

The Northern Quaker

Summer / Autumn 2015

North Scotland Area Meeting



Lighting of the candle from Hiroshima

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Area Meetings for 2015 & 2016

- 31st October 2015 Aberdeen
- 20th February 2016 Inverness.

General Meetings for Scotland in 2015

- November 14th/15th 2015: Edinburgh (Residential)

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Welcome to the latest edition of the Northern Quaker. Due to circumstances and bulk of material, I have decided to incorporate the Summer and Autumn editions.

There are two reports from Sufferings which also contains a briefing on migration into Europe. As well as some of the usual reports, including some challenges in Juli's NFPB report, we also have a very well researched and interesting paper from David James on Quaker burial sites.

If you are receiving this in the printed edition, please consider if you might wish to switch to the email version which contains coloured photographs as well as a "clickable" contents list for easy navigation and hyperlinks in the various articles. If you wish for your name to be transferred from the print to the email list, please send the address to harrydhorsley@gmail.com.

As usual, please send contributions for future editions in any form to myself: Harry Horsley, 11 Cottown of Balgownie, Aberdeen AB23 8JQ, harrydhorsley@gmail.com.

Announcements [^contents](#)

Norman Peacock died on August 10th aged 89 following a short illness. A Meeting for Worship to celebrate Norman's life was held on Friday 21 August in Baljaffray Parish Church, Bearsden. He had a green burial in the meadow at Langfaulds Cemetery, a mile to the west of the church.

Meeting for Sufferings, 28 March 2015 [^contents](#)

As well as routine business, the agenda included 'Asylum Seekers: Destitution'; and 'Islamophobia'. Also various reports: from representatives

to other European Yearly Meetings; from the Long-Term Framework working group; and from Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture (Q-CAT).

Q-CAT holds a concern on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting, within the oversight (at present) of three Area Meetings – two in England and one in Wales. All our AMs are encouraged to take up this concern as they are able. Could there also be a role for GM for Scotland?

Reports were received from representatives to six other European Yearly Meetings in 2014 (Belgium & Luxembourg, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland). The papers sent out in advance of Sufferings included these reports, and very helpfully they also included 'preview' copies of the epistles from the same Yearly Meetings as well as from Denmark and Norway, all of which will be formally received at Yearly Meeting next month. Some of these European meetings are very small, and some new, but their epistles are well-founded and confident. One phrase recurring among them is 'friends of Friends', in place of our 'attenders'. It seems there may be a group numbering about half a dozen meeting in the manner of Friends in Iceland. One Friend rose to tell the meeting, by the way, that of Iceland's entire navy of three ships, one-third are deployed full-time in the Mediterranean, rescuing migrants.

As I am writing this, I hear that some five thousand migrants have been rescued from the Mediterranean in the last three days. There are questions about where they will go, and whether the UK could receive more refugees from Syria, for example. However, the particular focus brought to Sufferings was the support of asylum seekers who find themselves in the UK, and especially of those whose application has been refused. This concern was brought by minutes from five Area Meetings, and prompted by a statement of the Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network (QARN). The use of enforced destitution as an instrument of government is indefensible; the High Court has ruled that the low level of support for asylum seekers is unlawful. We have been here before, and it is work in progress. The meeting felt that a public statement would be useful for carrying the work forward, and asked

Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) Central Committee to bring a draft statement to a future meeting.

In relation to 'Islamophobia', Friends shared examples of bridge-building, and the meeting encouraged Friends and local meetings, as well as the Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR) to continue this work. It can involve risk, as BYM Trustees and Friends House staff are well aware when letting meeting space to groups that might not be welcome elsewhere. For example, *The Friend* reported recently on Friends House response to criticism for letting the Large Meeting House to MEND (Muslim Engagement and Development). A policy of hospitality is implemented with great care, and endorsed by Meeting for Sufferings.

The proposed Long-Term Framework for 2015–20 is in the hands of a working group who are focusing primarily on how we work rather than what we do (although the particulars of Quaker work will be recognised). The group will produce a final report later this year.

The last 15 minutes of the day were set aside for reflection on the past triennium, now drawing to a close. I was struck by the ministry of one Friend giving thanks for all the support that has enabled her to serve on Sufferings, a possibility that she remembers having ruled out some ten years ago, on account of visual disability. This for her was an example of disability equality in practice, beyond all expectation.

Please feel free to ask Jane Booth or me if you have any questions. Sufferings papers, minutes, etc., including links, are at www.quaker.org.uk/sufferings

David Sanders, Skye Local Meeting

Meeting for Sufferings, 4th July 2015 [^contents](#)

This was the first meeting of a new triennium for Sufferings, following the Yearly Meeting held in May. A large part of the morning was taken up with induction, learning about the meeting, how it works and its place in Quaker life in Britain. Minutes were received from YM, particularly those addressing Sufferings. Other business included some routine items and receiving minutes from AMs, which will be returned to.

Call for equality

Yearly Meeting has also begun a cycle of three years, when Friends are exploring how we live out our faith in the world. In a 'Call for equality' (minute 36), Yearly Meeting reminds each of us that 'Our worship and action spring from the same source'. It asks Meeting for Sufferings

to take the work on social and economic injustice forward, co-ordinating the work of local and area meetings who might wish to become more deeply involved, and encouraging the deep spiritual and intellectual searching that could underpin a 'true social order' for our age

There is clearly a longstanding Quaker concern for housing, which will be developed. Sufferings reflected on the 'Call for equality', and voiced 'a deep disquiet about housing, economic inequality and climate change, recognising their inter-relatedness'.

Refugees and asylum-seekers

Two minutes concerned the plight of refugees. Particularly helpful in summarizing some of the issues was a statement from the Conference of European Churches (CEC), brought to Sufferings by QPSW (see below).

Briefing note on migration into Europe/deaths in the Mediterranean

As minute QPSWCC 15/12 states, this is a very complex issue. QPSW does not currently have the resources, expertise, long-term involvement or on-

the-ground experience to work substantively on it, though limited amounts of media and parliamentary work can be offered.

As well as the paper forwarded by East Kent AM, I hope Friends may find the statement below helpful. It was adopted on 3 June by the Governing Board of the Conference of European Churches (CEC). CEC is a fellowship of some 114 Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican and Old Catholic Churches from all countries of Europe, plus 40 national councils of churches and organisations in partnership. CEC was founded in 1959. It has offices in Brussels and Strasbourg. BYM is not in direct membership but has an indirect link through its membership of the ecumenical bodies of Britain, Scotland, England and Wales. The statement has not yet been considered by QPSWCC, but it has been warmly welcomed by members of the informal group Quaker Asylum and Refugees Network (QARN).

Helen Drewery, General Secretary, QPSW
2 July 2015

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it (Hebrews 13: 2)

Statement on external borders of the EU especially the Mediterranean

The Conference of European Churches (CEC) expresses its deep concern about the repeated loss of life in the Mediterranean. CEC deplores that for over two decades tens of thousands of migrants have drowned in their attempts to reach safety or find a more dignified life in Europe. Conflicts on the doorsteps of Europe have led to ever more migrants fleeing within and beyond their region. Many are trying to cross the Mediterranean to Italy or Malta, others climb barbed wire border fences in Ceuta in Melilla or cross to the Greek Aegean islands or Cyprus. Less known are flight routes across Eastern external borders of Europe, but observations from the field suggest that human suffering and death might also be a reality here. Smugglers are able to carry out their shameful lucrative business thanks to European migration policies. These policies, make it practically impossible to come

legally to Europe even for those in the greatest need of protection. Political reactions to the crisis have often focussed on stopping people rather than prioritising rescue of life. Using military means to stop irregular migration is presented as a priority in EU documents. Little has been proposed by policy makers to allow for regular and safe migration. Reception and welcoming of those who arrive in Europe is still a task left to a few European states. At the same time churches and civil society organisations have in many places mobilised remarkable support for those arriving on European shores. They are extending welcome on the island of Lampedusa, giving legal advice on Greek islands, offer church sanctuary in Germany or housing in Sweden, and in many places shelter those having survived dangerous journeys.

CEC recognises that ending the unacceptable and shameful situation of deaths at EU borders will require a multifaceted response and include short- and long-term measures. The most desirable situation would be that no one is forced to leave their home country.

CEC therefore wishes to reiterate its message of December 2014 (<http://www.ceceurope.org/index.php?id=1774>) on the situation in the Middle East and commends the peace-building efforts undertaken in the region. CEC also welcomes further efforts which would reduce harmful effect of EU policies on arms or on trade, for livelihoods in other regions of the world.

CEC is however mindful that seeking protection in another country or even another part of the world will be a necessity for many people for the foreseeable future. CEC therefore urges:

Churches in Europe:

- To continue to pray for those who flee conflict, war and destruction
- To commemorate those who have lost their lives on their way to Europe and use material developed for the annual day of commemoration proposed by CEC and CCME for 21 June 2015
- To continue to work on addressing the root causes of forced displacement

- To build up capacity to welcome refugees. We commend the examples given by churches in the Mediterranean and elsewhere
- To provide places where fears about the arrival of strangers can be discussed and constructive ways of living together can be found
- To cooperate in changing policies in the EU and associated states from migration deterrence to those putting the human at the heart of migration policies. This could happen in part by cooperating with CCME in the “safe passage” project
- To address national governments and responsible authorities in EU member states in order to support such human centred migration policies.

European institutions:

- To develop and adequately finance fully fledged search-and-rescue operations in the Mediterranean, carried out by qualified specialised staff
- To refrain from militarising European migration policy including through plans to bombard boats potentially used by smugglers
- To put in place policies which enable safe and legal pathways into Europe including more resettlement places, issuing of humanitarian visas, lifting of visa requirements for persons fleeing from conflict zones (e.g., Syria or Eritrea), and easier family reunification for persons in need of international protection or humanitarian admission
- To support efforts of countries in the Middle East and other conflict regions as well as UNHCR to adequately support persons seeking international protection
- To establish a system of solidarity between EU member states for the hosting of asylum applicants and refugees, which takes into consideration the wishes of asylum applicants and refugees
- To refrain from efforts to put the responsibility of for the protection of refugees destined for Europe on non- EU countries
- To advance plans for an accessible and known system of legal migration in countries of origin, thereby providing viable and humane alternatives to smuggling.

David Sanders, Skye Local Meeting

Residential Area Meeting, Pulcarden Abbey 21st - 23rd August 2015

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Where Planners see an empty space, Quakers and monks see a place of peace. We listen for the still, small voice while the monks sing, pray and chant. In our different ways we send our peaceful influence out into the world where it is translated into action.

This weekend in Pluscarden thirty five Quakers from the North of Scotland met and created a temporary working community together. We started from shared silence and moved from there to consider our heritage, our responsibilities to the world today and the legacy we wish to leave in the future. Not that we put it so explicitly, but those seemed to me to be the themes we were working with.

As a day visitor I joined the group after it had begun the previous evening. I was met with a warm welcome, so many familiar faces, and one or two new people whom I enjoyed starting to get to know.

In Meeting for Worship for Business we looked at practical issues; how to support our clerks and make their role more sustainable, and how to prepare people for this and other roles in the future. We want to link Local Meetings and Area Meeting more fully so that everyone feels a sense of belonging to, and responsibility for, our Area Meeting; we hope to introduce new enquirers more effectively to what it means to be a Quaker.

We heard from our Quaker Life representatives about working with conflict, and they brought this to life with an entertaining and insightful role play. I would have liked to hear more about what happened in Meeting for Sufferings, as I see this as one of the main places where Quakers decide on practical action as a group, but I will have to wait to read the written report.

We discussed the Quaker burial grounds in Aberdeen. These contain graves, often without headstones, of some of the earliest Scottish Quakers, many of

whom were imprisoned in the Tollbooth; people who risked their lives and gave up their liberty to sustain the Society of Friends which we have inherited. I wondered, what would those early Friends have made of us? Would they recognise us as Quakers? And if I had lived then, would I have felt inspired to be one of them?

The discussion about the burial grounds brought out differing priorities for the Quaker Trust. Preserving our heritage was crucial to some people present. The graveyards could become a focus for outreach. A few of us would like to be buried in Kinmuck burial ground. Others were more concerned about the needs of current times, feeling we should use our Trust to provide funding for people to attend meetings and do Quaker work, rather than committing to ongoing maintenance of stones and walls. Others focussed on the future; will we hand on a thriving bank account for ongoing work, or will we spend it all now because there is such a need in our world? These different views could cause conflict, and there was certainly heartfelt emotion involved, but I saw Friends taking the time to listen to each other and trying to take account of all these priorities. The discernment process goes on; the Trustees will meet, more of us will visit the burial grounds, and we will look for other possible sources of funding and support. Whatever decision is finally made, it will be reached carefully, taking all the issues into account.

In the afternoon Mairi Campbell-Jack spoke inspiringly about her role as Scottish Parliamentary Liaison Officer. She talked about the insidious growth of militarism in schools, and looked at how our Quaker view of working for peace is likely to be received by the various political parties. She seemed able to thrive in a world of ever-changing politics, keeping her priorities steady and working with Quakers to respond appropriately to issues as they occur. I felt she had an impressive grasp of a wide range of complex issues, and I loved her final reference to Oxfam who measure success in a country by its Gross National Happiness rather than its Gross National Product.

While we talked with Mairi, the children were engaged in an exciting range of activities. On our return to St Scholastica's we were shown a beautiful

mermaid chalked on the path, with long flowing hair and a multicoloured tail. Beside her was a boat bobbing along on the waves. And the children had worked together to create a model village which functioned well without money. It had wind turbines, an ice-cream parlour and a pizza palace, and a relaxing hammock by the village green and pond. All their needs were met, with space for everyone.

On Sunday we concluded the Business Meeting, discussing among other things the future of our annual residential weekend at Pluscarden. We considered the possibility of other venues, at other times of year, wondering how to attract more young families. Meanwhile we will book Pluscarden for next year. But in an extra agenda item we learned that there is a danger that the Pluscarden valley may be used for a four-lane bypass. Which brings us back to my initial thought, that Planners do not see what we see in this beautiful valley.

We finished, in silence and sunlight, with Meeting for Worship, where there was a deep sense of gratitude for the weekend, and then we shared lunch together. At the end I spoke to a few people, asking them what they would be taking away with them. All the answers were along similar lines, of having felt a warm sense of support and belonging, appreciating good food and shared work, and enjoying the sense of peace in the place.

Finally, although I was not at Epilogue on Saturday night I was kindly given a copy of the piece that was read. It is by Martha Graham, the twentieth century innovative dancer and choreographer, and it seems very apt for us today.

LIFE FORCE

There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening that is translated through you into action and because there is only one of you in all of time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and... it will be lost. The world will not have it. It is not your business to determine how good it is, nor how valuable, nor how it compares

with other expressions. It is your business to keep it yours, clearly and directly. To keep the channel open.

Lynden Easterbrook, Forres LM

Aberdeen Quaker Burial Grounds; A Report [^contents](#)

This report arises from the following Area Meeting minute; *Minute 9th May 2015, 22/15: 'We ask David James to liaise with Aberdeen Friends to clarify how we will meet our responsibilities outlined by Quaker Faith and Practice and report back to a future Meeting. We also ask him to liaise with Marion Strachan and Paul Burton, General Meeting for Scotland Archivist to clarify the historical and legal background to these burial grounds.'*

Documents and articles.

John Barclay, a descendent of Robert Barclay the 'Apologist', unearthed, in 1826, two manuscripts; the '*Diary of Alexander Jaffrey*' and also '*a Brief Historical Account of the Rise Progress and Persecution of the people called Quakers in the North of Scotland.*' The latter was written by Alexander Skene in 1672 at the request of the Aberdeen Monthly Meeting. John Barclay then published an annotated version of these manuscripts.

An account of the origin of Quakers in Aberdeen is provided by William C. Braithwaite in '*The Second Period of Quakerism*' published in 1919, ps.328f.

A booklet published when BYM came to Aberdeen in 1989, '*Quakers in Scotland; An anthology of the thoughts and Activities of the Religious Society of Friends past and Present*', contains a number of relevant short articles including Delia Seager's '*The early period in Aberdeen in Quakers in Scotland*' and an unsigned '*Kinmuck; a safe refuge from persecution*'.

A detailed and scholarly study of the early history of Kinmuck Meeting is found in '*The Kinmuck Meeting-house a Seventeenth-century scandal?*

Aberdeen University Review 45:8. 369-379, 1974, by Christopher J.R. Armstrong. There are photocopies of two articles in the Aberdeen archives, *The Quaker Colony at Kinmuck*, by May Jenkins and *Quaker Burial grounds* by Hamish Milne.

The Start of the Aberdeen and the Kinmuck Meetings

Aberdeen Meeting owes its origin to the preaching of the itinerant Quakers, William Dewsbury, John Burnyeat and his companion John Grave. There is uncertainty about the date of Dewsbury's visit. Delia Seager gives the year 1662 from a reference in the '*Brief Historical Account*'. However Braithwaite gives good reasons that all three, Dewsbury, Burnyeat and Grave visited Aberdeen in 1658. The initial response to their visit apparently was disappointing but in 1662 Alexander Jaffrey and several other leading citizens were convinced and the Aberdeen Meeting became firmly established from that time on.

The Jaffrey family had purchased Kingswells House in 1593. Alexander the 3rd Laird, born 1614, was one of the leading magistrates of Aberdeen, elected Provost on four occasions. He was instrumental in setting up a House of Correction under a patent from Charles the First in 1636. However in 1638, he, along with his father and other public figures, signed the National Covenant. After the execution of Charles the First, many of the Scottish covenant party desired to see the return of the exiled Charles the Second. Jaffrey took part in the Battle of Dunbar 1650 a battle between the Scottish Covenanters and Cromwell's forces. Jaffrey was injured and taken captive. He was well treated by the Commonwealth forces and along with some other Scots, changed sides and supported Cromwell. He had 'frequent conference' with Cromwell becoming MP for Aberdeen in Cromwell's Parliament. He was chosen as one of the six Scottish Commissioners who visited the exiled Charles the Second, persuading him to sign the Covenant. He renounced Presbyterianism in 1652, supporting Independency as the preferred form of church government. After the return of the Monarchy in 1660, he was held for treason from 1661 to 1662.

Returning to Aberdeen, in 1662, he was not in position to resume public office and at the end of 1662, he professed Quakerism. Early in 1663, whilst retaining the Kingswells estate, he moved to the greater seclusion of Inverurie where he held Meetings in his house. From that time, Quakers met at a number of houses and farms in the Inverurie area, including Lethentie Mill, home of Robert Burnett, Ardiharrald home of Nancy Sim a woman of 'low estate', Aquhorthies House, home of Alexander Forbes of Aquhorthies and Lethentie, (1625-1681) (imprisoned 1666), Paties Mill, Tillykerrie and Colliehill Mill. In 1662, a leading figure, the itinerant Quaker, Patrick Livingstone, moved to nearby Kinmuck and started the Kinmuck Meeting. In 1680, John Robertson moved to Kinmuck. Subsequently a Meeting House and School were built at Kinmuck which then became the centre for Quakers in the area, though Meetings continued at Lethentie Mill for a time.

The Kingswells Burial Ground

An early minute from Aberdeen Meeting reads *'It pleased the Lord to remove out the body our dear and precious Friend Alexander Jaffrey, at his own house at Kingswells on the 7th of the 5th month 1673 who was buried in his own burial ground on the 8th day.* His wife Sarah died 3 months after and was buried with her husband. Alexander's son Andrew was convinced in the same year as his father's death. He suffered much persecution and imprisonment. The minute after his death reads; *'He breathed his last on the 1st of the second month 1726 in great peace and full assurance of an everlasting portion among the followers of the Lamb; his remains being interred in his own burial ground on the family estate at Kingswells'.* At the time of Andrew's death, the burial ground is regarded as the private burial ground of the Jaffrey family. The burials at Kingswells were not included in the list of Quaker burials compiled in 1880. However a list of those buried at Kingswells is given by Hamish Milne in his *'Quaker Burial Grounds'*; Alexander Jaffrey and his wife, Sarah Cant, Barbara Johnston related to an Aberdeen Physician, James Forbes, Bervie, Daniel Jaffrey youngest child of Andrew, Lilius Jaffrey, eldest daughter of Andrew, Alexander Skene of Newtyle, Baillie of Aberdeen, Andrew Jaffrey himself in 1726, John Scott

merchant, convinced in 1662 and the last recorded burial in 1808, was of Robert Milom, a weaver.

The ground was visited on 18th July 2015 by Ann and Colin Millar and myself. The new Western bypass comes within 100yards of the ground and getting to it involved climbing over the excavations for the new road. The ground itself is a rectangle approximately 25 yards by 18 yards. It contains mature trees chiefly beech with a central conifer; the trees are marked with tree preservation labels. It is surrounded by a drystone wall around 4-5 feet high. The wall was repaired by the North of Scotland Quaker Trust recently, to prevent entry of stock so that there is now no entrance. We gained access by climbing up stones at one corner of the ground. The small sign listing those buried remains fixed to a tree. The new sign has not yet been installed.

There has been discussion between developers and the owner of the surrounding land, John Sheran, about extending the nearby business park. From my own observations, the burial ground is on the top of a steep slope and with its trees forms a prominent landmark. The enclosed trees are covered by a tree preservation order, I would imagine that the planning authorities would wish to see the burial ground preserved.

Kinmuck Burial ground

The history of the Kinmuck Meeting house and burial ground received scholarly attention in the article by Christopher Armstrong, who bought the old Meeting House alias 'Friends Cottage', in 1967. The property, owned by the Quakers from the 17th century, lay both to the north and south of the road. To the north lay Allan's Croft, latterly 'Bankhead', an area of about 2 and a half acres, which includes the burial ground next to the road. South of the road was the Meeting House and school with an adjacent small cottage and stables. The Meeting House was originally two storeys. The schoolmaster lived in Allan's Croft. Armstrong was able to study the original deeds for both Allan's Croft (9.2.1680) and the Meeting House (1709/1710), then in possession of the owner of Bankhead i.e. Allen's Croft. The ground south of the road was not purchased by Quakers until 1710, but Armstrong found

good evidence that Quakers leased the ground south of the road and built a Meeting House and school there prior to 1710 most probably soon after 1680. The school was the first Quaker school in Scotland. John Roberson, its first master was the person who bought Allen's Croft in 1680.



The active persecution of Quakers largely ceased in 1679, so it is likely that the school and Meeting House were built in 1680/81. This is supported by the evidence that Bishop Haliburton agitated for the demolition of the Meeting House and School after his appointment in 1682. By that time Kinmuck had become the centre for Quaker activity in the area and from 1681 the register of Quaker Marriages was brought from Lethentie Mill where previous weddings had taken place. It is not clear exactly when burials started at Kinmuck. Previous burials had been at a ground at Aquhorthies House from the 1670s. There is then a gap in the records, the first recorded burial at

Kinmuck being Anna Smith daughter of William Smith of Hillhead, Lethentie in 1709.

Kinmuck, recent history

I examined the Aberdeen Meeting minutes from 1937-1957. On 1.9.40, concern was expressed about the state of the fabric of the Kinmuck Meeting House. This apparently led to the sale of the Meeting House which Armstrong says, took place in 1940. On 30.11.41 the Kinmuck papers were sent to Aberdeen. On 10.9.42 and 10.1.43, Friends were worried for welfare of James Stewart who occupied Allan's Croft who had become frail. He had lived there with his wife for many years until her death in 1940. He died in 1946 and On 23.3.48 representatives were appointed to attend The Two Month Meeting on 3.4.48 which was to consider the disposal of the croft.

I visited Kinmuck on 17th July 2015 when I made measurement for a plan of the ground. I visited again on the following day with Ann and Colin Millar. The ground is an irregular rectangle. There are mature trees around the periphery with tree preservation order labels attached. There are 73 memorial stones. These are not arranged in chronological order but rather, the graves of family members are grouped together. It is possible that families were allocated areas within the burial ground. The Cruickshanks were farmers and cattle breeders, the Wighams, silk manufacturers, the Brantinghams, hosiers (See Milne). The stones are of uniform shape and size except for one marble memorial which was erected apparently without permission. The stone used was of good quality and the inscriptions are remarkably clear. The inscriptions record deaths mainly from the 19th century, the first being John Cruickshank in 1805. Of course stones might have been erected at a considerably later date than the time of burial. The inscriptions record 10 burials from the 20th century, in 1902x2, 1903, 1907, 1910, 1916 1918, 1919, 1929 and 1936. The 20th century memorials are mainly towards the eastern half of the ground. There is an area at the western end of the ground that does not have memorial stones. In an article '*The Quaker Colony at Kinmuck*', May Jenkins writes that her father, W.J. Jenkins, minister of Dyce Parish Church officiated at the burial of James

Stewart in 1946, the last Quaker living at Kinmuck. Other recent burials at Kinmuck are recorded in *'Quaker Burial grounds'* by Hamish Milne, John Duguid 1929, Agnes Duguid 1936, Jane P Duguid 1940 Mary Stewart, wife of James Stewart 1940, and James Stewart 1945. So the last burial at Kinmuck appears to be James Stewart in 1945 or 1946.

During our visit to Kinmuck we had the opportunity of meeting the present owner of Friends Cottage. He is interested in the history of Quakers in Kinmuck and he plans hold a seminar on the history of the burial ground. He has invited Christopher Armstrong, with whom he has had contact, to the Seminar as well as descendants of Quakers buried there.

The significance of the burial grounds

Tom Sayles has asked us to consider the significance of the Quaker Burial Grounds for Friends today. It is also relevant to consider the significance of these grounds for the wider community. The Kingswells Community Website has the following comment written presumably by someone who is not a Friend. Writing of the Kingswells burial ground she says, *'because of their Quaker beliefs, many of those buried there suffered harsh persecution. This adds to the poignancy and sense of solitude that I feel when I have visited the graveyard'*.

The article *'Kinmuck, a safe retreat from Persecution'*, says, *'A visit to the burial ground is a moving experience, the epitaphs on the serried ranks of gravestones are as simple as the lives these men and women led. They believed that there should be no distinction in death as in life'*.

Do these burial grounds speak to us and others of the tenacity of Quaker beliefs and values and the valiant lives of early Quakers who defended the Truth despite rejection and suffering? Are the grounds a living testimony and witness of Quaker values?

Continuing Use of these grounds for burial?

A number of Friends have requested that they be interred at Kinmuck, when the time comes. Marion Strachan has noted that the Annual Report of the North of Scotland Quaker Trust for 1994 records the approval of a possible interment at Kinmuck. There is no apparent record of the Burial ground having been closed. The Area Meeting might wish to suggest that their trustees and the trustees of the North of Scotland Quaker Trust, might wish consider this matter further and their responsibilities given in the relevant sections of *Quaker Faith and Practice*. The area to the west of the ground has no marked graves and would provide a possible area for interment. (This area might have been used in the 18th century before Quakers started to erect memorial stones).

Acknowledgments

My thanks are given to Tom Sayles and Marion Strachan for their continuing work and concern for the burial grounds, to Paul Burton GM archivist and Clare Trinder, NSAM archivist for their guidance and help and to Eva Deregowska, Ann and Colin Millar for their hospitality and assistance.

David James, Lochaber and Lorn Local Meeting

'Anchored in God' and devoted to 'repair of the world' [^contents](#)

In Inverness meeting there had been a long-held desire to hear more about "Jewish spirituality". On our behalf, our Friend, John Mellor, was indefatigable in his search and perseverance to find someone to speak to us. Finally in early July 2015, we, with other Moray Friends were able to welcome Rabbi Kate Briggs from a Reformed Synagogue in Glasgow.

Recalling with gratitude how often Quaker Meeting houses have been places of welcome for scattered groups of Jews without a synagogue, Rabbi Kate expressed a warm sense of friendship and her delight to respond to our invitation. She explained the challenge of the topic we had requested. Among Jews "spirituality" is not a matter of reflection or discussion: there is not even

a Hebrew word for it. She quoted an 18th Century Rabbi: “Today is all there is. Ignore all tomorrows and focus on the task in hand.” And then, as if sensing our attentive openness, she put her scholarly notes aside and began to share what nourishes and motivates her life.

Rabbi Kate began with the journey from Glasgow and how, “stunned by creation” at her first ever glimpse of the Highlands, an ancient prayer of praise and awe spontaneously arose on her lips. She spoke of how her day, the Jewish day, is punctuated – the word used was ‘anchored’ – by such prayers, from the first moment of waking: “I thank you living and enduring King, for you have graciously returned my soul within me. Great is your faithfulness.”

Rabbi Kate shared (in the beautiful resonance of ancient Hebrew, spoken and sung) some of these anchoring prayers. They mark the routine times and special events of every day as well as Shabbat, as well as particular festivals. They also celebrate the beginning, stages and end of life and of course the whole history of the Jewish people up to the present day.

At the same time she conveyed to us the vast variation not only in her own Reformed tradition, but also in the Orthodox and Liberal forms of Judaism. The essence for her of this variation is not who is right or wrong, but utter respect for each individual, young or old, in their life’s journey and their unique sense of God or the “something” that has no name. (For many in her congregation, she said, the very identity of God has been affected by the ever-present memory of the Holocaust.)

She illustrated this profound and lively respect in stories of her encounters both as a hospital chaplain with patients and their relatives, and in the welcome to those of other traditions and religions. What stood out was the clarity of her priority to “honour the intention” of people in their essential goodness. The rituals, which are very important, are always at the service of life. For Jews, acting to save and protect a life takes precedence over all rules and laws. For Rabbi Kate saving and supporting “life” went beyond physical

survival. She was willing to forego things important and precious to her own spiritual life if the essential spiritual needs of a patient were in jeopardy.

But we also got a profound glimpse of how Jewish laws and rituals, can truly open us to the dimension that is Other. And so Shabbat becomes a day not limited by stifling restrictions, but rather a day of joyful submission, opening to the source of our being, allowing space for sacred space and deepening the joy of connection. And this leads directly to the importance of *Tikkun olam*, contributing to the repair of the world. Shabbat is source of strength and inspiration to honour, heal and restore life in the name of the Creator of all life.

There were so many resonances with Quaker understanding, as well as revelations, but many of us were touched to the core by the creative freedom, the joyful service, and the deep spirit of a person inspired by faith. The packed room in a small hotel became truly a sacred space. We were not listeners to a talk *about* Jewish spirituality, but a privileged witness to Jewish spirituality alive in our midst.

Chris Sadler, Inverness LBM

EMEYF report, April 4th-11th, Ureki, Georgia [^contents](#)

I am incredibly grateful to have been given the opportunity to go to the European and Middle Eastern Young Friends Gathering in Ureki, Georgia. The diverse community came together to share in worship and discussions at the beach town on the edge of the Black Sea set between two mountain ranges. The theme for our week was ‘Living as one faith amongst many’. Georgia was full of examples for good discussion with its recent history of conflict and plethora of cultures and religions living in relatively small region. One speaker, a local Georgian historian, discussed how the country had many dialects and religions. He explained how these had come about and the tensions this had caused at times.



We began the week sharing our own spiritual journeys challenging ourselves in self-exploration of how we have found ourselves with a Quaker identity. It was the thing that had brought us together but our individual journeys were unique and many were comfortable answering questions about their experience. For me a Bulgarian Friend's story was inspiring as there is only one meeting in Bulgaria and she travelled to attend each week. EMEYF was her first experience of a gathering of more than 10 Friends. A Georgian Quaker and young Friend spoke to us about how he had been called to help with the provision of aid to the vast number of displaced people in Georgia due to the conflicts. He spoke about the effects of the conflicts and instability for many in Georgians and challenged us with a discussion looking at the use of conflict resolution and its limitation. This was followed by another workshop considering the personalities involved in conflict resolution and the importance of recognising their behaviours in ourselves when we think we are helping/avoiding a potential conflict in our own lives.

The theological difference between us was more varied than any British Quaker event I had experienced. Even things I had previously seen as basic, for example 'hope so' and 'hope not' weren't used by all in Meeting for Worship for Business. It was probably the greatest learning experience I have had about Quakers since I attended pilgrimage at 14 years old. One Friend ran a session explaining why and how the Christian church divided over time which prompted an excellent discussion especially about the future of the Quakerism. In our final business meeting we discerned that next summer in celebration on 25 years of EMEYF an all age gathering would be held with EMEYFers past, present and future in Germany and a committee was nominated to organise this.

The region we were staying in although predominantly Christian had a significant Muslim community. We were grateful to be given a tour around a mosque in Batumi by two Imams who also discussed their history in the region as well as their hopes to build a new mosque to support the growing Muslim community. Another day trip took us to the famous spring water of Nabeghlavi stopping at local brewers and fruit growers and speaking to local farmers along the way. Back at the hostel the owner ran a cooking session showing us how to make Georgian bread and beans, something we had all come to love! Experiences like this gave us the chance to leave our own small community and experience the generosity of local Georgians and conversations with them about their daily lives and experiences.

After the gathering I spent a further two days exploring Georgia with a young Friend from Birmingham. The highlight of this was spending Orthodox Easter in Tbilisi where midnight candlelit services were happening all over the city with congregations spilling out onto the street, singing and praying together. I would like to thank Aberdeen LM, Warwick LM and the North of Scotland Quaker Trust for their combined support which allowed me to attend this event and have such a wonderful week.



Ellie Harding, Aberdeen Local Meeting

Quaker Meetings and their little ways! [^contents](#)

General chat around our residential AM at Pluscarden threw up some points along the lines that often new – and sometimes not-so-new – members and attenders didn't always know routine Quaker protocol. Since we often are expected to learn, sucking up all info by osmosis – and after all we are not plants – this is hardly surprising.

Do Friends know not to walk into a room when someone is speaking or giving ministry in either business meeting or MfW but to wait quietly by the door until finished – and pausing a few seconds before entering? What about the time our meetings begin! If a meeting is timed to start at say 10.30

a.m. – actually that is not the time of arrival: it is the time that we are all settled. Traditionally, when the first person is seated in a state of quiet contemplation or prayer then the meeting has begun. Where the meeting has the use of only one room, of course, Friends will tend to gather first and then all sit down together. Where we are lucky enough to have a separate room for our MfW – even a meeting house (wow!!) Friends can sit down when they are ready. In some meetings there are a few Friends who will settle a quarter of an hour before the advertised start of the meeting to 'warm up the meeting room' – a sort of ministry in itself.

How many new to our Area Business Meetings realise that these should be conducted in the same vein as our MfW's: prayerfully seeking God's Guidance – somewhat challenging when we get lost on nitty-gritty stuff, I admit!! This discernment depends on openness and hearing different points of view, all within a loving community.

Reflecting back for myself, I reckon it was after some 15 years of membership when at a BYM the penny dropped that when Friends said "I hope so" in a business meeting they were saying "Yes" rather than uttering from a position of sheer boredom. This time-honoured "I hope so" is a response to the clerk's question, "Is this minute acceptable?" In other words, "It's good enough for me – others may feel differently about it."

It took even longer for me until I was serving on the Meeting for Sufferings to realise that one should not stand to speak once the clerk was writing a minute but that one should be sitting and upholding the clerk prayerfully. Normally it is obvious when the clerk is either looking down at the table, writing, or talking to an assistant clerk, that they are busy. When he or she looks up from the table, then may be the time to stand again.

Do we understand that when with the agreement of the meeting the clerk begins to draft a minute, this means that we are no longer holding a discussion about the item of business in hand? Having got as far as we can for the time being, we are now recording the discussion already held. The

task is now to make a good enough record of the meeting's discernment rather than to continue that discernment.

Oh and here's a nice quirky one – started recently I think by younger Friends. When someone holds their hand/arm up high, this means “please will the rest of you be quiet” – usually because someone needs to say something and not try shrieking above the din. It's also amazingly effective at BYM – like a wave going around about 1000 Friends – to draw them into the silence to begin the meeting. Because of course, in the delight and excitement of the moment at seeing old acquaintances, all the above advice has been totally forgotten – because of course, Friends, we are only human – not plants.

What other bits would Friends like to offer – ask at your local meeting!!

Julie Salt & David Sanders , Eldership and Oversight Committee Co Convenors

Interfaith Service of Commemoration and Commitment on the 70th Anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima - Nagasaki held at Friends House, London, and Peace-gathering at Tavistock Square, London 6th August 2015 [^contents](#)

I attended the Commemoration of the bombing of Hiroshima - Nagasaki on Thursday the 6th August at Friends House. We were visiting family so it tied in very nicely as there were also commemorations taking place all over London to commemorate the bombing of these two cities in 1945.

The event took place in the large meeting house or the “Light” as it is usually called. Entering into the Light was very impressive, this large area with its magnificent light cascading down from above, the work of American and Quaker artist James Turrell who is well known for his work in land art, light and space.

The commemoration began with a welcome from Quakers in Britain by Chris Skidmore from BYM. Various faith groups were in attendance, Buddhists,

Sikhs, Jews, Zoroastrians as well as Quakers. Each one stood up in turn to speak about how their faith inspires them.

Paul Parker introduced the next part of the service, a testimonial from Hiroshima by Japanese Hibakusha Emiko Yamanaka relayed via video followed by a brief message from her grand-daughter who was studying in England.

There was music by Japanese musician Keiko Kitamura in traditional Japanese dress who played an instrument called the Koto which produced a very unusual sound when plucked with a plectrum, I had never heard of or let alone seen one before. It is a long instrument resting on a plinth in which you sat down to play.

There was the lighting of the candle from Hiroshima a message was read by Yoshiatsu Takamura. A rather lengthy poem “Hiroshima Tiles” written by Andrew Motion and beautifully read by Alexandra Mathie was followed by a song by Hazel Morgan. We then all read aloud “All Faiths Affirmation”.

There were a number of workshops. I chose War Requiem a film montage accompanied with music by Margaret Cox. There was A Groups Fair and the film “The War Game” was shown in the evening. There was the Nuclear Risk Hibakusha Worldwide Exhibition. This exhibition is dedicated to the millions of people whose lives have been effected by the nuclear industry.

A statement on Nuclear Weapons on behalf of UK Faith Leaders was read by Jehangir Sarosh, Executive Director of Religions for Peace, UK Chapter. Then there was a Universal Prayer for Peace which we all said together. It closed with the signing of the book of condolence.



The event was very impressive and memorable. I was fortunate that I was able to attend this event, and it was good to meet Friends from across the country and the Friends who regularly send me information from Friends House.

The Hiroshima Ceremony at Tavistock Square took place in the morning prior to the Friends House event and was organized by London Region CND. This event is held every year at the cherry tree planted in 1967 by the then mayor of Camden in memory of victims of the bombing of the Japanese cities.

The compère was Bruce Kent Vice-President of CND who introduced participants such as A. L. Kennedy, the Rev. Nagase from the Peace Pagoda Battersea Park, who led a Peace Walk to Tavistock Square, and Jeremy Corbyn MP for Islington North who gave a speech on how money for nuclear weapons could be used for the benefit of society rather than on weapons of destruction. There was two minutes silence, in memory of the Hiroshima victims, followed by songs and poetry provided by the people in attendance. There was a picnic and shared food with the crowds in the Peace Park. A very memorable day.

Sila Collins-Walden, Inverness LM

Northern Friends Peace Board (NFPB) held Saturday 13 June at Glasgow Meeting House And Peace matters generally. [^contents](#)

A personal overview of two new videos, “The Unseen March” and “Propaganda in the Classroom”

NFPB meets 4 times a year and of those is making a big effort to meet twice a year in Scotland, wherever it meets depends on who offers to host. Meeting in South of Scotland on Saturdays are always timed to tie in with Sunday MfW outside Faslane and Friends are invited to stay over for this. This was an interesting site!! From where I was seated huge building works were going on opposite, whilst on the emergency exit side of the meeting room a building was being demolished so it was thought probably safest not to use if an emergency arose- eventually after a big poof of dust all went quieter!!

The main topic of the day was a short film and presentation on Militarisation, by Tim Wallis from Quaker Peace and Social Witness, QPSW. Tim usually comes to our meetings as the QPSW rep. All the Quaker Peace bodies complement (but don't duplicate) each other and work hard to keep us informed.

As it happens on the previous Saturday I attended General Meeting (GM) in Aberdeen. Mairi Campbell Jack, our Parliamentary Liaison officer gave a presentation on her work, specifically on militarisation and her research on how this is affecting us in Scottish schools, (the level unknown at the time of writing) and was present at NFPB in Glasgow. At GM David Gee from another organisation, Forces Watch gave a presentation on militarisation incorporating several short films.

The main one was the video, also shown in Glasgow by QPSW, 'The Unseen March' which went online on 23rd June. The video and links to related information, action ideas etc. can be found at <http://www.quaker.org.uk/unseenmarch> .

If you (like me 2 years ago) are not familiar with the term militarisation, it is essentially that the military (seems to be mainly army) have a large – millions of pounds- budget to go into schools promoting the armed services and canvassing for under 18 year olds to join up. It seems all secondary English schools have been sent a glossy brochure which they have been encouraged to use in class entitled “British Armed Forces Learning Pack”. It is not known how much military canvassing is happening in Scottish schools yet (Mairi is researching) but I am told there has been an army presentation at Dingwall Academy.

I had real problems getting my head around militarisation. So I’m now 67, brought up on war stories (not glamorised)– feels like it was the main topic in my family home. My husband joined the RAF at 16, and my cousin at 16 the army – signals. Both had excellent training in technical stuff (well!!) and a lot of good experiences.

BUT I found David Gees presentation really got home to me – at last I got it- I really did. Because it was an overall presentation on how since 911 there has been an insidious drip, drip feed by the government to make us all be very pro our Forces, from supporting individual soldiers who have been through a terrible experience, to supporting governmental policy to engage in all the ensuing wars from Iraq onwards, which many believe (not just Quakers) were wrong.

Back to schools –Catching children before they have had the life experience to understand the policies and the reality of going to war is –??? ... well what word would you use?. This is no longer, as for my husband and cousin, joining up in highly likely peace time (actually even then they could have been sent into war – e.g. the Cuban crisis) and getting a great training, this is joining up for wars, which most people feel are wrong wars and I and most Quakers feel all war is wrong.

BUT I found aspects David Gees presentation unbalanced – presenting pictures of war and the awfulness of WW1 – the total destruction of people in cities particularly Germany and Hiroshima as just done by us. Statements

such as “we check monthly to see how many 16 year olds have self- harmed, or committed suicide since joining the army, whilst not pointing out how sadly so many young people are already doing this, felt like overzealous presentation in order to get a desperately important point home. I felt (and it wasn’t me that brought it up,) that in the otherwise excellent short film using artistic license by presenting teenage actors supposedly at school writing lines –“ I will follow orders and not ask questions”, as if the army was facilitating the school work in that moment, took away some of the validity and urgency of the subject.

Please, please, watch this for yourself- it’s on line

'Propaganda in the Classroom' can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB9JD6P1RCM>

I offer this I hope constructive criticism of most excellent work done because Friends we have a reputation for speaking our truth, because it is too important to give any crack for argument against this case, against militarisation.

Because I finally (quoting David Cameron when we said we didn’t want war in Syria) – I get it, I get the case against militarisation. DO YOU? Please look up the links and ask what is happening in your primary and secondary schools. Take a second look at the news and notice how often items suddenly have an unexpected or unnecessary pro military twist.

What do you think Friends? In Peace

Juli Salt NSAM rep for NFPB

Approaching the Tao, Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre Course, Birmingham, July 2015. (East meets West, Taoism and Quakerism)

[^contents](#)

"The journey of a 1,000 miles starts with a single step" Tao Te Ching, Chapter 64

I have recently attended a course at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham, looking at the similarities and differences between Quakerism and Taoism. It has more commonalities than you might expect, though separated by distance, history and culture.

Personal Motivation

I have had a long standing interest in Taoism since meeting an Elder of Orkney Meeting well into her 90s after North of Scotland Area Meeting on the Orkney Isles, I couldn't help but notice she had numerous books on Taoism in amongst her many books on Quakerism. Sitting listening to her simple, kind and wise words in her tiny cottage, overlooking the old attractive and busy fishing village of Stromness, I was inspired to look into this Eastern faith I knew very little about. I was also to learn later the importance of the sage /teacher and pupil relationship in Taoism.

Course Content

The course was aimed as an introduction to Taoism, setting it in its historical, cultural and linguistic context. It also explored some of the key concepts and ideas.

Taoism or Daoism simply translates as "the Way" or followers of the Way, or could mean path or spiritual journey. It is a very old religion or philosophy believed to have originated from Shamanic and Pagan traditions in what is now present day China, over 2000 years ago. The Tao de Ching, the most familiar work on Taoism was thought to be the work of Lao Tzu but is now thought he only wrote down what was previously known or passed on orally. It is also has links to Confucianism, the parallel Chinese philosophy of the

time (there was a session looking at the key concepts and differences with Confucianism).

It also has strong links to Buddhism; when Buddhist Monks travelled north (from what is present day India into China) they discovered many similarities between Buddhism and Taoism. Zen Buddhism evolved as a hybrid of the 2 traditions.

Key Concepts in Taoism

- Yin and Yang, the most recognisable symbol of Taoism with the intertwining black and white symbol; that everything is composed of opposites or complementariness.
- Qi/Chi: The outward manifestation on the unseen Energy, life force or vitality
- De/te: Virtue, power how the Dao or Tao is realised
- The 5 Elements : fire, wood, earth metal and water; manifested in all physical things and in psychology
- Wu wei, action in tune with the nature of what has to be done, requires no effort and nothing superfluous. This concept is often misunderstood in the West.

These are just a few of the main ideas here, there are many other ideas and concepts in Taoism. There are many strands to Taoism which has links to: Chinese Medicine, Martial Arts, Tai Chi and an organised religious system in many parts of East Asia.

Calligraphy

The course looked at the linguistic context of Taoism, where every concept is represented by a character or a set of characters. There was also a chance to explore Chinese calligraphy with a hands on art session.

Tao Te Ching

The Tao Te Ching has many different translations and different interpretations; there was a session on trying to translate a chapter from the Chinese, highlighting the problems of translating Chinese Characters. Like

Advices and Queries, it is written in short advisory paragraphs on all aspects of life. The words need careful reading, interpretation and thought, and may even appear outwardly contradictory. There was a group discussion of what individual chapters meant, and discussion on their meaning to individuals in the group.

Fables and Stories.

Taoism, similar to Zen Buddhism, uses many stories and fables. The main author of these was Zhuang Zi. These highlight and illustrate key concepts on Taoism, often with wit, humour and humanity.

The Similarities to Quakerism.

The final session was a comparison between the 2 faiths here a just a few similarities:

- Emptiness and silence
- Pacifist position
- Respect for nature
- Live simply
- Minimise rituals
- No creeds or required beliefs
- Emphasis on the experiential
- Humility
- Integrity

Woodbrooke and Bournville

I enjoyed being at Woodbrooke a lot, a great combination of simplicity and beauty. With many areas for talking, and discussing but also quiet and silent areas. I explored the gardens again with many different areas of the garden for contemplation including: an orchard, labyrinth and walled fruit and veg garden, Chinese garden and pond.

Further afield, I explored Bournville, set up by the Quaker Cadbury family, a philanthropic model village for chocolate factory workers, with the emphasis

on quality housing, and facilities such as schools, adult education and parks. I was lucky enough to attend Meeting for Worship in the original Meeting House. I also looked around Birmingham, a vibrant multi-cultural city centre and lively outdoor market.

John Wigham Enjoyment Trust

During my stay someone gave Ministry on gratitude, so I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to the trustees of the John Wigham Enjoyment Trust, that funded me to go to Woodbrooke.

The Trust exists to support people of limited means or income, to pursue and further an interest, hobby or pastime. The Trust is open to Friends and Attenders in Scotland. For more details contact the Clerk of your local Meeting.

Conclusion

Overall a very worthwhile experience. The only drawback was the very long journey to and from Inverness, and I had to break my journey both times, staying with family and friends. I would certainly recommend Woodbrooke to other Friends. It deepened my knowledge of a major world religion and deepened my own spiritual journey both in Quakerism and Taoism. Once you understand basic Taoist ideas you look at life in a new different way, for example "*knowing others is intelligence, knowing yourself is true wisdom*" *Tao Te Ching Chapter 33*. The wisdom it proclaims seems timeless.

Some reading

I personally found these most accessible on Taoism:

- The Tao of Pooh, by Ben Hoff (2003) (Some of the basic concepts of Taoism seen through the life of Pooh Bear!)
- Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu, an illustrated journey by Stephen Mitchell (1999) (A modern translation but worth also worth buying a more academic translation to compare)

Alastair Simmons, Inverness Local Meeting