurisdiction (or “tax hideout”). A land value tax would meet Adam Smith’s criteria that a tax be *certain* (transparent); *convenient* to pay; *efficient*; and *proportionate to the taxpayer’s ability to pay*. (I was interested to note Revenue Scotland also cites these principles: <https://www.revenue.scot/about-us/scottish-approach-tax.>)

On his point that the privilege of having land has to be paid for, he cited the example of a Glasgow warehouse that caught fire after lying derelict for 10 years. Because empty industrial properties are tax exempt, no contribution to the fire service had been paid, nor any to the legal system, which upholds the rights of property owners. Another bizarre example is that of the Danish billionaire Anders Holch Polvsen, who according to Danish law must pay tax to Denmark on his vast land holdings in Scotland, yet pays nothing in the U.K.

Wightman expressed his frustration with the tax reform process in Scotland. He had been a member of the cross-party Commission on Taxation Reform (<http://localtaxcommission.scot>), whose final report recommended that “the current system of Council Tax must end, with any replacement designed to be fairer, more progressive and locally empowering”. Wightman had hoped that the new Parliament would be an opportunity for all parties to come together to design a new system of local taxation, but the SNP, although part of the Commission, is not planning to make radical changes to the Council Tax;

its proposal, to charge more in bands E-H and send this money directly to schools, potentially empowers headteachers but disempowers local councils. Council tax bands are based on 1991 property values, and the Commission's research suggested that c. 57% of properties should have moved bands by 2014, yet even now a revaluation is not proposed. Although the Scottish Parliament is "seriously under-performing" according to Wightman, I was heartened to hear that he is having some success in building cross-party support for reform.

The three talks were broadly complimentary, with a key theme being trust and accountability, especially the accountability of those with the means to pay their taxes. The focus of Riddoch and Wightman on the local level was balanced by Murphy's emphasis on macroeconomics. There were some differences: in contrast to Murphy's emphasis on taxing income, Wightman prefers to tax wealth, though both were keen to tax capital gains.

The (excellently chaired) question session brought out some more interesting points, and highlighted to me the interconnectedness of many issues. For example: "How can we prevent building of toytown housing on prime agricultural land?". When councils give permission to build on land, its value rises. According to Wightman, the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1947 gave local councils the power to buy land with permission for housing at the unimproved, cheaper value. They could then use the land for council housing, or sell it off in smaller plots. This part of the Act was repealed around 1959, thereby allowing volume house builders to acquire large tracts of land which they can then keep (at no cost, since the land is untaxed) until house prices make it most profitable to build. A local example is the undeveloped Granton Waterfront, owned by a company in a tax hideout. The council has no power to force building there, but building *is* occurring on greenbelt land west of Edinburgh. Ironically, the 1947 legislation was imposed by the occupying forces in Germany, where it still exists. There, councils sell off land in small lots to individuals, who then find a small building firm to construct a high-quality, energy-efficient house that will last.

The speakers were asked for ideas on what *we* can do. Murphy's suggestions were to make a "fair tax pledge" not to fiddle our taxes, deal with companies that display the "Fair Tax Mark", and change the narrative, for example by calling radio phone-ins and expressing a *willingness* to pay tax, citing personal stories. Wightman asked us to get more involved in the Scottish Parliament and in policy development. He suggested we write our own laws: even if not perfectly worded, a draft law provides a powerful argument to civil servants and legislators. We should engage with politicians by organising hustings.

I left the meeting with a clearer idea about how tax and local democracy can play a role in building a fairer society, some ideas for action, and a firm belief that positive change will be possible, albeit perhaps slow and painstaking. Foster-Fulton asked that the conversation should go on, and indeed it has, both with Friends and others at the meeting. I am very grateful to the Scotland Parliamentary Liaison Function Group, Mairi Campbell-Jack and Jane Dawson, Quakers in Britain Advocacy and Public Relationships Lead, for organising the meeting.

David Sterratt

Northern Friends Peace Board

Penrith has a ruined castle (admission free) once home to Richard III, and a rather good secondhand bookshop; it also has an historic Quaker meeting house, bought by Friends in 1699. The building has been altered over time (a new loft in 1730; extensions in 1803 and again in 1992) but the meeting room still has its plain panelling and galleries. This was the venue for the Board's third meeting of the year on 1 October.

It was a Friend from Penrith meeting, Ruth Harvey, who introduced our first substantive agenda item. She is, as well as being a member of the Religious Society of Friends, an ordained minister in the Church of Scotland, and is director of Place for Hope, a Kirk initiative which is now a multi-denominational project that "accompanies and equips people and faith communities so that all might reach their potential to be peacemakers who navigate conflict well" (see www.placeforhope.org.uk/). It began in 2008, after the General Assembly had recognised the need for a better handling of conflicts within and between congregations; differences commonly emerged when circumstances compelled change (as when two dwindling congregations were united) but addressing them, still less resolving them, was made harder if those involved felt that to be in dispute at all was a failing – of theirs, the other side's, or both – a complication calling for new forms of mediation. The calls on its services, not just from within the Church of Scotland, led to Place for Hope becoming an independent charity in 2015, providing training, workshops, and resources for understanding and working with conflict. Interesting as it was, I did not feel the exercise we did, showing how a resolution process might begin, using our feelings on 'Brexit' as our notional basis for disagreement, was a convincing demonstration of how its method (or one of them, at least) might

work: we were invited to form a line in which those who were strongly in favour stood at one end, those strongly against, at the other (my end), while those ambivalent or undecided had to work out from talking to others where in the spectrum of views they should be. When people were asked to comment on why they were standing where they were, the first person said something about “respecting the outcome of the Referendum” ... hmph. It irritates me that anyone should say this: the thing was expressly only advisory, and that our future, indeed all of Europe’s, should depend on a state-sponsored opinion poll, the climax of a campaign in which blatant lying was countered by hyperbolic doom-mongering, is quite dreadful enough, without people – *Quakers* even – suggesting the result means, in effect, that unless we disavow democracy we must make common cause with the killer of Jo Cox. (You will gather, Friendly reader, that I did not feel more peaceful at the end of this item.)

After reports from the treasurer and the trustees, we heard from Ellis Brook of Quaker Peace & Social Witness, about his work on peace education, campaigning and networking. On 3 December there is to be an “Activist Gathering” in York, the third such annual event that QPSW has arranged (see <https://www.quaker.org.uk/events/activist-gathering>), and Turning the Tide (the QPSW social action training programme) is offering sessions on the impact of ‘Brexit’. As part of the continuing campaign against nuclear weapons in general and Trident in particular, Friends are urged to draw public attention to two topical issues: current efforts at the United Nations to secure a treaty banning nuclear weapons (the UK was one of 38 states to vote against it in October, but 123 were in favour, and the issue is to go to a full General Assembly vote in December); and the case pending in the International Court of Justice in which the Republic of the Marshall Islands is challenging nine nuclear-weapons states that their current positions are in contravention of the Non-Proliferation Treaty or customary international law: a suit with wide-reaching legal implications. We were also reminded of how the bloodshed in Yemen exemplifies the shortcomings of supposed restrictions on the arms trade. Closer to home, Ellis spoke of concerns about the UK Government’s “Prevent” strategy, which, intended to counter radicalisation and extremism, is thought likely instead to provoke it, and is wholly at odds with Quaker thinking in its implication that non-violence can lead to violence.

Ursula Sharma spoke to us about the Income Tax (Non-Military Expenditure) Bill, originally drafted by Conscience (formerly the Peace Tax Cam-

paign) as the “Taxes for Peace Bill”. It was introduced by Ruth Cadbury MP on 19 July as a private member’s bill under the Ten Minute Rule, and is to have its second reading on 2 December; if passed, it would extend the principle of conscientious objection from being just the right of potential combatants to refuse to support war by fighting, to being a broader right of citizens generally to refuse to support war by paying for it through their income tax. Most private member’s bills fail to reach the statute book – although notable exceptions are the Adoption Act 1964, the Murder (Abolition of Death Penalty) Act 1965, the Abortion Act 1967, and, more recently, the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 – and it is not the first time that an attempt has been made to allow taxpayers to divert money away from military spending. We were urged to lobby in support of the Bill; the Peace Action Group of Manchester & Warrington AM has produced briefing materials, and a model letter for sending to MPs is available at <http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/template-letter-to-send-to-your-mp/>

The main item of the afternoon was a talk by Julie Ward MEP, one of the three Labour members for North West England. Of its other MEPs, three were elected for UKIP (Steven Woolfe has since resigned) and two are Tories; until 2014, when Julie was elected, one of the constituency’s MEPs was Nick Griffin of the BNP. Within its boundaries are Sellafield and Barrow, but also the city of Manchester, which in 1980 was the first place in the UK to declare itself a Nuclear Free Zone. Julie spoke of her own commitment to peace; Omri, her parliamentary assistant, is an Israeli so has first hand experience of a society in conflict, while she herself had participated in the 2015 Vienna conference on nuclear weapons, is involved with post-conflict work in former Yugoslavia, and, through the Women’s Committee, supports work in the Middle East, including that of the Parents’ Circle Families Forum in Israel and Palestine, bringing together the bereaved of both sides. She told us of her work in the parliament, in committees, and with constituents; there was much to take in, and too little time for questions.

The Board meets next at York, on 26 November.

Alan Frith

The Hansard record of Ruth Cadbury’s July speech is at

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2016-07-19/debates/16071936000001/IncomeTax\(Non-MilitaryExpenditure\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2016-07-19/debates/16071936000001/IncomeTax(Non-MilitaryExpenditure))

and the original draft of her Bill as prepared by Conscience is at

<http://www.conscienceonline.org.uk/new-taxes-for-peace-draft-bill/>

Bushido: the Soul of the Samurai

Inazo Nitobe (1862-1933) was one of the first Japanese Quakers; his prayer, "I ask for daily bread ..." is quoted in *Quaker Faith & Practice* (20.01). In 1899, while working in the United States, he wrote *Bushido; The Soul of Japan*, as an introduction for English-speaking readers to the samurai culture in which he himself was born. The book was published in 1905 and has often been reprinted; the cover of the most recent paperback edition (of which the AM Library at Victoria Terrace has a copy) praises his "fluid, poetic English style influenced by his Quaker philosophy", although some have found it an obstacle: "in style and content [the book] can today most charitably called quaint" (H. Paul Varley, *The Samurai*, 1970). Perhaps for the benefit of such teeth-gritting critics, Sean Michael Wilson (a Scot living in Japan) and the artist Akiko Shimojima have now adapted it as a graphic novel – ! – and, indeed, but for the change of the last word of the subtitle, quite faithfully. The original is not long – 193 pages, excluding the index – and all its seventeen chapters are rendered here, each starting with a double-page spread of (mainly) text before reverting to comic strip. A new introduction gives a potted biography of Nitobe, including a picture of a ¥ 5,000 banknote bearing his portrait, and (presumably as a sop to the most likely readership) one of a Japanese soldier crying "YAA^AA!!" as he bayonets a bound and blindfold prisoner; this by way of illustration to the statement "He was strongly disappointed by Japan's withdrawal from the League of Nations after the Lytton Report condemned Japan's actions in Manchuria." However considering its *genre* and subject matter there is not too much for the squeamish reader to have to skip; and whereas the original tends to assume we all know that (for example) "the Quaker poet" is John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-92), this version names him and other authorities mentioned; "the English philosopher-scientist Francis Bacon (1561-1626)" even rates a picture in Chapter 10, up from just a surname in Nitobe's own text. Whatever next?! Sean Michael Wilson has already adapted another Japanese work, *The Book of Five Rings* – a seventeenth-century classic, apparently. So too, of course, are *No Cross, No Crown* and *Barclay's Apology*; though I am not holding my breath for the graphic-novel version of either.

Bushido: the Soul of the Samurai; A Graphic Novel from the Book by Inazo Nitobe, adapted by Sean Michael Wilson, illustrated by Akiko Shimojima. Shambala Publications (U.S.), 2016; pbk, ISBN 978-1611802108 – £14.99 in U.K.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Minutes of Area Meeting held on Sunday 18 September 2016 at the Open Door, Morningside Road, Edinburgh

2016/09/01 Worship

During opening worship *Quaker Faith & Practice* 24:54 has been read to us. Conflict is part of life and creative conflict resolution should be an important educational priority. By learning to value one another and by developing skills to resolve our own conflicts, we will improve the quality of our personal lives and the prospects for society.

2016/09/02 Introductions

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

2016/09/03 The minutes of our last meeting, held on 23 July 2016 at St Andrew's Leckie Parish Church, Peebles, have been signed and entered in the minute book.

2016/09/04 Matters Arising

Enquirers' Weekend (Minute 15/05/05 refers)

We note that the Enquirers' Weekend, organized by South East Scotland Area Meeting on the request of General Meeting for Scotland, was held 2-4 September at the Conforti Institute, Coatbridge. There were eight participants from three Area Meetings. The evaluations of the weekend were positive.

2016/09/05 Laying down the STIR Group

Their task now complete, we agree to lay down the STIR Group, set up by minute 2014/10/13. We thank its members for their considerable work of reviewing the functioning of our Area Meeting.

2016/09/06 Area Meeting report and Accounts 2015

The full 2015 Annual Report and Accounts for South East Scotland Area Meeting were circulated by email to the Area Meeting contact list, along with the draft agenda and other papers for this meeting. John Phillips, clerk to Area Meeting Trustees, has prepared a brief summary of this document [*see page 3*] and Mark Hutcheson, Area Meeting Treasurer, has produced a financial summary using pie charts. Copies of these documents have been made available at our meeting today. John and Mark have presented the 2015 Report and Accounts, focusing on the summaries. They have answered our questions and heard our comments.

The annual accounts were prepared by our accountant, assisted by the treasurers team. We note that our total net income for 2015 was £194,764, of which £118,808 is voluntary income, and our total expenditure was £183,715. Although this left us with a surplus of £11,049, Area Meeting income has dropped since last year, as donations are lower. However the total funds have risen because of a legacy received. Our reserves have recovered slightly but are still 60% of what is recommended for a charity.

We are pleased to note that we pay all our staff at least the living wage and we have now applied for accreditation with the Living Wage Foundation. Changes made to our meeting houses have not translated into a proportionate increase in the value of the property because of a fall in the property market. However they have made our meeting houses more comfortable. Income from our meeting houses does not fully cover running costs.

Our treasurer suggested that to improve our financial position we might consider increasing our donations or reducing our expenditure.

Our major donation each year is to Britain Yearly Meeting. We are contributing just over £110 per member, which is considerably less than the recommended amount of £150 per member. It is also less than the average contribution per member across Yearly Meeting of £148. We have heard that a possible remedy is to give local meeting treasurers a greater role in fundraising, to put more emphasis on personal contact, rather than relying on the contributions schedule. We need more information on what to give and why the money is needed.

The meeting received the Annual Report and Accounts for 2015, approved by Area Meeting Trustees on 19 July, 2016. We note that the accounts have been independently examined. We authorise the Area Meeting Clerk to sign the Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for 2015.

After this plenary session, we broke up into small groups to consider the following four questions. John and Mark noted our responses.

a) Our contribution to Britain Yearly Meeting

BYM requests annual contributions of £150 per member and is considering raising this to £200. AM's contribution, plus earmarked contributions have fallen short of this for several years. How can we increase our contribution? Could we consider increasing our contribution to GM?

b) Annual Deficits on the AM Account

We should try to use legacy income to rebuild AM reserves and for capital work such as buildings. Could members and attenders contribute more each year to build up our annual income further? What would be the most effective way of increasing our income?

c) Can we do more to help our LMs to thrive?

Can we encourage greater interest and engagement with General Meeting and Yearly Meeting activities through additional support of our Local Meetings?

d) Another flat on the 6 Upper Bow staircase in Edinburgh

Should trustees consider the purchase of a third flat on this staircase?

We thank John Phillips and Mark Hutcheson and the treasurer's team for their work in preparing the 2015 Annual Report and Accounts and for presenting them to us today.

2016/09/07 Membership matters**a) Pascoe Harvey**

Sarah Martin and Phil Lucas met with Pascoe on 3 August, 2016. The report of the visit has been read to us by our assistant clerk.

Brought up in the Church of England, Pascoe has also explored other faith traditions. He first encountered Quakers as an undergraduate in Norwich and was attracted by their attitude to same sex marriage. He is now active in the life of Central Edinburgh Meeting and the Quaker Students' Society in Edinburgh. The Quaker questioning approach to matters of faith sits well with him. He feels the time is right to make the commitment of membership of the Quaker community.

We are pleased to accept Pascoe into membership of this Area Meeting and ask John Phillips to welcome him and inform Central Edinburgh Meeting.

b) Mark Borthwick

Rufus Reade and Marian Grothey met with Mark on 11 August, 2016. The report of the visit has been read to us by Rufus Reade.

Mark has been influenced by the Baptist tradition of his parents and by Buddhism. His introduction to Quakerism was through the Quaker Society at Edinburgh University, where he is currently studying theology. He attends Portobello & Musselburgh Meeting and Edinburgh Central Meeting and feels the time is

right for him to join and play a fuller part in the Religious Society of Friends.

We are pleased to accept Mark into membership of this Area Meeting and ask Rufus Reade to welcome him and inform Portobello & Musselburgh Meeting.

c) Esther Shreeve

Susie Reade and Chris Booth met with Esther on 13 August, 2016. The report of the visit has been read to us by Chris Booth.

Esther has had a professional interest in church history and strong links to Methodism. She attends South Edinburgh Meeting and feels at home with Quaker ways, especially the questioning approach of Advices and Queries. Living out her faith in the world is important to her and she sees politics and faith as two sides of the same coin. She values the support of being in a Quaker community of like-minded people and wishes to join the Religious Society of Friends.

We are pleased to accept Esther into Membership of this Area Meeting and ask Rufus Reade to welcome her and inform South Edinburgh Meeting.

Termination of Membership

Kathleen Maxwell of Central Fife Local Meeting has emailed the clerk asking for her membership of the Religious Society of Friends to be terminated. We understand that Kathleen's decision has been made after long and careful thought and that she does not wish a visit to discuss the matter. We agree to Kathleen's request and ask our Assistant Clerk (Membership) to amend our records.

We wish Kathleen well.

Record of death

We record the death of Douglas Nelson, of Central Fife Local Meeting, on 4 August, 2016. His funeral was held on 19 August, after the manner of Friends.

2016/09/08 Central Fife Local Meeting memorial minute for James Lewis

We have received the following minute from Central Fife Local Meeting:

*James Glanville Lewis memorial minute
15th July 1923 - 9th July 2015*

Jim Lewis was born in South Wales, attended a public school and was called up early in the Second World War serving in Burma. He was captured there and

undertook forced labour on the railway construction; this was a very difficult time for him. Subsequently he joined the civil service in London and, while there, volunteered in local youth clubs.

In the late 1950s Jim trained as a youth worker and became involved with Friends quite quickly becoming a member. From 1965 to 1988 he worked for the local authority in Fife retiring as a senior member of staff in the youth and community service. He never gave up his involvement with local community activities and was associated in a practical way with a number of independent youth organisations. He lived in Glenrothes where he brought up his adopted son and was a key figure in establishing the town's Summer Festival. On retiring from the Regional Council he joined Kirkcaldy District as a Labour Councillor until it was abolished in 1996. At the time of his death, Jim was still an active member of NHS Fife's users' panel. He had never been a patient in hospital before dying, after a short illness in Kirkcaldy's Victoria Hospital.

Jim was one of the founder members of what is now Central Fife local Quaker meeting. He was actively involved with it during the 1960s and 1970s focusing his attention on Friends at a local level. Over the last decade or two he maintained contact with the Meeting, but attending became difficult for him.

Laurie M. Naumann
28th February 2016

We note this minute.

2016/09/09 Central Fife L. M. memorial minute for Douglas Nelson

We have received the following minute from Central Fife Local Meeting:

Douglas Nelson memorial minute
9th September 1928 - 4th August 2016

Douglas Nelson was an only child, born a birthright Quaker in London. The family moved to Edinburgh when he was eight. He had very fond memories of living in Colinton on the edge of the Pentlands, cycling to George Watson's School and having family holidays on Arran as well as enjoying the company of local cousins.

After gaining a civil engineering degree Douglas qualified as a planning officer, working in the north of England and in Dumfries where he met Inge from Denmark, then depute matron at the Crichton Royal Hospital. They married in 1957 and moved to Fife in the mid 1960s, Douglas eventually retiring as the Director of Planning for Kirkcaldy District Council.

Douglas was active in the local Quaker meetings in Dumfries, St Andrews and Kirkcaldy. In each of these places, he and Inge are particularly remembered for the warm welcome they gave to young people attending for the first time, and

also for the hospitality they offered many of them and others in their own home. In Central Fife, for many years, Douglas was much appreciated as the mainstay of the local meeting, preparing the room and cheerfully welcoming all Friends on arrival. Sadly Douglas's dear Inge's health deteriorated and he spent much of his retirement as a widower, but her presence continued very much to be around him in his home.

Douglas held a number of key Quaker roles including being the treasurer of both General Meeting for Scotland and the Dundee Friends' Property Trust for a number of years and he also undertook a variety of specific tasks for the Yearly Meeting.

*Laurie M. Naumann
29 August 2016*

We note this minute.

2016/09/10 Central Edinburgh Local Meeting Minute

We have received the following minute from Central Edinburgh Local Meeting:

2016/09/06 Recording of deaths:

We record with sadness the death of our dear Friend Douglas Nelson. Douglas was a long-standing Friend and a member of Central Fife Meeting, and he worshipped with us very frequently when he was able. We remember with pleasure his sense of humour, and ability to clarify difficult issues in our Meetings for Business with kindness and insight. We send this Minute to South-East Scotland Area Meeting.

Margaret Mortimer, clerk

We note this minute.

2016/09/11 Memorial Meeting for Douglas Nelson

The clerk of Central Fife Local Meeting, Laurie Naumann, has requested that a Memorial Meeting be held for Douglas Nelson. He suggests it be in Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House and that responsibility for the meeting be shared by Area Meeting and Central Fife.

We agree to this, and ask Simon Jackson to liaise with Laurie Naumann in organising this.

2016/09/12 Testimonies Concerning Deceased Friends

Through their clerk, Margaret Mortimer, Friends in Central Edinburgh Local Meeting have raised what they see as a lack of consistency in our practice of remembering deceased Friends.

We ask our Clerks to remind Local Meetings of our practice as set out in our 'Gold Minutes' and *Quaker Faith & Practice* 4.27-30.

We remind ourselves that testimonies concerning deceased Friends are not obituaries but records of our thankfulness for the Grace of God in a human life.

2016/09/13 Nominations Committee Report

1. Appointments

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

To serve from October 2016 to end of September 2019:

- a. Pastoral Care & Oversight – Sue Proudlove, Central Edinburgh
- b. Meeting House Management Committee – Rosemary Hartill, Central Edinburgh
- c. Prison Chaplaincy, job share – Jenny Copsey and Marianne Butler, both Kelso.

It was noted that this excludes the task of providing direct financial assistance to newly-admitted prisoners (See AM minute 2016/07/04): Nominations Committee are looking for a Friend to undertake this task.

To serve from October 2016 to end of September 2018:

- d. Registering Officer – Rufus Reade, South Edinburgh
- e. Deputy Registering Officer – Kerstin Phillips, Central Edinburgh.

To serve from October 2016 to end of September 2017:

- f. Nominations Committee – Don Stubbings, Central Edinburgh.

We appoint these Friends accordingly.

2. Release from service

Madeline Patterson (Central Edinburgh) has asked to be released from service as Elder, as she is having mobility problems. We agree to this with immediate effect and thank her for her service.

3. Completion of service

We note that Rhoda MacKenzie (Central Edinburgh, Library Committee), Brian Mayes (Central Edinburgh, Meeting House Management Committee) and Ken Jobling (Central Edinburgh, Meeting House Management Committee) have completed their terms of service.

We thank these Friends for the work they have done for Area Meeting.

We thank Nominations Committee for preparing this report.

2016/09/14 Sale of red poppies at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House

Further to minute, 2016/01/09, our Assistant Clerk has reminded us of

the issue brought to us by East Lothian Local Meeting and of our earlier consideration of this. An email from the managers of Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House has been read out, as they are prevented from being with us today.

We agree we wish to make a statement about Quakerism by continuing to sell white poppies at the Meeting House.

We feel that selling red poppies is increasingly a way of endorsing the military, through the influence of the British Legion. We recognize that the symbolism of the red poppy is being changed.

We wish to stop selling red poppies at the Meeting House.

We ask our Clerk to communicate our decision to the Earl Haig Fund.

2016/09/15 Militarisation in Scottish society

See Minute 2014/10/06 'Minute from South Edinburgh Local Meeting on militarisation in society'.

In 2014, our Friend David Turner brought his personal concern about increasing militarisation in Scottish society to South Edinburgh Local Meeting, which supported it. In time this became the concern of South East Scotland Area Meeting and General Meeting for Scotland, and a priority area of work for Mairi Campbell-Jack, the Scottish Quaker Parliamentary Engagement Officer.

We note that a joint Quaker/Forces Watch petition on the military presence in Scottish schools, which was signed by over 1000 signatories, was given a preliminary hearing by the Public Petitions committee of the Scottish Parliament on 15 September. Mairi introduced the petition, which called for greater scrutiny, guidance and consultation on armed forces visits to schools. The Committee decided to write to the Scottish Government, the Ministry of Defence and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) for more information. There will then be an opportunity to respond to the information they submit, so a public dialogue about the issue has been opened up. There was press coverage of the Petitions Committee discussion.

We welcome this news.

2016/09/16 Young Quaker Participation Day December 2016

Meeting for Sufferings provide an annual opportunity for young people to participate in Yearly Meeting business alongside Meeting for Sufferings. This year it will be held on Saturday, 3 December in Friends House. Britain Yearly Meeting will cover the travel and accommodation

costs of young people attending.

We ask our clerks to find up to four young Friends to represent us at this event. Given that the deadline for applications is 20 November, we ask that they be appointed by between meetings procedure.

Depending on the age of the young people appointed, there may be a requirement for a Responsible Adult to give support, in which case we ask our clerks to find a suitable person to act in this capacity. We understand that if the Responsible Adult is not the Meeting for Sufferings representative, Area Meeting will be responsible for their expenses.

2016/09/17 Correspondence and notices

1. *Speaker from the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva*

Polmont Local Meeting has suggested Area Meeting consider taking up the invitation to host a QUNO speaker. We ask our clerks to follow this up.

2. We have received a letter of thanks and an attractive card from Emmie Touwen, on behalf of the All-Age Gathering Planning Committee of Europe and Middle East Young Friends. Our donation helped provide bursaries to enable more Friends to attend the Gathering. Also enclosed is the Epistle from the 2016 gathering.

3. **Edinburgh World Justice Festival**

Migration Gathering – Challenging Myths: Respond Positively
Saturday 8 October, 1.30 – 6.30 pm, Augustine United Church,
41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EL [See page 19]

4. **Creating a just Scotland – Transforming our land and taxation policies**

A symposium on economic justice arranged by the GM Parliamentary Liaison Function Group, 29 October, 10.00 - 11.50 am, Out of the Blue Drill Hall, Dalmeny Street, Edinburgh EH6 8RG. Speakers: Richard Murphy, Lesley Riddoch, Andy Wightman
MSP

Further information: Mairi Campbell-Jack mairic@quaker.org.uk
[See page 22]

5. **“So you’ve read *Quaker Faith & Practice*, what next?”**

4-6 November at Woodbrooke. This event is in partnership with the Book of Discipline Revision Preparation Group.

2016/09/18 Closing minute

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

Central Edinburgh 9 + 2As	Central Fife -	East Lothian 1	Kelso 1	Penicuik 2
Polmont -	Portobello & Musselburgh 2	South Edinburgh 7	Tweeddale -	

We next meet on Saturday 19 November at the Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL at 11.00 am.

(Signed)

Elizabeth Allen, Clerk

Explanatory notes and additional information

In Oliver Grothey's poem (pp. 16-18), "Allemanfun" [*line 38*] is a German Saturday school that Oliver used to attend; "A-Worth" [*line 209*] is the evening entertainment at Shindig at which anyone can do a 'turn'; and "the Spectacular Six" [*last line*] were the group, including himself, that met at the Thinking Tree. A "Whatsapp status message" [*line 132*] is (the Editor understands) a statement of a person's current mood, feeling or *Weltanschauung*, which, visible to would-be callers to his/her mobile phone, saves their having to ask.

Shindig – the Northern Friends Summer Shindig, which this year took place 30 July - 6 August, at Ackworth School, Pontefract, West Yorkshire – is an annual event, open to those aged 11 to 16. It aims to be "A spiritual adventure with fun, laughter, new friends, visiting speakers, discussions, art, crafts, worship and games." For more information, contact Bronwen Currie (01496 850 006) or summershindig@gmail.com.

Oliver also refers more than once to "Link" events; the Scottish Link Group runs activities for 13-17 year-olds: "day events, social gatherings or residential weekends for young Quakers to come together to have fun, build friendships and explore Quakerism". There is more information at <http://www.yqspace.org.uk/>; the contact person is Jennifer Hodson (jhodson545@hotmail.co.uk).

See also page 15, for details of a forthcoming young people's event.

Ed.

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
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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.