

# SESAME

Number 209: May 2017

---

Library Review / Trustees' Conference / 'Spirituality and End of Life' / Faithful Service / Nuclear Weapons Ban / QPSW Spring Conference / Mary Fisher / Fracking / The work of Quaker Life / AM March Minutes

---



Mehmet IV (b. 1642; reigned 1648-87; d. 1693)  
in a Dutch engraving of 1667. *See page 22.*

---

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](mailto:ar.frith@btinternet.com)) or by post to 10, East Parkside, Edinburgh EH16 5XJ, to be received at the latest by **Tuesday 6 June 2017**. 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

**Area Meeting will be at Edinburgh Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, on Monday, 15 May, 2017, 7.00 – 9.00 pm.**

We will be discussing the future of our Area Meeting library. The working group set up to look into the issues of managing our library has completed its task and will present its report and recommendations. A summary report is opposite. If you wish an electronic copy of the full report, please let me know. A small number of paper copies will be available at Area Meeting.

At our March Area Meeting we heard about Polmont Meeting's concern over fracking. Once again we will be discussing the Scottish Government's consultation on fracking, as South Edinburgh Meeting has sent us a minute urging us to respond to it.

Evening meetings for church affairs are open to everyone. I would like to remind you that each local meeting plus Area Meeting treasurers, trustees, elders, overseers and nominations committee are asked to appoint someone to attend as 'core representatives'.

I hope to see you on 15 May.

**Elizabeth Allen**

Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

### DRAFT AGENDA

1. Worship
2. Introductions
3. Minutes of last meeting, 18 March, 2017
4. Matters arising
5. Recording decision made by Between Meetings Procedure
6. Membership matters, including a request for termination of membership of Jean Bolton, Margaret Jago, Guy Norris, Mark Norris, Daphne Pease, Mary Tebbie, who have lost contact with the meeting, and Tessa Parkes, who in recent years has lacked interest in the affairs of Friends.
7. Marriage of Ann Kerr and James Friend
8. Area Meeting Library review report *See opposite*
9. AM Nominations Committee report
10. Marjorie Farquharson's legacy
11. Minute from South Edinburgh Local Meeting *See page 5*
12. General Meeting for Scotland

13. Correspondence and notices
14. AOCB
15. Closing minute

## Library review summary report April 2017

### Introduction

This is the summary report (a detailed report is available) of the task given to Laura Pearson (Central Fife), Sara Davies (Central Edinburgh) and Clayton Cameron (Central Edinburgh) by South East Scotland Area Meeting in November 2016, to investigate the problems with looking after our library.

### Background

The current state of the library is that it has a well-functioning online catalogue (<http://www.quakerbib.org.uk/>) and a range of books on display in the library at 7 Victoria Terrace first floor room. The library has a budget of around £400 a year to purchase new books, pamphlets *etc.* The analysis of the library's paper borrowing system indicated a low level of recent use of around 50 books per year. There is very limited space for new books. In 2015 the National Library said they would be keen on acquiring up to 30 % of current books. The views of the current library committee, who kindly gave time for discussions, are shared in the detailed report; in summary they want the library to continue and wish to stand down from their activities once there is a functioning replacement system.

### Investigation

To fulfill our task we spent time asking Local Meetings, individual Friends, the managers of Victoria Terrace, and the Glasgow Meeting librarian for their views, and looking at some online resources. In summary we gathered views from all Local Meetings except Tweeddale, and had 24 responses to an online survey. The main themes from Friends are:

- not aware of library
- do use, but
  - not attractive space or display
  - book or interest groups to share resources in more comfortable surroundings
  - could use the crèche room as an engaging comfortable resource and study centre
- need for the resource and better engagement with Meetings outside Victoria Terrace

- integrate children's books into library
- Online resources: multiple sources which appear to be useful. Different formats were not investigated in detail as 80% of the responses to the online survey question on whether other methods of reading /listening to books wanted said other formats were not required.

## **Discussion**

We followed the aspiration that a Quaker gave in the survey monkey, that the purpose of the Area Meeting library is *"To provide relevant reading to help develop ideas, understanding of our history, explain Quakerism to those new to it, share books we've enjoyed, give Friends the opportunity to become more aware of certain issues, make books available that would otherwise be difficult to get hold of, make Friends (by which I include attenders) aware of new Quaker / related writing ..."*

We came to our one recommendation through a process of discernment and discussion. This is that though currently the library is not well used, there is passion for a functioning library as a learning and resource centre and part of outreach for our Area Meeting.

**THE RECOMMENDATION IS TO KEEP THE LIBRARY AND REFRESH IT Refresh library and engage all Meetings. This requires involvement and a dedicated budget (up to £10,000 – rationale in detailed report) to change the current situation.**

This process should be overseen initially by an interim library committee, then ask nominations to consider whether a single librarian reporting through an agreed governance process within South East Scotland Area Meeting could be a future way forward. For the interim library committee additional members have already been approached and are willing to help (David Sterratt, Margaret Mortimer, Lin Murison, Managers *ex-officio*, Don Stubbings and 2 places reserved for non-Central Edinburgh Quakers).

**Clayton Cameron  
Laura Pearson  
Sara Davies**

---

*Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh.*

Ecclesiastes, 12:12 NRSV

***South Edinburgh Local Meeting, 30 April 2017:  
Extract Minute forwarded to Area Meeting***

***Unconventional Oil and Gas or “Fracking” – a Quaker concern***

*We heard about the Scottish Government’s invitation to respond to their Consultation on a Draft Scottish Energy Strategy. One of the associated documents outlined plans for a £10-billion Scotland’s Energy Efficiency Programme and one asked whether to make the Moratorium on “Fracking” a permanent ban.*

*We noted the statement from our Parliamentary Engagement Officer, clearly supporting a ban on Fracking, and Pendle Hill Quakers’ appeal for support on their Meeting for Witness against Fracking to be held on Saturday 6 May. We felt very concerned that a clear message be given to the Government that fracking was not compatible with our Quaker witness. We were concerned that our individual and collective voice be heard on these matters and asked our Clerk to:*

- 1. Write to all members and attenders in Local Meeting encouraging them to respond in very good time to the consultations with guidance on points to make;*
- 2. Submit a positive response to the Energy Strategy consultations including Scotland’s Energy Efficiency Programme (SEEP) and a negative response to the Talking Fracking consultation;*
- 3. Forward this Minute to Area Meeting in recognition of our concern about these issues and ask Area Meeting to respond in the same way to the Scottish Government consultations.*

**SEE ALSO PAGE 24**

---

**PRAYER FOR MEEKNESS**

O GOD, whose gracious providence has particularly ordain’d the spirit of meekness to waft us safely through the turbulent sea of the world to our haven of bliss; vouchsafe, we beseech Thee, that the clear experience we every day make of our own weakness and vanity, may so dispose us for this precious virtue that our minds may never be discompos’d with passion, nor our tongues break forth into violent expressions, but our temper may always be preserved calm and regular, and, as becometh those, all whose powers are possess’d of the joys of heaven, apt to feel in everything only the sweet impulses of hope and charity, through Our Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son, to whom, with Thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end.

*From an 18<sup>th</sup> Century Prayer Book*

## **Trustees' Conference, 17-19 February, Woodbrooke**

I was nominated to attend this weekend conference of AM Trustees on behalf of South East Scotland Area Meeting. As a first-timer, I was delighted to travel to Birmingham, and to see for myself all that Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre has to offer. Set in lovely, mature grounds just waking up to Spring, it was a pleasant place to meet and get to know Quakers from all over the UK: from as far afield as Orkney, the Isle of Harris, and Caithness, and as far south as Devon, and with a significant Welsh contingent. To consider the trouble so many delegates had taken to attend was a great incentive to learning!

The Friday evening session began with a reintroduction to the Quaker Stewardship Committee (QSC) who organised the conference, and who are the central Quaker body for the support and encouragement of all our Area Meeting Trustees, Treasurers and Clerks. In the next three years the QSC are prioritising the recruitment, retention and support of AM Trustees Treasurers. Our link person for Scotland on that committee is Ursula Fuller<sup>1</sup>, who is very happy to hear from anyone who might have any questions. The QSC also has a large body of information and advice, handbooks, directories and fact-sheets, which is there to help all AM Trustees and office bearers to feel supported in their roles.

On Saturday morning we heard from Sandra Berry, the director of Woodbrooke, about the many and varied challenges of her role. We also heard from Linda Craig, who used the familiar story of Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38-42) to illustrate the apparent conflict which is perceived to exist between those of us who take on all the practical duties that are part of running our Meetings, and those of us who feel guided to uphold our work in silent worship. Do we "encourage in [ourselves] a habit of dependence on God's guidance for each day?" (Advice 3) If we do, in any conflict we feel between practical necessity and spiritual clarity, it will be easier to discern right action.

After tea on Saturday and some free time to explore in the afternoon, various workshops explored such diverse topics as ethical investment, Quaker stewardship, and safeguarding, all of which threw up interesting new questions and offered the chance to clarify.

Our Sunday morning session began in fine style with an excellent and very informative session from Elaine Green, HR and employment speci-

alist, considering the contributions that our AM employees make, and ways in which to manage recruitment, employment and complaints effectively. In a lively presentation, it became very clear that the Quaker practice of discernment, and our core testimonies to honesty and equality, assist us to manage this area of our responsibilities well.

I came away from this conference feeling refreshed and empowered to do the best I can for our Area Meeting, knowing that there are resources available to help, and that, if I haven't found the answer to a particular question, there will be others who have. It was lovely to meet trustees from our other Scottish Area Meetings, and to make new acquaintances among the seventy-five or so who attended the conference. My sincere thanks to QPSW and to our Area Meeting for funding my attendance.

**Ann Forsyth**

1. *Ursula Fuller is a member of East Kent Area Meeting. As a Link Friend she can be contacted via Helen Griffith at Friends House, tel. 020 7663 1161 or email [heleng@quaker.org.uk](mailto:heleng@quaker.org.uk).*

## Spirituality and End of Life

*'I have made death a messenger of joy to thee. Wherefore dost thou grieve? I made the light to shine on thee its splendour. Why dost thou veil thyself therefrom?'*

Bahá'í – *The Hidden Words*, Arabic no. 32

Nominated by Area Meeting, I attended a day conference offered by the Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations, (QCCIR) at Frigate Meeting House, York, on 4 March 2017. The subject was death, and the ways of dealing with it evolved by different faith communities.

Trupti Patel, President of the Hindu Forum of Britain, opened our comparative consideration of several faiths with a very interesting – and for me, far too short – presentation on *The Hindu Way of Life and Understanding of Death*, through which she explained that in Vedic culture there is no taboo around the subject of death, a fundamental acceptance of which is taught from infancy. Death is understood as part of universal energy – Shiva – a vital part of the inevitable cycle of birth and rebirth. In Vedic belief, the soul has no beginning or end. According to Vedanta,

one of the six orthodox schools of Indian philosophy, everyone is free to imagine and accept God's form according to one's beliefs. Every thought is allowed to develop freely, both theist and atheist. Every school of thought is part and parcel of Indian Culture, in the same way as a garden has variety of flowers and plants, their differences increasing the beauty of the garden.

Andrew Foster, Methodist Chaplain at York Hospital, spoke movingly about the importance of planning, as far as possible, for a good death and respecting the different personal and ritual needs of each person at end of life. To plan how we shall die, we need to be empowered to talk through what we choose. He also reminded us that grieving is a long term process and that grief expresses itself in different ways.

Amanda Goldby, Rabbi at the North London Synagogue and Member of the Faith and Dementia Network, offered a Judaic perspective, explaining that, in Jewish tradition there is a quick funeral, followed by ritual mourning periods: the first seven days, next thirty days, eleven months following - which make up a year of mourning and are flexible enough to allow mourners to choose their own form and pace of grieving. Though burial rituals are uniform and well-established, individuals can opt in or out of these as they wish. The old understanding of a linear progression through grief is giving way to increasing awareness that the acute and longer-term phases of grieving move through each other and express in different ways at different times over long periods. Jewish tradition honours a rich life, well lived – *The real dying is when our name is no longer remembered* – so living a rich life is very important, so that there be a good remembrance.

Later in the morning, we were treated to a choice of two workshops, death café or Bahá'í. I chose to learn about the Bahá'í faith, which, though a relatively modern one – founded in the mid-nineteenth century in Persia – has striking resemblances to Quakerism. Bahá'í writings describe a single, personal, unknowable, omniscient, omnipresent, imperishable, and almighty God who is the creator of all things. ('That which has been created cannot understand the Creator.') The Bahá'í faith teaches the unity of God, religion and humanity, unity in diversity, personal and social equality, the elimination of all prejudice, world peace, and the harmony between religion and science, as well as elimin-

ating extremes of wealth and poverty and spiritual solutions to economic problems. Interestingly, apart from a few very simple procedures around death, in order to maintain simplicity the Bahá'í caution against developing rituals. In a very interesting seminar offered by Daryoush Mazloum and Ronnie Bindra of the Bahá'ís of York, it was explained that life is about preparing to move closer to God after death. Regarding the dangers of material entrapment in this life, our tutor gave the example of a man who goes swimming in a river. To swim effectively, he must remove his clothes – the trappings of life – or he risks drowning; but if he stays in the river too long, and gets too carried away by it, he will not be much use either, in this life. He must leave the river to eat, to socialise and to live his life, putting on the clothes he needs, to live effectively. The trick is to find balance between the spiritual and the material without becoming ensnared.

Unfortunately I was unable to attend the death café sessions, one in the morning and a second in the afternoon: participants found them very illuminating and rewarding. There is a lot about death cafés on the internet, (<http://deathcafe.com/deathcafe/1423/>) and Geof Sewell of Thirsk Meeting is working to bring them to wider notice. Anecdotal evidence suggests they are very valuable, allowing participants to share grief often buried for decades because, in the past, it was the practice to just 'get on with things' – a clear example of the ways in which openness and removing the taboos around death can be beneficial.

I was struck by how very much the religious traditions expressed in Hinduism, in Judaism and in Bahá'í, run parallel to the core beliefs of Quakerism. The presentations were uniformly illuminating and spiritually refreshing. Many thanks to Area Meeting for enabling me to attend this conference. Over fifty people from all over the United Kingdom, including two from Scotland, attended the day.

**Ann Forsyth**

*We give back, to you, O God, those whom you gave to us. You did not lose them when you gave them to us, and we do not lose them by their return to you. Your dear Son has taught us that life is eternal and love cannot die. So death is only an horizon, and an horizon is only the limit of our sight. Open our eyes to see more clearly, and draw us closer to you that we may know that we are nearer to our loved ones, who are with you.*

**William Penn**

## Faithful Service

*Chapter 30 of Church Government (1968) was the concluding chapter of the old two-part Book of Discipline superseded in 1994 by Quaker Faith & Practice. It was entitled "The meeting and its members" and was included "that we may remind ourselves that our Church government is not a code of abstract regulations but the embodiment of the Society's experience" as shown in extracts from the testimonies concerning "a beloved rebel; a clerk, an elder and a registering officer about their tasks; the faithful quiet service of one Friend and the more volatile enthusiasms of another; the day-to-day work of a devoted overseer." What follows is the final passage of all (§ 998); it echoes in part the introduction to the Book, now quoted in Q.F. & P. 18.20.*

How many more men and women we would have liked to show. The geniality and charm of a Roger Clark whose 'sympathetic insight, shrewd judgment and wit made any committee on which he sat an enjoyable occasion' and who 'had the great gift of being able at times of strain to dissolve tension through humour, and subtly to change the whole level of discussion'. Or the faithfulness of his contemporary, whose monthly meeting wrote: 'Whatever Alec Wilson undertook to do, he did. No one was more faithful in attendance at meeting, whether for worship or business, nor more deeply interested in all the activities of the meeting, and it was a grief to him when, towards the close of his life, increasing deafness made it difficult to hear what was said. He so passionately wanted to hear, and still he came.'

Or, nearly a century earlier, Thomas Pierce, the chartist, admitted into membership by Poole & Southampton Monthly Meeting in 1840: 'He took a warm and active interest in all our meetings being very rarely absent. We recall with satisfaction his zeal in this respect. His means being at this time very limited, he felt it needful to make his journeys on foot: and his diary records his frequent walks, in going and returning, of fifty and a hundred miles to attend his monthly and quarterly meetings. The fervour and weightiness of his observations in our meetings for discipline, and the religious covering under which he sought to dwell, live in our remembrance.'

But then, in fairness, we should have had to reveal our failures too. The aggressiveness of spirit, the lack of charitable judgment, the heated discussions, the dissention and the sheer tedium of inertia, for we have known all these. It is our prayer that we may have the discernment to face our failures without being cast down and to face our successes without self-pride.

Bridport Friends, recalling in 1754 the 'Fervency and Zeal' of Samuel Bow-nas, one of the most eminent and lovable of eighteenth-century ministers, placed upon record their 'thanks to him who hath Blessed us in the Enjoyment of his Service of Love, being still partakers of the Blessed Effects thereof'. In our life as a religious society we, too, are still partakers of the blessed effects of the thousands who have gone before us, known and unknown, and as we give thanks for their faithfulness we may re-echo our Friends of Bridport as they prayed that 'the Lord of Heaven and Earth will be pleased to raise many others to Stand up in the places of such Faithful Labourers in his Vineyard.'

It is, in one sense, right that we should speak of *our* responsibilities, *our* service, *our* faithfulness, for God works through human instruments, fallible though they be. But it is his work. He is the initiator, the inspirer, the strengthener. Our task is not to try to work in our own strength on tasks of our own devising, but to learn to listen to the voice of God and to follow his call. May we each make our own the words of John Woolman:

*I cannot form a concern, but when a concern cometh I endeavour to be obedient.*

## **Banning the Bomb**

Janet Fenton of the Northern Friends Peace Board was part of the civil society presence in New York during the UN discussions in March on a nuclear weapons ban treaty, as was Tim Wallis of QPSW. Janet's report starts on page 13; Tim's is at: <http://quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/nuclear-ban-treaty-talks-begin>. During the week, with other faith groups, they presented the following statement, endorsed by Paul Parker, Recording Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting, and Douglas Shaw, Clerk of NFPB Trustees.

***Public Statement to the First Negotiation Conference  
for a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons leading to their elimination  
Faith Communities Concerned about Nuclear Weapons***

*March 2017, New York*

*Since the first attack with atomic weapons, in August 1945, when the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed, the terrible consequences of nuclear weapons have demanded their abolition. Since 1945 humankind has been forced to live in the shadow of apocalyptic destruction. Any use of nuclear weapons would not only destroy the past fruits of human civilization, it would disfigure the present and consign future generations to a grim fate.*

*Our respective faith traditions advocate for the right of people to live in security and dignity. We believe in the commands of conscience and justice; we seek to honour our duty to protect the vulnerable and to exercise the stewardship that will safeguard the planet for future generations. Nuclear weapons manifest a total disregard for all these values and commitments. There is no counter-vailing imperative—whether of national security, stability in international power relations, or the difficulty of overcoming political inertia—that justifies their continued existence, much less their use. Their catastrophic humanitarian consequences demand that nuclear weapons never be used again, under any circumstances.*

*We raise our voices in the name of sanity and the shared values of humanity. We welcome these negotiations, necessary to prohibit the worst weapon ever invented. We reject the immorality of holding whole populations hostage, threatened with a cruel and miserable death. We applaud the world's political leaders that have demonstrated the courage to begin these negotiations. We urge those not present to re-examine their positions and, at the very least, make a commitment to join the June- July session in good faith.*

*As people of faith, we urge those negotiating here to:*

- 1. Heed the voices of the world's Hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) and re-iterate that the fundamental justification for this new legal instrument is the prevention of the humanitarian harm caused by any use of nuclear weapons. The clear justification for this new legal instrument is to ensure the suffering of those affected must never be visited on any other individual, family or society. The humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons remains at the core of all nuclear disarmament efforts;*
- 2. Continue to call upon all states to participate in the negotiations in order to fulfill their obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament;*
- 3. Develop a treaty text that clearly and explicitly prohibits the use, possession, development, production, acquisition, transfer and deployment of nuclear weapons, as well as any inducement, encouragement, investment or assistance with those prohibited acts. The new instrument should also provide for an obligation for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, and a framework to achieve it.*

## *The World – nae place for nuclear weapons*

Friday [31 March] was the last day of the first session of the UN Nuclear Ban Treaty discussions in New York. Second session starts in June till the beginning of July.

There was an exuberant excitement in the room at the enormous significance of what is happening, hard to communicate in the UK because the UK Government has resolutely ignoring the negotiations as their main tactic for resisting the coming change in nuclear posturing. and the UK media seem to be complying with that.

During the Civil Society debrief at the end of the session, New York International Lawyer Alice Slater, who has been working in this area and attending UN meetings for forty years, said that she had never seen such good progress and open dialogue in a UN disarmament meeting. She was very excited!

*At the present count, 132 UN Member states have participated in this meeting.* We started with considerations of what the preamble should include and the first topic of the treaty, when states could outline their views on what the treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons should contain. Topic one outlined the prohibitions and topic two focused on obligations. This set out prohibitions and obligations that stigmatise nuclear weapons. On Wednesday afternoon, the President suggested that member states' delegates could engage in an interactive dialogue with civil society experts on the issues under topic 2, working to identify what the treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons should contain in the way of obligations, and how it will relate to existing humanitarian law and other legal instruments governing nuclear weapons and other kinds of indiscriminate weapons. And the format for Thursday allowed thoughtful deliberation and exchanges, and a useful example of how the United Nations can operate in terms of open, fluid conversation amongst states, international organisations, academics, and non-governmental organisations. This was particularly helpful around the positive obligations for states parties, such as ensuring the rights of victims and survivors of nuclear weapons activities, identifying actions to address damage to affected environments and providing for international cooperation and assistance to meet the obligations of the treaty.

The final session, on the third topic, looked at the Institutional arrangements, continued in the same spirit, ensuring the process was open to all interested states, international organisations and civil society with no state

able to singlehandedly block the treaty's establishment. It's also important that it is compatible with, or reinforces existing treaties, and that there are robust arrangements for how it is implemented and how it comes into force. This topic also considers the necessary arrangements regarding participation in the negotiations – how and who.

*The nuclear weapon ban treaty is a categorical rejection of nuclear weapons. Its overarching objective is to help facilitate the elimination of nuclear weapons.* The treaty can and should be seen as part of the larger architecture of general and complete disarmament, and of peace, security, and human rights. It is not an end itself, but a tool.

Getting there requires creativity, especially when the nine states that possess nuclear weapons have exhibited no good faith commitment to nuclear disarmament. The discussions are creating a pathway to disarmament.

The president Elaine Whyte now has the task of drawing together all the views suggested to create the first draft. All of us hoping for a strong and effective treaty must consider what we can do in the inter sessional period before the discussions on that draft start in June.

*The non participating states' 'protest' stunt outside on the first day, saw the UK right up there outside the room, misrepresenting Scotland* with even more insouciance than they demonstrated over Brexit. They offered no new information though, and they did not offer any explanation of how they can comply with the NPT [*Non-Proliferation Treaty*] and at the same time upgrade Trident. Despite their cavalier insistence that the weapons will all be deployed from Scotland, they offer no explanation of how they would renew, or even continue, with Trident without control of Faslane.

*Meanwhile, the important point for Scots is that independence can bring an end to all that.* With the lack of infrastructure and amenities anywhere else in the UK, a fact that the UK Government nor the MOD has never denied, Scotland could non-violently force the issue, and start the badly needed unravelling of the P5 and their nuclear addiction problem. The majority of states are moving inexorably to creating the Ban Treaty. Those who support independence for Scotland should welcome these negotiations as the other arm in a pincer movement that will ensure that UK can no longer be a nuclear weapons state.

There is a real possibility of Scotland taking concrete steps towards a world free of nuclear weapons through:

1. Scrapping Trident

## 2. Committing to, and eventually joining the Nuclear Ban Treaty

*That's why it's important that people in Scotland who are serious about nuclear disarmament support independence, and people in Scotland who want independence work for nuclear disarmament. Win win!*

**Janet Fenton**

*PS. There is a Scottish CND working group on The Nuclear Ban Treaty which is open to anyone who wants to get involved in raising awareness and supporting the process in Scotland. It is gathering a team of civil society representatives from Scotland to attend the June/July sessions to support the diplomats. Janet is supported by Northern Friends Peace Board (and others) to enable her to attend; Scottish CND is to send a staff member, and also provides administrative support to the working group. It is hoped to add two further members to the team: one young person and a campaigner from outwith the central belt.*

*To contact or join the Open Working Group for the Ban Treaty please email Janet at [janet@wordsandactions.scot](mailto:janet@wordsandactions.scot) More information is at [www.nuclearban.org](http://www.nuclearban.org)*

*Trident Ploughshares are appealing for funds to support this work; any help that you can give will be greatly appreciated. Donations can be made by cheque or by Bacs Direct Credit ("bank transfer").*

*Cheques (payable to "Trident Ploughshares") should be sent to*

Jean Oliver  
TP Treasurer  
43 Knocklea  
Biggar, ML12 6EF

*(Please enclose a note specifying BAN TREATY as the object of the payment.)*

*The details needed for making a Bacs Direct Credit are:*

<i>Bank:</i>	Co-operative Bank
<i>Account name:</i>	Trident Ploughshares
<i>Account number:</i>	50113251
<i>Sort code:</i>	08-92-50
<i>Reference:</i>	BAN TREATY

---

**F**OR the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world.

## Creating a Just Country – can Scotland lead the way?

In 2015 British Quakers committed themselves to give priority to working with others to identify and address the root causes of inequalities in society. With increasing powers devolved to Holyrood, are some Quakers right in believing Scotland can show the rest of the UK the way?

Following a successful symposium hosted by Quakers in Scotland last October and attended by some 200 people, a seminar for invited participants took place in Edinburgh Meeting House on 22 April. In addition to Quakers with interest or expertise in tax and justice matters, the seminar was attended by representatives of Christian Aid, Positive Money, the Iona Community, Oxfam, the Citizens Basic Income campaign, Community Climate Action and others. John Mason, an SNP MSP and former member of the Holyrood Finance and Economy Committee, was also in attendance.

The seminar was addressed by Michael Keating, Professor of Politics at Aberdeen University and Director of the Centre for Constitutional Change at Edinburgh University. He began by raising the question ‘What is the purpose of Scotland having new constitutional powers?’ suggesting we need first to define what sort of society we want, and then explore what powers we need to deliver it.

Michael challenged the currently fashionable view that social inequality is the price of economic growth; that rich people need higher salaries and poor people lower wages to work harder. He quoted evidence from academic research showing it is not the case that unequal societies do better and that increasing taxation does not necessarily harm an economy. Small countries can do well when there are high levels of social investment.

We spent much of the day in two discussion groups, from which the following three areas of interest emerged, which Scottish Quakers will take forward in our future work:

- **The need to change the narrative**, to promote the concept that tax is a good thing: our subscription to a good society, which unites the state and the citizen. Tax needs to be taken out of its separate box and firmly linked to social policy, the benefits it brings to a good society.

We need to promote growth as not just growth in formal economic activity, but growth in welfare, community, environment, land ownership, gender justice, care *etc.*

- **Citizen's basic income.** Annie Miller, an Edinburgh based economist (yes, *our* Annie Miller), took part in the seminar. She has been working on basic income for many years and is publishing a book on the subject this summer. This was of great interest to participants and a concept we wish to explore further.
- **Better education about economics.** Steps need to be taken to improve economics education for all of us as well as for academic students of the subject. We all need to have enough understanding to contribute to the debate. Taxation is a neglected area in academic economic studies, where radical challenges to current normative practices are rare. We were pointed to places where such challenges are beginning to be made.

Scotland General Meeting Parliamentary Liaison Group is grateful to the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust, which funded both the October symposium and this seminar.

Phil Lucas

### ***Books of related interested***

*Michael Keating is the editor of **A Wealthier, Fairer Scotland: The Political Economy of Constitutional Change** (Edinburgh University Press, £14.99) which was published in March – the main title (which originally had a question mark, vetoed by the publishers) comes from the incoming SNP government's stated ambition in 2007 for a Scotland "that is Wealthier, Fairer, Healthier, Safer and Stronger, Smarter and Greener"; and the book's seven chapters discuss various policy areas with regard to what has happened in the past ten years and what may follow the implementation of the Scotland Act 2016. Annie Miller's **A Basic Income Handbook** (Luath, £9.99) is due to be published in June; we hope to review it in a future edition of Sesame. In the meantime, Penguin has brought out **Basic Income: And How We Can Make It Happen** by Guy Standing (under the revamped Pelican imprint, £8.99). Two of the speakers at last year's symposium also have had new books out recently, each with a snappy but somewhat uninformative title and a longer subtitle disclosing the subject matter. Richard Murphy's is **Dirty Secrets: How Tax Havens Destroy the Economy** (Verso, £12.99); while Lesley Riddoch is co-author (with Eberhard Bort) of **McSmörgåsbord: What post-Brexit Scotland can learn from the Nordics** (Luath, £7.99). All of these are in paperback.*

*Ed.*

## QPSW Spring Conference

### *Journeys of Witness*

**Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick – 24-26 March**

*Friday*

#### **Opening Session – Clare Wood, QPSW Assistant General Secretary**

Clare explained the aims of the conference were to introduce Quaker Peace & Social Witness, describe its work, and foster connections between it and the Quaker community. Underpinning the work are Quaker principles of peace, simplicity, equality, justice, community and sustainability (see *Quaker Faith & Practice* 8.11.) QPSW employs 19 whole-time-equivalent staff members plus 3 peace workers, in projects grouped as follows:

*Peace Work focused outside Britain* e.g. The Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel; Naga conciliation in North-east India.

*Peace Work focused within Britain* e.g. Peace Education; campaigning on disarmament; Forced Migration; training in non-violent action through the “Turning the Tide” project.

*Justice work focused mainly in Britain.* Economic Justice; Climate Justice; Sustainability.

Quaker work in Criminal Justice and Housing was also mentioned.

She ended by describing how the work of QPSW is overseen by a central committee accountable to Britain Yearly Meeting. Clare emphasised the possibility of Friends influencing the work of QPSW through their local meeting *via* Area Meeting to Yearly Meeting. She encouraged all Friends to consider serving on QPSW Central Committee.

*Saturday*

#### **Quaker Faith and Activism**

This session took the form of a conversation between Jane Pearn and Chris Venables about the motivation and process of becoming Quaker activists. The differences in their age, gender, and experience, coupled with an apparent ease between them, led to an entertaining and absorbing hour.

A sense of injustice, and a strong feeling of what was right and wrong had led them to activism, and had changed their relationship to themselves, and their community. As Quakers their activism was grounded in worship and reflection. They spoke about returning to the centre, and acting from a place of love, leading to care about what, when and where action should be taken, and knowledge of what was not theirs to do. Both acknowledge the im-

portance of the support given by the Quaker community, and they used the image of a tree made of individual leaves taking energy from light to feed the whole tree. This symbol remained with the conference throughout the weekend, and was used further to describe growth, connections and the long-term nature of change.

### **Workshop choices.**

On both Saturday and Sunday there was a choice of workshops at which to explore some particular area of work. On Saturday I chose *Climate Change and Sustainability*. It was a very informative session, which began with an outline of Britain Yearly Meeting's commitment to sustainability and climate justice: at home (in the UK, 95 % of energy is provided by six companies who can manipulate the market) and abroad (countries producing less carbon are more susceptible to climate change). Projects supported by QPSW have included:

- Urban Harvest – a small grant was given to a project in Birmingham to provide a juicer for locally-sourced fruit;
- Huddersfield Meeting's disinvestment from fossil fuels;
- Footpaths project – training to support individuals aiming for carbon reduction in their lives;
- The 'Reclaim the Power' camp, to resist the expansion of opencast coal mining in South Wales.

We were reminded of actions to oppose fracking, and of the Scottish Government's consultation.

### **Meet the Staff.**

A number of drop-in sessions with QPSW staff members enabled us to meet them and hear something of what they are currently doing. I went to two.

Tim Gee's work as Forced Migration Programme Developer was described in the last issue of *Sesame* [208, pp. 19-22] with the list of proposals to emerge from his threshing meetings. Friends at Swanwick mentioned as a particular cause for dismay the large number of migrant children missing in the UK.

Helen Bailey spoke about E.A.P.P.I.: the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Israel and Palestine. It is co-ordinated from an office in Jerusalem. Accompaniers – from 24 countries and various denominations – provide a constant protective presence, for instance in accompanying children to school and adults past border checks. The aim is to offer eye-witness accounts, gather and diffuse stories, and apply pressure for change, with the ultimate object being to end the occupation of Palestine. Owing to Israeli visa restrictions, accompaniers only stay three months. Applicants for the role require

an understanding of the conflict and of the values of the organisation: they need to be flexible, physically fit, and emotionally resilient.

### **Open Space**

In a session of small-group discussions, I joined one pondering the question “Can the arts be used to reduce conflict?” We concluded that they could; and that it might be time for the Society of Friends to review its relationship with the arts.

## *Sunday*

### **Workshop Choices**

My Sunday choice was the workshop with Phil Wood and Hannah Larn, this year’s participants in the QPSW Peace workers scheme, a project which aims:

- to nurture young people who have a passion for peace work;
- to strengthen peace work organisations; and
- to form links between Quakers and peace organisations.

Examples of previous peace worker placements include with Forces Watch, and *Peace News*. Posts last for one year, and start with two weeks’ training at Friends House and Woodbrooke. Peace workers also have an opportunity to visit the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva.

Phil Wood has been placed with Scientists for Global Responsibility, a group formed in 1992 by the coming together of SANA [Scientists Against Nuclear Arms] with other groups of concerned professionals, and having the wider, post-Cold-War aims of promoting ethics, openness, accountability, peace, and social and environmental justice within the scientific community. Their current concerns are climate change (fracking), security and disarmament (arms control, nuclear weapons) and controls on technology (military research budgets, and assessing the potential harm of artificial intelligence). Current and recent projects include ‘Science for Society’ which highlights the involvement in schools of companies with interests in armaments and fossil fuel, ‘Arms Conversations’, looking at how jobs in the arms industry could be replaced, and ‘Nukes of Hazard’ highlighting the threat posed by the storage and transportation of nuclear weapons. Phil is particularly involved in a project investigating the forces’ influence on research, specifically in relation to the Institute of Engineers and the Institute of Physicists who have close relations to industry and government.

An account of Hannah Larn’s placement in Warrington, at the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Foundation for Peace, was given in the last *Sesame* (208, p. 19). She gave a moving description of how the Foundation was set up by couples who had both lost sons when the IRA bombed the town; an important part of its work is still support to survivors and victims of terrorism.

## Plenary

The conference ended with a plenary session to which many contributed. The image of a tree with many leaves re-emerged as a symbol of the long term, multi-generational nature of the work of witness.

**Jane Tingle**




---

## Area Meeting, Saturday 24 June

**The second all-day event of 2017 will be hosted by Central Fife LM, at Kinghorn Community Centre, Rossland Place, KY3 9SS.**

The programme is not yet finalised, but, in addition to business, the day will include all-age worship, a session on what it means to be a Quaker today, and we will have a bring and share lunch together. We hope that the children's programme will include a visit to the nearby Earthship (see more at <https://sci-scotland.org.uk/about-earthship-fife/>). We expect the day to run from about 10.30 am -4.00 pm: a more detailed programme will be issued in June; and of course, people are welcome to come for all or part of the day, as suits themselves.

Since Central Fife has few children in the meeting, it would be really helpful to know in advance of families with children and young people who intend to come. Offers from adults, particularly those with PVG membership, who could help with children and young people on the day, are also very welcome. In either case please let Alastair Cameron know: [mandolin.alastair@gmail.com](mailto:mandolin.alastair@gmail.com) or 07900 044577.

I look forward to seeing you on 24 June.

**Alastair Cameron**

Assistant Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

## Meeting the Ottoman Emperor, 1658

*One of the Valiant Sixty, Mary Fisher had been a housemaid when she met George Fox in 1651. Between 1652 and 1654 she was imprisoned repeatedly at York for speaking against a paid clergy; in 1653 she and Elizabeth Williams were publicly flogged at Cambridge, the first Friends to suffer this punishment, supposedly for being vagabonds. On 11 July 1656, she and another Quaker, Ann Austin, landed at Boston in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and were immediately arrested. Their books and pamphlets were burned by the hangman, and they were imprisoned. To isolate them, the prison window was boarded up, and they would have starved, but for the intervention of an innkeeper, Nicholas Upsall, who bribed the gaoler to allow him to bring them food. After five weeks, they were deported to Barbados, and then returned to England. This account of Mary Fisher's mission to Mehmet IV (which omits any mention of the five who set out with her but gave up after being sent back from Smyrna) is from Joseph Besse's *Sufferings of the People called Quakers* (1753): the text is unchanged except that italicisation of proper names and the initial capitalisation of other nouns is modified, and short s's are used throughout (thus: "sea-coast of the Morea" for "Sea-Coast of the Morea".) The Morea is the Peloponnese; when Mary Fisher realised the ship was Venice-bound, she asked to be landed there. Her route lay through Macedonia and over the mountains of Thrace to what is now Edirne.*

MARY FISHER, a religious maiden, of whose sufferings we have before spoken in our account of New-England, being returned from thence to London, found herself concerned to go with a message from the Lord, as she believed, to Sultan Mahomet the Fourth, then encamped with his army near Adrianople. Accordingly she went to Smyrna, but was stopt there by the English consul, and sent back to Venice, whence she went by land from the sea-coast of the Morea to Adrianople, being preserved from any manner of abuse or injury in that long journey of about five or six hundred miles. Being come thither, she acquainted some of the citizens with her intent, and desired them to go with her, but they not daring so to do, for fear of the Sultan's displeasure, she went to the camp alone, and procured information to be made at the Grand Vizier's tent, that *There was an English woman who had something to declare from the great God to the Sultan; who sent her word, that She should speak with him the next morning.* So she returned to the city that night, and next morning went back to the camp, when the Sultan being with his great men about him, as he uses to be when he receives ambassadours, sent for her in, and asked her, *Whether it was so, as he had heard, viz. that she had a*

*message from the Lord? She answered, Yea. Then he bade her, Speak on, (having three interpreters by him) and when she stood silent a little, waiting on the Lord when to speak, he supposing that she might be fearful to utter her mind before them all, asked her, Whether she desired that any of them might go forth before she spake? She answered, Nay. Then he bade her, Speak the word of the Lord to them, and not to fear, for they had good hearts, and could bear it, and strictly charged her, to speak the word she had to say from the Lord, neither more nor less, for they were willing to hear it, be it what it would. The she speaking, they all gave diligent attention with much seriousness and gravity till she had done; and then the Sultan asked her, Whether she had any more to say? She asked, Whether he understood what she had said? He replied, Yea, every word: Adding, that It was truth, and desired her to stay in that country, saying, that they could not but respect such an one as had taken so much pains to come to them so far as from England with a message from the Lord, and offered her a guard to bring her to Constantinople, whither she intended to go, which she not accepting, but trusting in the arm of the Lord, who had brought her safe thither, to conduct her back again, he told her, It was dangerous travelling, especially for such an one as she, and wondered that she had passed safe so far as she had, saying, It was respect and kindness to her, that he had offered her a guard, and that he would not, for any thing, that she should come to the least hurt in his dominions. Then they asked her, What she thought of their prophet Mahomet. She replied, that She knew him not, but that she knew CHRIST the true prophet, the Son of GOD, who was the Light of the World, and enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. Adding, If the word that the prophet speaketh cometh to pass, then shall ye know that the Lord hath sent that prophet, but if it come not to pass, then shall ye know that the Lord never sent him. To which they confessed, and said, It was truth. And so she departed through that great army to Constantinople without a guard, and came thither without the least hurt, scorn or derision, the Turks in this behalf receiving her and her message with far more respect and civility, than she had often met with from those who covered themselves with a profession of Christianity.*

*See Quaker Faith & Practice 19.27, for Mary Fisher's own words about her journey, and also 28.13 (Panel 12 of the Quaker Tapestry).*

## Fracking – Responding to the Scottish Government’s consultation

The Scottish government recently opened a public consultation on whether to allow fracking for shale gas and oil in Scotland.

In February this year, Meeting for Sufferings, the representative body of Quakers in Britain, called for a ban on fracking. It said “The UK needs to be investing in efficient and renewable energy, and reducing demand, not in additional fossil fuels. Fracked gas is not the low-carbon solution some suggest that it is and is incompatible with tackling the climate crisis.”

In Scotland, the practice has been under moratorium in Scotland since 2015 whilst the government assesses its impacts. This moratorium is now up for review.

### **Join us in calling for a ban on fracking in Scotland.**

A response in the name of Quakers in Britain has been submitted to the Scottish government’s consultation. You can also submit a response as an individual, as a Meeting, or with any other group you are involved in. It’s a unique opportunity to shape Scotland’s energy policy and demand urgent action to protect our climate.

The response by Quakers in Britain can be read at:

<https://quaker-prod.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/store/c748521f5480c52c8411b7e39d3bd95e9ad9e2472ed0ae17716e96b880f3>

**The consultation closes on 31 May 2017.** If you would like further information before responding, this can be found on the Quaker website at:

[www.quaker.org.uk/fracking](http://www.quaker.org.uk/fracking)

Alternatively, **Chris Walker**, Sustainability & Peace Programme Manager at Friends House, would be pleased to hear from anyone who has a question, would like support in responding to the consultation, or would like to share ideas for taking further action. Chris can be contacted at:

**Quakers In Britain, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ;** email: [Chrisw@quaker.org.uk](mailto:Chrisw@quaker.org.uk); tel. 020 7663 1047 or via the Quaker website: [www.quaker.org.uk](http://www.quaker.org.uk).

South Edinburgh Friends also recommend the Friends of the Earth website, [www.foe-scotland.org.uk](http://www.foe-scotland.org.uk).

## The work of Quaker Life

*KATRINA McCREA, one of our AM reps on Quaker Life Representative Council, has provided this outline of the work done by QL staff, and of the help and support they offer. Email addresses are included of staff members with particular responsibilities.*

*Quaker Faith & Practice describes the work of Quaker Life Central Committee thus:*

**8.08** *Quaker Life Central Committee's purpose is to support and strengthen Quaker life throughout the yearly meeting, a remit which covers faith and practice: both spiritual nurture and the practical tasks required for the running of our Quaker meetings. It is responsible to Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees for support, advice and training in the following areas:*

- a. the right holding of meeting for worship and meetings for church affairs, including for those taking special responsibilities as clerks, for eldership, oversight and pastoral care;*
- b. other aspects of support for meetings, such as for meeting employees and trustees on compliance and good practice in Quaker employment, for librarians, for registering officers, for nominations work or in other ways;*
- c. spiritual development and religious learning, both with and for adults and children and young people, including membership matters, publications and providing opportunities to empower meetings and individual Friends so as to deepen their spiritual lives and refresh their sense of vitality;*
- d. the outreach activities of Friends in their meetings, and for those seeking information about Quakers.*

There are three key departments responsible for developing and delivering this work.

### ***Library***

The Library team look after the archives of the Society of Friends. The collections include books, periodicals, the archives of Britain Yearly Meeting, personal manuscripts, and the papers of many different Quaker organisations. It also holds visual materials such as photographs, paintings and museum objects. One of their key roles is to provide access to the collections to as wide an audience as possible. One of the way they do this is by running the Quaker Strong Rooms blog: <https://quakerstrongrooms.org/> and the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/libraryofthesocietyoffriends>.

The library staff work to keep the library open to visitors Tuesday to Friday, 10am–5pm, and welcome special visitors, recently including graduate trainee librarians from the Institute of Historical Research and ICS libraries and

Friends from Pontefract and Rugby meetings. There are regular displays in the library, the current one being of historic Quaker posters, and the staff also assist other groups looking to mount exhibitions bearing on Quaker history – such as the Imperial War Museum’s ‘People Power: Fighting for Peace’ which makes mention of Quakers.

The library work in partnership with colleagues in Friends House and at Woodbrooke on Library development and interpretation. They are currently working with Woodbrooke on the Joint Libraries Development Project. The library also archive current Quaker work and oversee data safety for BYM.

### *Ministry and Outreach*

Ministry and Outreach (M&O) upholds meetings as centres of worship and witness by supporting and resourcing post-holders in meetings and the wider community. M&O also works to make information about Quakerism easily available and help the growth of Quaker communities.

One form of M&O’s support for meetings is the Quaker Life Network, by which Friends stay connected to support each other – the network co-ordinates visits by experienced Friends to meeting and has a monthly newsletter containing news from BYM and Friends in the network. The network also supports specific clusters: the Conflict in Meetings cluster, the outreach cluster and many more. It continues to grow both in the number of Friends in the network, the number of email subscribers and the facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/QuakerLifeNetwork> The staff member to contact with any queries is Oliver Waterhouse ([oliverw@quaker.org.uk](mailto:oliverw@quaker.org.uk))

M&O also supports Quaker chaplains. Marleen Schepers has recently organised a chaplains’ retreat, and a recruitment drive for new chaplains in hospitals, prisons and universities. Quaker Life Representative Council is also overseen by the M&O team: this is a large, twice-yearly event, with representatives from each Area Meeting sharing news, learning about our work and helping Quaker Life reflect on and develop new ideas and initiatives to nourish and support the life of the Yearly Meeting. Recent gatherings have looked at topics such as the spiritual root of our witness to sustainability and the nourishing of gifts and service in meetings. Email Marleen at [marleens@quaker.org.uk](mailto:marleens@quaker.org.uk).

The M&O team is responsible for offering guidance, advice and support to meetings around safeguarding issues, including helping meetings with the process of applying for criminal records checks for those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Gill Sewell is the staff member to contact ([gills@quaker.org.uk](mailto:gills@quaker.org.uk)).

In order to make information about Quakers widely available, M&O has worked to have a Quaker presence at Greenbelt and the Hay Festival. The team also support the Quaker Centre at Friends House, and look after the Outreach inbox where they answer Quaker Questions and distribute information packs to enquirers wanting to know more about Quakerism. – on this too, Gill Sewell is the person to contact ([gills@quaker.org.uk](mailto:gills@quaker.org.uk))

Quaker Week is a major annual project, which calls for posters and resources, advice and ideas to meetings, and a national advertising campaign across a range of media. Increasingly this has meant improving Quakers' digital presence as well as continuing in helping Friends to tell the Quaker story and share their experience. Alistair Fuller, head of outreach development, oversees this work ([alistairf@quaker.org.uk](mailto:alistairf@quaker.org.uk)).

A new project starting soon looks at Engagement of Young Adult Quakers within the Society of Friends. – ([oliverw@quaker.org.uk](mailto:oliverw@quaker.org.uk))

### *Children and Young People's work*

The CYP team work to make children and young people a valued part of the Quaker community. CYP do this by producing a rich range of resources, running events for various age groups, supporting Junior Yearly Meeting and offering training for those working with young Quakers. They also offer support and guidance to meetings, to help them develop their work and engagement with children and young people.

CYP produce *Journeys in the Spirit*, which offers ideas, activities and approaches as a springboard for those working with children and young people in local and area meetings. It is published in two formats: a themed based issue and a topical activity – each on alternate months. CYP and M&O are working on a leaflet about Quaker testimonies for young people.

CYP are currently busy planning all the children's provision for Yearly Meeting Gathering and some other big events coming up like *Living Out Our Faith in the World* at Embercombe (April), Friends House Family Day (June) and Quaker Parent weekend (October) with M&O and Woodbrooke. See:

[cypadmin@quaker.org.uk](mailto:cypadmin@quaker.org.uk)

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/children-and-young-people>

### **Quaker Life Central Committee**

Our work as a department is discerned and directed by Quaker Life Central Committee, who are responsible for developing the strategic vision for our work, holding it to account and linking with Meeting for Sufferings, Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees and other national bodies.

## SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

### Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 18 March 2017 at Greenpark Community Centre, Polmont

#### 2017/03/01 Worship and Introductions

We began our business meeting with a period of worship.

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

**2017/03/02 The minutes of our last meeting**, held on 23 January, 2017 at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, have been signed and entered in the minute book.

#### 2017/03/03 Matters arising

*a) Review of Area Meeting library*

The review group, appointed by minute 2016/11/10, has asked to defer its report until Area Meeting on 15 May, 2017. This request was agreed by Area Meeting clerks.

*b) Marriage of Sarah Martin and Calum Macuisdean*

We record that the marriage took place on 4 March, 2017 in Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House and that the Certificate of Accomplishment has been received.

*c) Militarisation in society [See correction at end (page 35)]*

#### 2017/03/04 Decisions made by Between-Meetings Procedure

We record the following:

***Training Courses***

*31/01/17: We appoint by between-meetings procedure Alison and Peter Moore of Tweeddale Local Meeting, to attend the course on Exploring Oversight at Woodbrooke, 8-10 May, 2017. We ask our treasurer to pay their expenses.*

*06/02/17: We appoint by between-meetings procedure Simon Jackson of Central Edinburgh Local Meeting, to attend the course on Exploring Eldership at Woodbrooke, 8-10 May, 2017. We ask our treasurer to pay his expenses.*

*Elizabeth Allen, Clerk South East Scotland Area Meeting*

*Alastair Cameron, Assistant Clerk South East Scotland Area Meeting*

#### 2017/03/05 Membership matters

**Applications for Membership**

**a) and b)** *[Two applications were received, and visitors appointed]*

## **Transfer of Membership – out**

**Lucy Zawadzka** of Penicuik Local Meeting has asked that her membership be transferred to Cornwall Area Meeting, where she now attends Come-to-Good Local Meeting. We ask our Assistant Clerk (Membership) to send a Certificate of Transfer to Cornwall Area Meeting.

## **Deaths**

We record the death of Tessa Ransford at St. Columba's Hospice, Edinburgh on 2 September, 2015. Tessa had attended South Edinburgh Meeting.

## **2017/03/06 Nominations Committee Report**

### **1. Appointments**

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

#### *Service on other Quaker bodies*

To serve from July 2016 to end of June 2017, (re-appointment):

- (a) General Meeting for Scotland Agenda Function Group –  
**Alison Burnley**, South Edinburgh

To serve from July 2016 to end of June 2019, (2<sup>nd</sup> triennium):

- (b) General Meeting for Scotland Nominations Function Group –  
**Rachel Frith**, Central Edinburgh

To serve from April 2017 to end of March 2018, (re-appointment):

- (c) Northern Friends Peace Board – **Alan Frith**, Central Edinburgh

#### *Service to Area Meeting*

To serve from April 2017 to end of March 2020:

- (d) Elder – **Rachel Frith**, Central Edinburgh, (2<sup>nd</sup> triennium)  
 (e) Elder – **April Middleton**, Portobello & Musselburgh  
 (f) Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Jim Balfour**, South Edinburgh  
 (g) Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Jackie Slater**, East Lothian  
 (h) Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Lynne Barty**, Central Edinburgh  
 (i) Health and Safety Officer – **Andrew Hajducki**,  
Central Edinburgh, (2<sup>nd</sup> triennium)  
 (j) Safeguarding Coordinator – **Madeleine Harding**,  
Central Edinburgh, (3<sup>rd</sup> triennium)  
 (k) Trustee – **Phil Lucas**, East Lothian  
 (l) Edinburgh Meeting House Management Committee –  
**Phil Lucas**, East Lothian

- (m) Edinburgh Meeting House Window Display –  
**Jane Angel**, Central Edinburgh
- (n) Edinburgh Meeting House Window Display –  
**Tony Peach**, Central Edinburgh, (2<sup>nd</sup> triennium)

We appoint these Friends accordingly.

## **2. Release from Service**

David Hume (Tweeddale) has asked to be released from service as an Area Meeting Elder. We agree to this request, with immediate effect and thank the David for his service.

## **3. Completion of service**

We thank the following Friends for their service to Area Meeting, which they will complete at the end of March:

Janet Grimwade, Central Edinburgh and Mary Woodward, Portobello & Musselburgh, as Elders;

Margaret Suddaby, Penicuik, April Middleton, Portobello & Musselburgh and Sue Freshwater, South Edinburgh; Pastoral Care & Oversight Team;

Brian Mayes, Central Edinburgh, as a Trustee;

David Sterratt, Central Edinburgh, Safeguarding Coordinator (job share)

Mary Jane Elton, Portobello & Musselburgh, Advocate for Children and Young People.

We thank Nominations Committee for the work it does on our behalf.

## **2017/03/07 Tabular Statement for the year ending December, 2016**

Richard Williams, our Assistant Clerk (membership), has presented the Tabular statement for 2016. Copies have been sent to the Recording Clerk's Office in Friends House and to the General Meeting for Scotland Administrator.

We accept the Tabular Statement for 2016 and note the following:

1. The overall number of members is 255, a rise of 1 since 2015.
2. The total numbers of attenders is 347, which includes 73 children not in membership. This is a decrease from 381 since 2015, but includes 2 more children.
3. Central Edinburgh Meeting continues to have 40 % of Area Meeting members and 50 % of recorded attenders. South Edinburgh is the next largest meeting.
4. Polmont had the largest proportional increase in members (15 from 13).

We note that an adjustment was made to the membership figures submitted by our local meetings to reconcile them with General Meeting for Scotland (GMS) records. In 20 cases a Friend had been recorded by more than one local meeting, either within this area meeting or elsewhere. On the GMS list, around 12 names are held of those with whom contact appears to have been lost.

We note that attenders at midweek meeting at 7 Victoria Terrace are counted within Central Edinburgh. We ask the AM Clerks and the Assistant Clerk (Membership) to check for the 2017 statement that attenders who come only to meetings not listed as local meetings, such as the North Edinburgh worship group, are included.

We thank Richard for his work in preparing the tabular Statement; also the GMS Administrator, and those in local meetings who have assisted Richard.

#### **2017/03/08 Marriage of Ann Kerr and James Friend**

Our Registering Officer, Rufus Reade has received an application for marriage within South East Scotland Area Meeting from Ann Megan Kerr and James Anthony Ritson Friend. Ann is a member of West Scotland Area Meeting, and James is not in membership. A Meeting for Clearness took place in Glasgow on 16 March, 2016 and we have received a minute of this meeting.

We appoint a meeting for worship for the solemnisation of the marriage in Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, on 27 July, 2017 at 3.00 pm, and ask Area Meeting Elders to bring forward the names of two Friends to serve as elders on this occasion.

#### **2017/03/09 Meeting for Sufferings report focused on fracking**

The full report of Meeting for Sufferings held on 4 February has been published in *Sesame*.

Today we have focused on Meeting for Sufferings minute *MfS/17/02/07 Fracking for shale gas*, the text of which was sent out with the draft agenda, and Kate Arnot has spoken to it.

Kate noted that the issue of fracking had first come to Meeting for Sufferings in 2013. She quoted Genesis 1, with its repetition that God saw what was created was good; and Job 12:8: ‘...speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee’. She made clear that the stance of Britain Yearly Meeting expressed by Meeting for Sufferings is rooted in our Canterbury commitment of 2011, and noted that the campaign for climate justice is part of wider campaigns for economic justice and equality.

She has drawn attention to a consultation being conducted by Labour MSP Claudia Beamish, which might lead to a private member's bill to abolish fracking.

Our Friend Jessica Paterson has spoken on behalf of Polmont Friends, saying that Polmont Friends are united in the conviction that devastating global temperature rises can only be dealt with if we stop burning fossil fuels. Fracking and unconventional gas extraction methods are fundamentally incompatible with this view. These resources must stay in the ground. We should be putting all our efforts into developing our green energy technologies: wind, wave and solar. Polmont Friends have engaged with the fracking debate to differing degrees but are committed to individually responding to Scottish Government consultation. Some Friends have found it useful to refer to the dedicated Friends of the Earth Scotland website [www.stopfracking.scot](http://www.stopfracking.scot), which gives information on the consultation and covers the threats to climate and to human health.

We note that fracking is of particular significance among the different forms of unconventional extraction because of the potential effect on the water table.

We encourage individuals to respond to the Scottish Government consultation on unconventional oil and gas at

<https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/energy-and-climate-change-directorate/fracking-unconventional-oil-and-gas/consultation/subpage.2016-07-07.1474135251/>.

We refer again to the information on the BYM website, and encourage Friends to refer to that in participating in the debate. [SEE PAGE 24]

We encourage local meetings to consider this further, and to bring appropriate minutes to a future Area Meeting.

### **2017/03/10 General Meeting for Scotland**

#### **Proposed dates for General Meeting in 2018/19**

10 March, 2018	South East Scotland AM
9 June, 2018	North Scotland AM
15 September, 2018	West Scotland AM
17 November, 2018	East Scotland AM
9 March, 2019	West Scotland AM

We are asked to consider these dates, and we will return to this matter at our next Area Meeting.

## 2017/03/11 Friedgard Adams memorial minute

We have received and note the following minute from Central Fife Local Meeting.

### *Friedgard Adams memorial minute*

**30<sup>th</sup> December 1919 - 21<sup>st</sup> December 2017**

*Friedgard Adams was of Swiss and German parentage. She spent her childhood in Stuttgart, Germany, before moving to Switzerland, to study and to learn the country's other main languages, French and Italian. Then, while living in Sweden, she met and married her husband. They started their family in England before more moving to Fife, her husband George's home.*

*Friedgard began attending Central Fife local meeting at the time of its inception in the late 1960s. She joined the Society of Friends in the early 1970s and became a well loved member for almost five decades. Friedgard, who was very warm and caring, used to minister frequently and was the Meeting's diligent correspondent for almost forty of those years. While still physically able, she was also a regular attender during most of that period at both Area and General Meetings in Scotland.*

*Friedgard's determination was remarkable. Even well into her nineties she still continued serious gardening – including the maintenance of a most splendid composting system – and the ladder from the hallway of her single-storey home to the attic was very often left in place so that she could climb up and down it as part of her resolve to keep moving. Visiting her during this period was uplifting. While happy in the love of her caring family, she was content to spend her days mostly alone, sitting in her often sunny kitchen. She always had a wide welcoming smile for visitors, and a disposition to chat.*

*Friedgard will be remembered for her enthusiasm and friendliness and, right up to her death, her concern for all individuals in the Meeting. She will also not be forgotten for her provision of home-made baking, including celebrating the birthdays of all those attending the Meeting with a small much appreciated fruit cake with a candle surreptitiously extracted from her bag after the end of Meeting for Worship. Also, for many years, she was accompanied to the local and other meetings by her beloved small Chihuahua dogs sitting quietly on her lap.*

*Friedgard will assuredly be missed by her international family whom she visited annually in Canada and the USA until a very short time before her lack of mobility slowed her down too much to manage the very long flights. A most remarkable and loveable soul.*

**Central Fife Friends  
9<sup>th</sup> March 2017**

### 2017/03/12 Correspondence and notices

- a) A Clerking Meeting for Learning will take place at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House on 29 April, 2017 from 10.30 am to 5.00 pm. It will be facilitated by Janet Scott, tutor for Woodbrooke on the Road.

All who have a clerking or convening role in our local meetings and committees will be invited to attend, along with those Friends who might be interested in clerking in the future. Further information is available from the Area Meeting clerk.

- b) Copies of the annual report and accounts for the Northern Friends Summer Shindig 2016 have been tabled today. We are pleased to note that it continues to be a successful and well-supported event for young Friends.

Bronwen Currie has thanked us for our ongoing financial support for the Shindig.

- c) The QPSW Economics, Sustainability and Peace Team have sent a card congratulating Area Meeting on becoming a living wage accredited employer [see page 35].

### 2017/03/13 What we did today

In South East Scotland Area Meeting we are a community of all ages, with gifts and interests to share. We welcome this opportunity to spend time with each other. Today we have worshipped together and we have shared stories of our witness. We have welcomed Daniel Cullen, who spoke to us about his time as a programme assistant with the Human Rights and Refugee Programme at the Quaker United Nations Office Geneva. We are inspired by this work.

Our children have been busy. They have been thinking about refugees and what it might be like to pack your case to leave home. They have heard stories about the *Kindertransport*. They have shown us the cards they made to welcome refugees to Scotland.

At the close of our meeting, we are celebrating this occasion with a ceilidh and tea.

We thank Polmont Meeting for being our hosts today.

### 2017/03/14 Closing minute

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

Central Edinburgh 10	Central Fife 1	East Lothian 1	Kelso 1	Penicuik -
Polmont 7 + 1A + 4C	Portobello & Musselburgh 6 + 1A + 4C	South Edinburgh 4 + 1A	Tweeddale 1 + 1A	

We next meet at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, on Monday, 15 May, 2017 from 7.00 to 9.00 pm

(Signed)

**Elizabeth Allen, Clerk**

***29/03/2017 Correction to minutes of Area Meeting held on 18th March, 2017.***

*Some inaccuracies in minute 2017/03/03 Matters arising (c) have been brought to the attention of Area Meeting clerks. To correct these, we agree to the following amended minute, which will replace the original in the archived copy.*

**2017/03/03 Matters arising**

- c. Militarisation in society** (minutes 2014/10/06, 2014/11/04a, 2015/01/04a, 2015/02/06, 2015/04/04a, 2015/05/04, 2015/08/04a, 2015/10/05a, 2015/11/04a refer)

The joint Scottish Quaker/Forces Watch petition to the Scottish Parliament, calling for greater scrutiny, guidance and consultation on armed forces visits to schools in Scotland, is still under consideration by the Public Petitions Committee. We note that on 2 March the Committee agreed to invite John Swinney, Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills, and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) to give evidence at a future meeting, and to accept the offer of a briefing from the Ministry of Defence.

***South East Scotland Area Meeting has been accredited by the Living Wage Foundation as a Living Wage employer.***

*Quakers believe in building a society in which everyone is paid enough to lead a fulfilling life, and are therefore strong supporters of the Living Wage, which we pay our managers and wardens at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House. However, until last year we were not paying our cleaners a Living Wage: they were employed by the firm of contract cleaners we used – employing cleaners directly would entail problems of arranging holiday and sick cover. When we discovered the Living Wage Foundation's employer search facility, we were able to locate a Living Wage firm of cleaners, Edinburgh Commercial Cleaning Limited, and finally make the step to being a Living Wage employer.*

***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
--------------------------------------	--------------

**First Sunday in the Month**

Penicuik: Valleyfield House, 17 High St., Penicuik <i>Children welcome, bring and share lunch</i>	11.00 am
--	----------

**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 <a href="mailto:sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk">sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk</a> for details	1 – 1.30 pm
--	-------------

**Second Sunday in the Month**

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
--	----------

**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
--	---------

**Fifth Sunday in the Month**

Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am
--	----------

**Last Sunday in the Month**

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
--	----------

**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](mailto: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.