



August 2019

Scottish Friend



Family Weekend at Pitlochry



Welcome Friends to the August edition of the Scottish Friend. Comments and suggestions would be welcomed. When sending in contributions, please, *please* note your LM. It was great to hear from young Friends, keep your contributions coming.!
In Friendship Sila

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Scottish Friend is distributed by Marion Sharkey

Please send articles as an editable attachment to silartist100@gmail.com or typed or hand-written to 27 Creag Dhubh Terrace, Inverness IV3 8QG to arrive five weeks before GM, i.e. by 19 October 2019 . If you submit images , please ensure that they are about 1Mb in size. Any captions provided with your images should be short!

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<p>The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writers and not necessarily the opinions of the Society of Friends in Scotland, Britain or elsewhere.</p>
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Report of General Meeting, Edinburgh Meeting House, June 2019

Jay Wilkinson, Argyll -- West

General Meeting for Scotland met on Saturday, June 8. Fifty-two Friends from across Scotland descended upon Edinburgh Meeting House, along with a visitor from Birmingham, our speaker Edwina Peart, and a representative of the Church of Scotland.

During the Meeting for Worship, the Welcome Statement from the Spring Conference of the Centre for Action and Contemplation was read – a touching reminder of the need to make clear that we welcome *everyone*, no matter their age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or ability, which led smoothly into our speaker for the session.

Edwina Peart discussed BYM's ongoing work into inclusion and diversity. Beginning on a high note, she told us how pleasantly surprised she had been, returning to Edinburgh after many years, to find a city far more diverse than she remembered. Diversity and inclusion, she reminded us, is not just a concern for Friends – Scottish society is making huge steps to address inequalities and exclusion, and we have a duty, as Quakers and as Scots, to be part of that progress.

Issues of inclusion and diversity have been a concern of BYM and of Friends worldwide since the very early days of our Society; the current discussion around diversity is one that has rolled on for decades. Our job, therefore, is not just to pay lip service to the idea of diversity; we must embed the principles of inclusion and diversity deep into our practice, making fundamental changes to the way we approach our worship and living testimony. This is hard work, and demands that we “grapple with this and bring it

home” – we must take on the work of self-improvement as a Society, and not treat this as a purely theoretical exercise. This may include building closer connections with the wider community, or examining what we assume based on how people look or act.

We were also reminded that, as important as inclusion is, even more important may be *belonging*. We discussed the power of language as an example – the “sound of belonging” which a Scottish accent can confer on a person of non-Scottish descent.

Scotland, as Edwina told us, can have a very different attitude to racial identity compared to our neighbours south of the Border. “Scottishness” is not necessarily associated with whiteness, or even with having been born in Scotland. Many of us in the room were born elsewhere, but consider ourselves Scottish. Progress in Scotland is quick and intentional - the Scottish Government has taken a strong stance on diversity, Edinburgh University recently created a Chair in African Philosophy, and while (as we were reminded in a short but emotional BBC Scotland clip) Scotland has a great deal still to confront about our role in imperialism and slavery, that confrontation is underway. “Scotland is poised to recognise [the need for inclusion]”, as Edwina put it. “Are Quakers?”

Certainly, there are challenges to our understanding and ability to change. Edwina told us that responses to the recent survey on Quaker diversity had included some hostility to being asked about ethnicity. This challenged a lot of people, including some Friends present, who spoke to their sense that to be asked to define themselves by race went against our testimony to equality, and that it was unnecessary. However, Edwina pointed out that to people of colour, being asked to define oneself by race is a daily

expectation; the ability to refuse to identify yourself by race is itself a privilege. (Earlier in the morning, a Friend recommended the book *Why I'm No Longer Talking To White People About Race*, by Reni Eddo-Lodge; this book expands on this idea, as well as others.)

We were asked to consider how our faith was affected by our own ethnicity or race. This was challenging, since almost everyone in the room was white, and - as Edwina had just observed - white people are rarely asked to examine their own race in this way. Many responses were around Scottish identity, and the sense of ourselves as Scottish. Still, ethnicity and race were noted to impact on our faith, if only because different ethnicities often have different cultural expectations of religion. This was highlighted by our perceived lack of connection to marginalised communities.

So what, we were asked, are we going to do? There were many answers to this question, but they seemed to lead in one general direction: we need to recognise, value, and respect difference, and in order to do that, we have to think about the difference between how people are represented and how they really are.

After such a challenging and emotional topic, it was a bit jarring to return to more regular business! We were eased back into it through Ann Kerr's report on Meeting for Sufferings, as she told us that Edwina had spoken to them along similar lines. We also heard about other concerns raised through Sufferings recently, including the need to recognise and remember Friends who, in the First World War, fought and died with the armed forces.

Another pressing issue raised was the recent Extinction Rebellion protests, and the resulting arrests. This was initially raised as a reminder of Sufferings' prison register, but as most of those who were arrested were not Quakers

themselves, it was asked: do we have any way of helping those arrestees? Many are struggling financially to match legal costs, and this is likely to be an ongoing issue as the climate emergency continues to go unaddressed. Do we have a role in supporting people outside the Meeting? The general consensus seemed to be that we do, and it may be worth developing a fund for future support.

Friends are encouraged to contribute financially where they can, since money is a huge barrier for many of the protesters involved. Donations can be made online at: https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/extinctionrebellionscotland?utm_term=Nd6ZXKgWn. Donors are asked to add to their message: "In support of the North Bridge 29" and the amount given. This will help the money to be sorted effectively.

Between this and Edwina's presentation, there was a lot to think about, and the lunch break was much-needed – and quite loud, as Friends discussed with each other everything we had been asked to consider over the course of the morning. It was difficult to get through all the conversations to shepherd us back to the Meeting Room afterwards!

Perhaps thankfully, the afternoon began with some relatively light business, as we were introduced to our visitor from the Church of Scotland (Sandy Horsburgh, Convenor of the Ecumenical Relations Committee), and then received and accepted several nominations for General Meeting positions.

We then returned to last GM's discussion on the need to simplify our structures and ways of working, to free up Friends to work on spiritual matters and witness in the world. We agreed to send this on to Area Meetings

throughout Scotland, to discuss and bring action plans to the General Meeting held in November.

Some Friends felt that the length of the documents involved made them difficult to manage. There was therefore a suggestion to record key documents as audio, to make them more accessible.

We received and discussed several more reports and updates over the rest of the afternoon. Martin Burnell (Churches Together in Scotland) updated us on the upcoming transition to a Scottish Christian Forum, still in progress. Nigel Dower (Treasurer) delivered the Annual Report & Accounts, after which we heard from the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group about the Protection from Assault Bill and their meeting with the Cabinet Secretary, and had an update from the Book of Discipline Revision Committee encouraging Friends to share their suggestions through the BYM website.

Alan O'Callaghan updated us on Roots of Resistance - Quaker witness against the DSEI arms fair held annually in London. Action is planned outside the arms fair on 3 September, and Friends are invited to meet and prepare at Friends House, London, from 1:30pm on September 3. Of course, London is a long way from any of us in Scotland, but Scottish Friends will coordinate where possible. Help with travel costs is available.

We thanked local Friends for their hospitality and support, and ended, as always, with a short period of worshipful silence. After tea and a great profusion of cake, we left the cool of the Meeting House and headed our separate ways into the crowded streets of Edinburgh, with a lot to process and a lot to consider. ■

Book of Discipline Revision Committee – the work begins!
Mary Woodward, Portobello and Musselburgh-South East.

Yearly Meeting 2018 was devoted to discerning whether the time was right to start the process of revising our Book of Discipline [aka Quaker Faith & Practice / The Big Red Book]. YM discerned that the time was right, and set in motion the search for a committee to carry this out.

After a lengthy and complex discernment process YM Nominations offered to Meeting for Sufferings the names of twenty-two people to serve with the co-clerks, Rosie Carnall and Catherine Brewer, who'd been appointed last November. The committee contains representatives of every decade from teens up to the 70s: the oldest member is in his late seventies, and there are only six members over the age of 66 – myself included. I am one of the two Scottish members, the other being Nuala Watt of Glasgow Meeting: there are two Welsh members, and the rest are from AMs all over England.

Our first meeting as a committee was in London over the weekend 10-12 May, when we began to get to know each other and work out how we start to tackle this mammoth undertaking. I have been continually reminded that the last revision of our book of discipline took ten years – and I was both excited and somewhat apprehensive... Three people were unable to join us in Friends House. One was able to connect with us electronically: she could see and hear what was going on but it was not easy for her to contribute to the sessions -- this will need addressing in future. The other two couldn't be present: all three were given 'buddies' to fill them in on the weekend, and this will be our practice on all future occasions.

I was fortunate in knowing, to some degree or other, a number of the other committee members, largely through meeting them at Woodbrooke either when FiRing or while doing Equipping for

Ministry [EfM]. I was friends with Nuala before we were appointed to the committee – but she didn't know any of the others which must have been daunting. One committee member had brought along wee Norma, born the very day we were appointed to the committee: we were all delighted to make her acquaintance. The other 'committee baby' wasn't able to come as he and one of his mums weren't well – we look forward to meeting him later this year. Some committee members have children, grandchildren, and wear any number of other Quaker hats as well: I am feeling quite glad to be single, with grown-up children but no grandchildren, and no other Quaker commitments [apart from representing us at ecumenical gatherings] – I'm finding it challenging enough to get to know all these new people and deal with all we are being asked to do without having to take other stuff into consideration too!

Our first weekend was spent getting to know each other and starting to consider how we tackle the revision: it's not simply a matter of editing and rewriting our current book of discipline, but of considering how we produce something that reflects British Quakers as we are today and how we want to be in the future – and what form this might take. We are thinking about ways in which we can work together, and how to embody last year's YM Minute 31 which encouraged us to be prayerful, creative, joyful and bold.

There is an on-line 'collection tool' via which you can submit passages and quotations that you would like to see in the new Book of Discipline – go to <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/qfp-idea/> . If you would prefer to use a paper form, one is available from Michael S Booth, Recording Clerk's Office, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ / qfp@quaker.org.uk . All submissions will be gathered and kept until such time as we are ready to attend to them.

We also spent time considering ways of keeping Friends informed about the progress of our work – e.g. workshops, visiting Meetings, and on-line communications. I've been invited to give reports to GM for Scotland and SE Scotland AM this month, and will report regularly in future. I am also very happy to travel elsewhere if Friends would like to hear first-hand how we are getting on! There will be a weekend at Woodbrooke in November [8-10] entitled *Why have a Book of Discipline?*, open to anyone over the age of 13. AMs will be invited to send representatives, and other interested Friends are also most welcome. Many of the committee will be there, so do come and get to know us!

This will not, however, be our first public appearance: we took part in a session at Yearly Meeting. Friends were invited to come and meet us, worship with us, and engage with us during the Saturday lunchtime break – it was slightly scary to be handed the microphone and asked to introduce ourselves, but most heartening to receive Friends' good wishes, encouragement and prayerful support, especially from those who had been part of the group producing *Quaker Faith and Practice*.

I had also been involved in a couple of sessions for people visiting from other Yearly Meetings, or who'd been appointed to visit other YMs. It was great to meet Friends from other parts of the world, and learn not only what concerns they have at present, but also what they each call their Book – the Irish have *Quaker Life and Practice*, the French *Expérience et Pratique*, while the Germans simply call it 'Unser Buch' [Our Book].

Your Revision Committee will meet as a whole over three more weekends this year, and in order to engage with Friends all over BYM will meet in York [July], Edinburgh [October] and at Woodbrooke [December]. I look forward to meeting some of you during one or more of these weekends.

We are working on your behalf, and can't do this alone. Please uphold us through the rest of 2019 and the years to come. ■

UPDATE: Book of Discipline Revision Committee – July 2019
Mary Woodward Portobello and Musselburgh-South East.

The Committee's second weekend took place 12-14 July at Cober Hill, a residential centre just outside Scarborough – a delightful venue to which I'd like to return, as we were working so hard there wasn't a lot of time to explore the lovely gardens, and definitely not enough time to walk down to the nearby beach!

It was good to meet up as a group again, and I was particularly delighted to see Alice Southern, the representative from South Wales, who wasn't able to be with us in London. She came with her wife Kate and baby Idris who, like Norma, is approximately the same age as the committee – I was at Pendle Hill in America with Alice in 2004, so it was good to catch up with her.

We appointed Elders for the weekend, and buddies to update those who were prevented from being with us. We heard from the Revision Preparation Group about the need to communicate and LISTEN – both to deepen our mutual trust and ability to work together as a committee and also better to engage with Yearly Meeting and encourage Friends' involvement and build on the understanding gained from the two-year Reading Quaker Faith & Practice project. We shared our experiences of working on the tasks we'd chosen to do for this our second meeting – focusing on what we as individuals had learned from doing the task and what we as a committee could learn about how we work as individuals and together.

Rhiannon Grant led us in a session in which we shared and explained the words we would use for God when talking to everyone, those we would only use to certain individuals or groups but not to everyone, and words we would never use. This encouraged us to explore different ways of talking and thinking about “God”, giving us a safe way to explore our differences and begin to understand others’ viewpoints, helping us to avoid future conflicts arising from imperfect understanding or misinterpretation of someone else’s words. In a threshing session to consider what we do next, and how we might do it, we identified three tasks on which we can work individually or in small groups and bring to our next meeting.

Saturday evening’s more light-hearted sharing session and our meals together gave us time to get to know each other better: I feel that I now have a much clearer idea of people as individuals rather than a list of names, and I’m looking forward to discovering more about each one as we work together.

The committee agreed three key messages:

We are thankful for the work of the Revision Preparation Group and previous/ ongoing input from Friends. We look forward to opportunities to work with central and standing committees, and Friends across our Yearly Meeting, on aspects of our task. We welcome the approaches we have had and will respond to them when we are ready.

At this stage we are exploring some potential approaches to our task within the committee. We are not yet producing any definitive proposals, but are making progress in finding ways to be creative in exploring different ideas, in order to learn from the process about how best to plan and organise our work on the revision.

We see it as core to our work that we take the opportunity to build community as a committee in order to speak authentically to each other. In this way we are seeking to model a willingness to be open with each other about our spiritual experiences and understandings. Such openness is vital to building a healthy community within the Yearly Meeting, which we see as both essential to and a desired outcome of the revision process.

Our next committee meeting is in Edinburgh in October [4-6]. We will work in the Meeting House, and look forward to joining Friends' worship on the Sunday morning. ■

Woodbrooke weekend 8-10 November

“Why have a book of discipline?”

Nuala Watt and I are part of the planning group. It's going to be a great weekend, offering Friends the opportunity to consider what they use the current Book for, and what they would like to see in the new one. Area Meetings are invited to send a representative, and there will be spaces for interested individuals as well – so if you want to go, speak to your AM Clerk and/ or contact Woodbrooke about attending. We look forward to seeing you there!

Meeting for Sufferings (July 2019)
Michael Shilson, Mull and Iona- West

When I was hungry you fed me” Matt 25:35

These verses I think epitomise the message of this Meeting for Sufferings (July 2019): **of perceiving a need and taking action.**

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings/papers-and-minutes>

I found the Meeting moving and very challenging, but I don't think the minutes adequately convey the spirit of the Meeting.

(In minute 5 from this Meeting, a similar sentiment is echoed about the minutes of this year's Yearly Meeting. Is this sentiment shared by other attendees of YM?)

It is now half a century since Apollo 8 sent back pictures of “*Earthrise*” showing the vulnerability of our home planet. This had a dramatic impact on our relationship to our world; since then there have been numerous conferences, and UN meetings to discuss the value and vulnerability of our “home”.

As a 73 year old, I find the commitment of today's young adults to take action encouraging, and many aspects of this Meeting for Suffering focused on their “message”.

Minute 4: Court and Prison Register.

I was challenged by the number who had been arrested, and some charged, for their commitment to demonstrate about the environment and the “Climate Emergency” ~ a large number from Scotland. The consequences for them and their families and friends can be profound. We need to uphold them in every way (the minute lists their names): this was brought to GM on Saturday 8th June, and GM decided amongst other things *“to encourage Friends in Scotland to individually support a fund to*

help people with this need” ~ legal representation may cost £900 per person, which many cannot afford.

Minute 5: Yearly Meeting 2019

This was an opportunity to reflect on the experience of Yearly Meeting this year. It was generally agreed that the dual aspects of Sustainability and Diversity was too much for one Meeting, and the discussion on “privilege” helpful. But there was a concern that a group of young Quakers left the Swarthmore lecture after 10 minutes, because they couldn’t identify with what was being said. Many found the gathered “waiting in silence” awesome, though some felt the numbers present too inhibiting to express their ministry. How can we discern what is unsaid?

Local and Area Meetings are encouraged to share their insights so we are the community we need to be, to face the future.

Minute 6: Gender identity

This issue was raised by Young Friends General Meeting. Many people shared their experiences of feeling, and being discriminated against, marginalised and abused because of their gender, sexuality, physical or mental ability, or ethnicity. I found their accounts very disturbing, but encouraged that many felt “at home” within the Religious Society of Friends; where the God in every person is valued. The meeting was challenged to find ways to support those who are discriminated against in any way, and to create a “safe space” for them in our local meetings. Individuals who have experienced discrimination are encouraged to contact Quaker Life about their thoughts and experience. (This will be treated in the greatest confidence). gender@quaker.org.uk

Minute 7: Sustainability

Three Area Meetings expressed their concerns about Sustainability and Climate Change. Once again MfS acknowledged, “We recognise the urgent need to address climate breakdown”, and “re-affirmed our commitment to action”. (This seems to be an ongoing resolution since the “Canterbury

Commitment” in 2011). This will be considered again at the October MfS.

I was disappointed that a proposal for Quakers to emphasise the spiritual and positive advantages of a “simpler and sustainable life style”, which can be achieved by individuals in preparing for climate change, was not included in the minutes.

It is to be celebrated that in April, young Quakers welcomed the 16 year old Swedish climate activist and Nobel Peace Prize nominee Greta Thunberg to Quaker House: <https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/quakers-host-greta-thunberg-and-support-climate-activists>.

In June more than 100 Quakers from England, Scotland and Wales took part in *The Time is Now*, a mass lobby of Parliament urging MPs to take action on climate crisis and environmental breakdown. The gathering was addressed by a 17 year old Young Quaker. <https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/mass-lobby-urges-action-on-climate>

Minute 8: Sanctuary Everywhere programme

The appeal for funds for the Sanctuary Everywhere has been sent to meetings but a link to the appeal leaflet may be found here: <https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/social-justice/migration>

Minute 12: Vibrancy in Meetings Trustees Report.

Following the successful Vibrancy in Meetings pilot, the joint Trustees of Woodbrooke and BYM have agreed to extend it throughout Britain. The implications of supporting local meetings, particularly in remote areas such as North Scotland Area Meeting, that stretches from Shetland to Argyll is daunting. This implementation will be costly and needs to be evolutionary and not revolutionary. The salutary message was on the wider impact on membership: How can we ensure people, which includes youngsters (as discussed in minute 14), feel “at home”

and safe in Meetings, and that their concerns and needs are acknowledged?

“If we stay as we are, we will dwindle (this is particularly apparent from larger meetings). Change is necessary”.

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/moving-in-a-new-direction-1>

Minute 13: Financial Statement

The expenditures are exceeding incomes by £0.75 million. Though the reserves can cover this now, reserves are also dwindling. To reverse this situation, there needs to be an increase in membership and/or individual contributions.

Minute 14: Young People’s Involvement

It is recognised that young people’s involvement in Quakers is often not through the regular attendance at local meetings. It seems Sundays are not a suitable or an attractive time for young Quakers (teenagers and young adults) to meet; which often results in “all age meetings” consisting just of older adults and pre-teenage children. However, it was highlighted that in Scotland there are opportunities for young Quakers to meet at other times: in Glasgow- Saturday night pizza gatherings; Shindig summer camp and reunions; and the welcome inclusion of them in General Meeting for Scotland. What other ways can young Quakers be included, and supported in their spiritual journey?

The next Meeting for Suffering is residential at Woodbrooke on October 4thth-6th. The MfS Arrangements Group meets in the third week of August to plan for this meeting and will be grateful for your upholding, and for any further input from GM or Area Meetings that you may like to make. ■

PHOTO GALLERY

Maggie and Jack Trevelyan finishing the Highland Cross.
Well done to all of you.



United Free Church of Scotland (UFCOS),
Women's home and overseas committee, 29th May 2019.
Stella Cranwell, Perth Meeting.

Theme: Onwards and Upwards

I went to this event as the Quaker representative, knowing nothing about the United Free Church. (www.ufcos.org.uk/). By the end of the day I had experienced a good 'flavour' of it through the speakers, hymns and prayers.

In practical terms, the day was well-planned. Seated on tables of 10, the Guests (of whom I was one) were allocated on separate tables and welcomed individually by the Chair. There was a large envelope containing various literature and a notebook and pen at my individually labeled place. The people I was with were easy to talk to – interested in finding out a little about Quakerism and willing to talk a little about their individual congregations. Do other people find one of the first questions asked is 'how many people attend meetings'?

The speakers

A representative of CMCT (Christian Missions Charitable Trust) spoke about their work (www.christianmissionsindia.org/) CMCT was founded by Colleen Redit 55 years ago in Chennai, India, for whom it was 'realising a vision through faith'. Their vision is to see 'Lives transformed in India through the Love of Christ', with a message of Hope playing a big part. They currently have 26 ministries, much of which is housed in a 5 story main building. There is an orphanage, 2 schools (primary and secondary, providing education for 1,200 children from the slums); a hospital and a handicraft centre for young girls. They also run a Soup kitchen, a child sponsorship scheme and have a social work team.

John Cross (Moderator) was reviewing his first year in post and talked about the importance of making connections – within congregations and outside the Church, with the aim of spreading the Gospel.

Wilma Lyttle spoke about her and her husband's work for the past 17 years with refugees with Mizpah Outreach in Greece. (www.mizpahoutreach.org/). They have received much support from UFCOS and recently a whole container full of supplies was organized and sent over from Scotland, so this was also a speech of thanks. The work in Greece is centred on the 2 refugee camps, which house 80,000 people who are 'stuck' on the island.

Help provided by Mizpah Outreach includes providing equipment and clothes for new-born babies, youth work and dental and optical care. Currently they are building a Youth Camp and retreat Centre – a place to train young people to become future church leaders. As part of their Evangelical beliefs they also hand out Bibles, gospel literature and produce and distribute a yearly Calendar.

Overall a very interesting day, I would recommend anyone to attend one of these days if invited. ■



Family weekend in Pitlochry

The Promptings of The Spirit ?

Peter Cheer. Perth Meeting

I do not know if this was a prompting of The Spirit but it certainly was a prompting. Recently I borrowed 'A Sustainable Life' by Douglas Gwyn (ISBN 378-1-937768-55-3) from the library of Perth Quaker Meeting. The book has a foreword by Steve Chase that mentions 'The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice'

The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice was approved on 24 April 2012 at the Sixth World Conference Friends, which was held at Kabarak University near Nakuru, Kenya. It was the culmination of the FWCC (Friends World Committee for Consultation) World Consultation on Global Change conducted through 2010 and 2011. I had already heard of the Karabak Call, despite having largely forgotten about it, because I was lucky enough to be present at the World Conference when it was issued together with more than eight hundred and fifty friends from Asia, Africa, Australia, The Middle East and the Americas.

I was prompted to re-read the Karabak Call. It seems now, in these uncertain times of 2019 to be even more important than when it was issued five years ago.

The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice.

In past times God's Creation restored itself. Now humanity dominates, our growing population consuming more resources than nature can replace. We must change, we must become careful stewards of all life. Earthcare unites traditional Quaker testimonies: peace, equality, simplicity, love, integrity, and justice. Jesus said, "As you have done unto the least... you have done unto me". We are called to work for the peaceable Kingdom of God on the whole earth, in right sharing with all peoples. However few our numbers, we are called to be the salt that

flavours and preserves, to be a light in the darkness of greed and destruction.

We have heard of the disappearing snows of Kilimanjaro and glaciers of Bolivia, from which come life-giving waters. We have heard appeals from peoples of the Arctic, Asia and Pacific. We have heard of forests cut down, seasons disrupted, wildlife dying, of land hunger in Africa, of new diseases, droughts, floods, fires, famine and desperate migrations – this climatic chaos is now worsening. There are wars and rumours of war, job loss, inequality and violence. We fear our neighbours. We waste our children's heritage.

All of these are driven by our dominant economic systems – by greed not need, by worship of the market, by Mammon and Caesar.

Is this how Jesus showed us to live?

We are called to see what love can do: to love our neighbour as ourselves, to aid the widow and orphan, to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable, to appeal to consciences and bind the wounds.

We are called to teach our children right relationship, to live in harmony with each other and all living beings in the earth, waters and sky of our Creator, who asks, “Where were you when I laid the foundations of the world?” (Job 38:4)

We are called to do justice to all and walk humbly with our God, to cooperate lovingly with all who share our hopes for the future of the earth.

We are called to be patterns and examples in a 21st century campaign for peace and ecojustice, as difficult and decisive as the 18th and 19th century drive to abolish slavery.

We dedicate ourselves to let the living waters flow through us – where we live, regionally, and in wider world fellowship. We dedicate ourselves to building the peace that passeth all

understanding, to the repair of the world, opening our lives to the Light to guide us in each small step.

Bwana asifiwe. A pu Dios Awqui. Gracias Jesús. Jubilé. Salaam aleikum. Migwetch. Tikkun olam. Alleluia! ■

John Melling's Memorial.



John died in May aged 85 years at Culduthel Care Home, Inverness. The memorial was held at the Royal Northern Infirmary, Ness Islands, Inverness. John was a much-revered member of the Religious Society of Friends and an elder at Inverness LM. He will be much missed.

Over a hundred were in attendance, a testimony to the many causes he supported, including the Liberal Democrats of which John was a member, and the Railway Society – John had a keen interest in the railways of the North. Friends from Inverness Local Meeting along with family members were also in attendance. A collection was taken and a total of £200 was collected and divided between two charities, Medical Aid for Palestine and the Refugee Council. ■

Scottish Episcopal Synod, 6 – 8 June 2019
at St Paul's & St George's, Edinburgh
Mary Woodward Portobello and Musselburgh South East.

Having had such a ball at the synod last year, I was delighted to be appointed to attend on your behalf again this year: having attended last year made this year's visit considerably less stressful, as I had a good idea of how things worked and what would go on.

Last year I'd been put at a table on the front row: this year I was somewhere in the middle of the gathering – was there any significance in this? I also had a new 'buddy', a young woman named Victoria who took a little getting to know, as initially she was very busy with Synod business, but with whom very friendly relations were rapidly established.

During the opening eucharist I found myself singing lustily, particularly enjoying thundering out *Immortal, invisible, God only wise* as the celebrants processed in. Bishop Mark's address referenced the reading from Isaiah [30: 15-22], reminding us that the urge to panic is human, and makes us unable to hear and easily get lost. We have to listen – “*this is the way, walk in it*”; *even if the journey is painful and difficult it can be joyful and life-affirming if we walk together and listen; we can bring hope, reconciliation and fairness to ourselves and the world.* I joined enthusiastically in the sign of peace and this year had absolutely no problem joining those receiving communion, though I may have surprised the people giving the bread and wine by replying “thank you”...

The Primus, Mark Strange, welcomed the delegates from other churches and faiths. I was delighted to re-encounter John Bremner of the URC, while later in the Synod I had highly enjoyable and informative conversations with Maureen Sier, a Baha'i woman representing Interfaith Scotland, and Sandy

Horsburgh of the Church of Scotland. Friday's lunch for delegates and their buddies provided another opportunity to talk with a wide range of people, and I was delighted that Adwoa, our GM Clerk, was able to join us. The Thursday evening 'posh' meal was also delightful: last year I sat next to a 'nearly-bishop', this year I was placed between Victoria, my buddy, and John Ferguson-Smith, Convenor of the Administration Board: alas, I didn't make any notes about our fascinating and wide-ranging conversation, but it was most enjoyable!

Thursday morning's business was mainly routine and easily done, but the Investment Committee's proposed revision of its Ethical Investment Policy ran into strong opposition from a group of people deeply concerned about the climate emergency and wanting complete divestment from fossil fuel funds and a more ethical and positive investment policy. Synod was urged to "act like Christians" and "put our money where our faith is"; asked would we be happy knowing that "my stipend and pension were paid at the expense of the planet?" and reminded that "ethics means sacrifice". Passions ran high, and the approval of a counter-motion left the 'activists' very happy but the people who had worked long and hard to produce the initial proposed revision deeply discomfited – I wonder how things would have turned out had the Quaker business method been used? Synod decides things by vote, contributions from the floor follow one another rapidly without pause for digestion or consideration: when matters aren't contentious, this isn't a problem, but...

The afternoon sessions included a brief report from Bishop Mark on the Faith and Order Board, in which he mentioned the forthcoming publication of a series of essays *Truth and the change in a secular world*, designed to promote discussion rather than provide answers: this could be worth getting hold of. The Administration Board's Personnel Committee reported on their Clergy Wellbeing Survey which revealed that, while many clergy were highly satisfied with their job, some felt unsupported during

illness, and to my surprise said that bullying and harassment were rife, prompting the question *What is Christian behaviour?* There was concern too for the burnout that comes from lack of self-care, from living alone without family nearby, from the *aloneness* of ministry, from the blurring of boundaries between being ‘on’ and ‘off’ duty: does this sound familiar?

Friday’s business was even more interesting: concern for the protection of children and vulnerable adults raised the proposal of having identity cards for ministers visiting hospitals and care homes; the consideration of an ecumenical policy for the Church urged people to work together in as many creative ways as possible, saying that *churches ought to act together except where deep differences of conviction compel them to act separately.*

The Committee for Relations with People of Other Faiths had invited Imam Sayed Ali Abbas Razawi, Chief Imam of the Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society to address us: he was simply brilliant! The Imam travels widely: he said he had not seen a country as unique and accepting as Scotland, where the ethos is “together”. He reminded us that dialogue is important in an age where social media prevail and misinformation is rife – nothing is better than face-to-face conversations. In an age where the distances between us increase as we fail to understand ‘otherness’ and put barriers up against it, we need to open up our doors and invite “other” in. The power of friendship arises from dialogue and engenders trust and hope. Constant migration underlines the value of neighbours: we were challenged ‘who is my neighbour?’ – do we know who lives in the forty houses to the north, to the south, to the east, to the west of our homes? *We are all Adam, Adam in his diversity is all of us: we are the image of god – diversity. Acceptance is the key: we need to have a THEOLOGY OF COMPASSION, accept each other for our differences, and stand together as one community to show the one-ness of God.*

The afternoon's business considered '*what it means to be human; the challenge of genome editing*'. Rather than have a series of people addressing us, a four-way conversation took place in which questions were raised and discussed without getting anywhere near providing answers. What is it to be human? What is our purpose? What are, where are the Christian principles we need to apply? "Physicists observe, biologists tamper"... We need to be careful about defining 'normal' and 'abnormal'. When we are ignorant, we meddle at our peril... What is disability? What is the theory of disability? What is 'perfection'? How do we live with that? Is it okay to fix a problem within a cell that is not passed on generationally? How do we deal with "insurmountable illnesses"? What about 'money buys' treatments? Who gets them, who doesn't? Who chooses? At what point do we draw the line – 'fix this problem, not that one'? When is the genome altered – at what stage in an embryo's development? When does life begin? How do we make decisions for the unborn? What as yet unseen effects will the alteration have? If farm animals are bred with resistance to disease, will this lead to less care for their welfare [de-polling cattle can often lead to worse farming practices]? This is a very important conversation in which we all need to engage, and about which we need to inform ourselves.

On the Saturday morning I was invited to address Synod. I was led to offer a gift of silence in which to consider my favourite passage from Quaker Faith & Practice – Isaac Penington's *Give over thine own willing, give over thine own running, give over thine own desire to do or be any thing, and sink down to the seed which God sows in the heart, and let that grow in thee and be in thee and breathe in thee and act in thee; and thou shalt find by sweet experience that the Lord knows that and loves and owns that, and will lead it to the inheritance of Life, which is its portion.* [26.70]

We heard from the young people in the church, reminding us that they are NOT the church of the future, but the church of today,

and asking us to leave space to enable them to be heard, to find out what they really care about. They were a very lively group and all hugely appreciative of the opportunities offered them within the Scottish Episcopal Church, especially their times at the Glenalmond camp.

The final report of Synod was from Ley-Anne Forsyth, who had attended the 63rd session of the UN Commission on the status of women. She waxed lyrical about the opportunities it offered, especially of meeting with the UK government delegate, who surprised her by listening attentively to her demands for equal opportunities for education regardless of gender, elimination of poverty, and action on gender-based violence and sexual assault. *He told her that annoying the Government brings positive change, so she should shout loudly and annoy as many people as possible* – something I’m sure she will be delighted to do. Ley-Anne was also vocal about the United States’ leading of a regressive movement to repress hard-won equalities and women’s human rights... She told us that by the age of six, children know “which jobs are for boys, and which for girls”, warned us against ‘terminal niceness’ – “I’m not sexist, but...” and urged the Church to start discussing gender fluidity and, later, bring the discussion to the UN.

Synod ended with a valedictory service, with yet more lusty singing, and I made my farewells and hastened up the Mound to attend the afternoon session of GM, hoping to be appointed to attend Synod again in 2020. ■

Family weekend 31st May-2nd June 2019
Madeleine Harding, Edinburgh Meeting.

Families from all over Scotland came together in Pitlochry for another family weekend. We were back at the youth hostel which many were very pleased about. However young people were saddened to see that the pine trees in the grounds had been cut down. They had much fun in past years climbing trees, making dens and playing games here. There was a little ceremony to mark the passing of the trees.

Otherwise, the weekend went very well. There were 24 children and young people and 19 adults. We created a loving community where people lived together, helped each other, and determined how to do this having read a story at the start of the weekend called “Kindness Rules”.

Our theme was the rights of the child. We looked at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There were discussions about our rights but also the lack of rights of children and adults in other parts of the world. We thought too about the responsibilities that go with rights. We explored all this through stories, song, making puppets and performing short plays, wonderful art work and some times of deep, powerful worship. Adults benefited from time together to talk about many things including parenting.

We had time to explore outside as the weather was kind to us on Saturday. Not so on Friday and Sunday! People left on Sunday morning vowing to come back next year.

The value and benefits of this weekend are very clear. Families who struggle with the day to day pressures of raising children find a relief from this for a short while, but more importantly discover that they are not alone and can share their problems in a safe supportive atmosphere. ■

I reluctantly reach the time when I need to lay down my responsibilities for organising this weekend but feel very sure that those taking over are well able to take the work forward, develop it and provide this much needed opportunity for families.



PITLOCHRY RAP

By Willoughby and Elian Densham

At Pitlochry we all have fun. At Pitlochry we like to eat an iced
bun.

At Pitlochry we have the right to water. At Pitlochry we have
the right to slaughter... sorry, sorry, take that back, take that
back.

At Pitlochry we have the right to water the plants. At Pitlochry
we have the right to wear pants.

At Pitlochry we go to the park. At Pitlochry we snooze in the
dark.

At Pitlochry we all know the chorus. Did you know there's an
Egyptian God called Horus?

At Pitlochry we play werewolves. Sorry we don't have anything
to rhyme with that and that's why we don't have a pet bat

At Pitlochry friendship is good. At Pitlochry we eat healthy food.

At Pitlochry we have the right to banter. At Pitlochry we like to
drink Fanta. Even though its not good for you. Well just have a
little and that will do.

At Pitlochry everyone loves me but now I need a pee!

The Long and Friendly road – Cycle against Torture 2019 completed

Carolyn Burch and Richard Raggett, St Andrews -East.

Brighton, Oxford, Birmingham; Manchester, Lancaster, Yealand Conyers; Kendal, Hexham, Briggflatts; Glasgow, Falkirk. No, not a Quaker version of ‘Mornington Crescent’ but a list of the Quaker Meeting Houses who welcomed, fed and accommodated cyclists on our Cycle against Torture 2019 route in July [*Scottish Friend*, May 2019]. But we should also mention Friends from Stansted Mountfitchet in Essex, Tavistock in Devon, St Andrews, Perth and Dundee, who through personal contacts with us gave huge support, moral and financial.

The involvement of Quakers transformed Cycle against Torture 2019. It was, in its original conception, a physical challenge for dedicated cyclists, determined to attract attention, understanding and funds to the work of Freedom from Torture. But it became much more, drawing a whole range of people together and offering warmth and encouragement – not to mention energising food and restful beds – to the teams as they made their way. This was thanks to the meals, speaking events, local publicity and leafleting work organised and carried out by Quakers at many points on our route. Plus simply the reassurance that yes, there is awareness out there; the desire to share the awareness and the effort, especially now, in times when truth and power seem to be drifting further apart, seemed to be fired up by the cyclists’ hard work.

By the time Cycle against Torture returned home it had raised just over £20,000 in donations (including Gift Aid), but also heartening was the sense that local support and connections along all the long route had been strengthened and new Friendships made, hopefully rejuvenating support and understanding for Freedom from Torture’s difficult but vital and inspirational work.

Inclusivity on a roll!

Cyclists aged 17 to 85 took part and the ride leaders of each of the 19 stages were tasked with making sure all riders were safe and non-pressured, going at the pace of the slowest and being our guides and guardians. Electric bikes increased the inclusivity, with one e-bike owner very kindly lending hers to an exhausted novice co-pedaller for some of the Lancaster-Kendal route.

It was also a cross-party effort: Greens, SNP, Labour, Conservative, LibDems: all were represented by MSPs, MPs or local mayors who came to welcome the ride or take part in a send-off ceremony in Edinburgh, Hastings, Brighton, and Oxford. And perhaps most importantly – it was multicultural. Muslim local officials came to wish us well; a Buddhist spoke on behalf of the Manchester FfT support group; a Reform Jewish synagogue welcomed us to a brunch in Newcastle; and the finale of the ride was a celebratory meal at the Sikh Temple in Leith. There was even an enthusiastic Anglican presence as the Chaplain of the University of Sussex (and Chair of the local FfT support group) gave us an uplifting send-off homily in Brighton.

Dramatic highlights

Yes, there were punctures and yes there were ‘VIP’ send-offs and yes, there were hairy moments negotiating the Manchester traffic. But the dramatic Quaker element I’d like to give special space to is the performance of ‘Feeding the Darkness’ by Journeymen Theatre, who came to Oxford Meeting House on 6 July and Birmingham Bull Street on 11 July with their remarkable play. ‘Feeding the Darkness: Shining a light on State Sanctioned Torture....through Story, Poem and Song’, was originally commissioned by Q-CAT (Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture). It frames the disturbing issue of State sanctioned torture through a series of monologues and duologues which explore how the UN Convention Against Torture is clearly being abused by both UK and world-wide governments. It is a hard watch, not because it is gruesome or violent – it isn’t – but because it is very searching about human nature and how we are

capable of treating each other. Q-CAT asked specifically that the production should look at the viewpoint of, and the effects on, perpetrators as well as victims. It's a highly skilful piece of writing by Lynn Morris, who with her partner Dave forms this very experienced two-person Quaker theatre company. Richard and I have also seen their play about the asylum-seeking process, 'The Bundle' – a clever, moving and thought-provoking piece. In addition, Journeymen have written and produced 'Over the Top' which was commissioned by West Midlands Quaker Peace Committee in response to the increasing influence of military values in everyday life, especially in our schools, and 'And the Beat Goes On'. which charts over 300 years of Quaker Nonviolent Direct Action, from the early Abolitionists, through Quakers living in Nazi Germany and Jean Zaru in Palestine to Trident Ploughshares in the 21st century. Their latest production, 'A rock and a hard place' is about domestic abuse. I would love to see Journeymen Theatre on tour in Scotland! or perhaps at a GM? They are a wonderful opportunity for outreach and reflection.

The title of 'Feeding the Darkness' is taken from the words of James Nayler, a passionate Quaker in the 1650s: *Art thou in the Darkness? Mind it not, for if thou dost it will fill thee more, but stand still and act not, and wait in patience till Light arises out of Darkness to lead thee. Art thou wounded in conscience? Feed not there, but abide in the Light which leads to Grace and Truth.*

For full information on Cycle against Torture 2019 please see <https://edinburghfft.org/cycle2019/>

For full information on Journeymen Theatre please see www.journeymentheatre.com

Freedom from Torture helps torture survivors rebuild their lives. Since 1985 when it was set up, more than 57,000 people have been referred for help. Its staff and volunteers provide medical and social care, psychological and physical therapy and medico-legal reports to support asylum appeals. Freedom from Torture educates the public and decision makers about torture and its consequences, and strives to ensure that the UK honours its international obligations towards survivors of torture, asylum seekers and refugees. The main treatment centre and administrative HQ is in London, with other centres in Birmingham, Glasgow, Manchester and Newcastle.



**Woodbrooke on the Road Comes to Inverness
with Timothy Peat Ashworth.
Sila Collins-Walden, Inverness LM**

It's not always possible for Friends this far north to travel down to Woodbrooke Study Centre in Birmingham to take part in workshops or courses. So, Woodbrooke came to us.



Woodbrooke provides a travelling teaching service of workshops and courses to meet the spiritual needs for the convenience of Friends. Friends at Inverness local meeting had discussed having Tim Peat Ashworth, Biblical Studies tutor at Woodbrooke, to invite him to do a workshop. Tim has been to Inverness before to do workshops so he knows us well. We were sent preparatory material to study before the workshop to read and digest in preparation.

The workshop was held on July 5 at L'Arche Community Centre in Inverness. The theme was 'A Place for the Scriptures – Friends and The Bible Today'. There were twenty one Friends and one non in attendance.

At the opening of the workshop Tim spoke of his own background and his training for the priesthood which we found very interesting. We were divided into groups and were given various exercises to do, a passage from Luke 24:13-35 to read and to make comments on. Experiencing bible study!

The day was completed with an invitation to Roger and Kathleen Quinn's for "come and meet Tim" and for a meal and lots of chat and discussions and plans to meet up again. The possibility of forming a group to continue on from this Bible study workshop has been discussed by Friends and it is hoped to have Tim come again next year. ■

PHOTO GALLERY

Photos by Oriole Hall of Woodbrooke on the Road at Inverness



Workshop in Westray 27th April 2019

Madeleine Harding

You will have read Sandy Mc Ewan's account of this all age workshop in Westray on 27th April [*Scottish Friend*, May 2019] but I thought a few words from one of the facilitators might be interesting.

Sophie Smith and I travelled to Westray, which was quite an adventure in itself, to facilitate a workshop on all age meeting for worship. The hospitality was amazing and Sophie and I were very well looked after.



As Sandy says there were seven adults and five children taking part. We looked at what Quaker worship means for each of us, various ways of

worshipping altogether and a chance to have a go at planning all age worship. The children and young people were an inspiration and added a richness and diversity to the day.

For Sophie and I it was a privilege to be invited to do this workshop and the icing on the cake was the opportunity to worship with Quakers on Papay on Sunday. A trip on the minister's boat was a unique way to get to Meeting for Worship.

If anyone is interested in having a training worship on all age worship or a variety of other themes you can contact me or Friends House to find out more. ■

General Meeting for Scotland, Saturday September 14th

Dear Friends,

Please do come to Aberdeen for General Meeting! Usually around 60 Quakers from across Scotland meet to worship, discern, share food and build community. Come and be part of it. In the last year, Shindig age (11 and up) young people have been meeting at each GM alongside and with us. They would like to meet up again in Aberdeen. **LM Clerks PLEASE pass this and the guidelines below on to young people and their parents in your Meeting.**

General Meeting will be held on 14th September in Aberdeen Quaker Meeting House, 98 Crown Street, Aberdeen, AB11 6HJ. Coffee will be available from 10:30 with Meeting for Worship starting at 11 am. Please bring a packed lunch if you have special dietary needs, however soup and sandwiches will be offered at 1 pm and we hope to finish with cakes at 4:30.

This GM is about taking action on the climate emergency. The morning session will be led by a group of Quakers in Scotland who are already engaged in this, in different ways. Please see the letter already circulated to all LM clerks asking for involvement.

We will have a wee report or two and generally set the world to rights. Please do come. Everyone is welcome, new attenders to old hands. All decisions made are in your name and if you are not there, well what can I say!

Papers and agenda relevant to GM will be circulated roughly a week prior to GM. If you do not receive them, please ask Marion Sharkey scotfriends@gmail.com for a copy. Reading the papers beforehand helps to prepare the heart and mind. If you have any questions or need anything please contact me, your clerk, at adwoabittle@hotmail.co.uk or 07854 177 450.

Adwoa Bittle

Guidelines for YP involvement at GMS

1 Parents do not need to come to GM with their 11yrs+ YPs so long as they make arrangements for travel with a local Friend or with the clerk.

2 Parents need to agree that they are responsible for their YPs and discuss these guidelines with them

3 YPs and their parents should set up their own check-in system for the day, either with another adult they know who will be at GM, or via the YP's own mobile as contact system. As a backup, a volunteer adult will give their mobile number to the YPs and take their numbers, for those who choose to go out round Aberdeen after lunch

1.30 - 4.00 (Hopefully advance notice of who this will be will be available prior to each GM)

4 YPs will be invited/expected to be in GM session from 11 am until lunch after which they can have free time to explore the main areas of the city we are in (the agenda will be set with YP involvement)

5 They must stay in groups of no less than three. 11- and 12-year-olds must be in groups with older Yps

6 If the YPs do not wish to have free time out with GM in groups they must attend the GM session in the afternoon from 2 – 4:30. Please could they have books to read or something to draw quietly, if necessary. Not a screen. LM Clerks PLEASE pass this on to young people and their parents in your Meeting.