



February 2019

Scottish Friend



A Peace Pole for Falkirk

Photo: Mariot Dallas



Welcome to the Febuary edition of the Scottish Friend. Comments and suggestions would be welcomed. When sending in contributions, please note your LM.

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 4th May 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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*Published by Quakers in Scotland, 01382 730 842
quakerscotland.org.uk (British website: quaker.org.uk).*

*Printed on recycled paper by
Print Force, Milngavie, 0141 956 1052.*

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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 on General Meeting, Perth, 16 November 2018

Margaret Roy, Lanark Meeting

Sixty-five of us gathered for this event, including seven attenders. We almost filled the Soutar Theatre, named after the Scottish poet William Soutar who was born in Perth. It was an unusual venue for Quakers as we were arranged in theatre style facing the two clerks below.

Before the opening worship, the clerk explained the procedure and especially the use of little customs such as 'Hope so' instead of yes in accepting the minute. When our heads are down, she said, please uphold us (the clerks) in worshipful silence as we construct the minute: only when our heads are up can we see you and call on you to speak. And what is meant by 'upholding'? It was a user-friendly gathering of all into the Quaker business method which I am sure was appreciated by more than the young Friends who had joined us for the whole morning session. It was hoped we would have a 'spirit led day'.

The opening worship was followed by minutes of record - that is the recording of routine business such as new members and deaths. One of the two new members were able to be present and there were no deaths. Then our Friend Mike Shilson from Mull & Iona Meeting reported on the latest Meeting for Sufferings, and we got the explanation of where that name came from, that it originated to support Friends standing up for their faith - many early Friends were imprisoned. This last Meeting for Sufferings had a very full agenda of 21 items. Mike's paper to GM is available with the minutes and the full minutes for Meeting for Sufferings can be obtained on BYM website. The difference between England and Scotland arose in the emphasis of certain items. Three items in particular were drawn to our attention. **The *Vibrancy in Meeting*** project has had a trial run in meetings in England and has not yet reached Scotland. Edwina Peart

presenting on **Diversity and Inclusion** was much appreciated. She identified that *all barriers are made by people, and so can be broken down*. The item on sustainability gave rise to much comment within our General Meeting – do Quakers discuss? The question presented by Meeting for Sufferings was *Can we make a difference?*

After Madeleine Harding reported on the rich experiences of the Link and the Family weekends, Huw Lloyd-Richards explained the changes ACTS was going through and he highlighted some of the issues being worked on. The aim of the changes is a move away from the current membership and to bring in many of the other Christian denominations to create a Scottish Christian Forum.

Our agenda was planned to enable a good length of time to be spent on the priorities of our Parliamentary Engagement Working Group. Militarism in schools is being treated seriously in the Scottish parliament. We have made a difference. A major concern is now Land Reform and Economic & Tax Justice which are strongly linked. There was much ministry on this. It is obviously a concern dear to the hearts of many Friends. Sadly, I must confess to you that I fell asleep after a bit. It may have been the delicious lunch provided by Perth Friends! It is certainly a subject that I have grown to respect through Quaker involvement in it and insert this part of the minute which expresses the heart of our discernment . . . *This is not about palming off this work on to the shoulders of a few. This is about good communication so that our PEWG can encourage us into action and work, as individuals and as LMs, AMs and GM.*

Our distinctive Quaker role, which derives from our Faith, experience and willingness to listen, may be to enable groups of politicians, other Faith groups or interested parties to meet together, hopefully enabling them to discover points of leverage and ways to make changes to policy that in the long term will

make a real difference. We encourage our PEWG to continue to seek partners to work with on the matters that concern us. This work affects us all in all generations. We applaud our PEWG for working with YFGM and know that these issues are on the agenda of next year's JYM.

We are moved by the depth of the discussion today and our sense of leading that drives us to be part of a movement for change that is urgent and vital. We know that it is essential that as individuals and groups we change our lifestyles now. We want to influence our politicians and enable them to make a difference.

Their report is available with the papers for the General Meeting.

The last items were the budget, with clear explanatory notes by Nigel Dower, and a report by David Somervell on the Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre. Although time was short, Friends were delighted to hear about the plans for the Conscientious Objectors Monument now renamed the Opposition to War Memorial, although we all liked David's name for it - The Peace Tree. Friends may be interested that there is a crowd fund to pay for this. Details of this are being circulated by our Administrator.

And so ended a pleasant day in Perth, meeting many old Friends from different meetings and making new Friends. ■

BYM Sustainability Gathering, Swanwick, 19-21 October 2018
Martin Mansell (Glasgow) and Ed Tyler (Argyll)

We gathered in Derbyshire a few days after the **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report** came out. It makes for stark reading, saying that in order to stay within 1.5°C warming we have a narrow window of 12, possibly 20, years in which global human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, which have been fairly constant for decades, have to fall to zero. How should we as Quakers respond to this?

Seven themes emerged during the weekend and were reported back to us at the end. We share them with you below.

1. The need to be **joyful**. To see the changes we make as positive opportunities to explore the new, have fun and be joyful, rather than talking negatively or making people feel guilty.
2. We have heard of the importance of **envisaging the world we want**; of speaking it into being, for example working out what a zero carbon Society of Friends would really look like. Rather than looking at what we should not be doing, we should rejoice in what we will be doing.
3. The **importance of sharing stories**; we have heard inspiring stories of individuals who are letting their lives speak and are leading others to follow their example; we have heard examples of inspiring actions by Meetings. We often do not know the change that flows from our own

simple acts. Sharing inspires others and fosters new cultural norms.

4. We have been challenged to reflect upon whether our role is to 'Bridge the Gap' or to 'Inhabit the Gap'.
5. We have been challenged by the concept of **exceptionalism**: the incomprehension that what we apply to others should also apply to us. Our species, our country and us as individuals fall prey to this. How often do we make excuses? Do we understand where this approach comes from in our culture and are we prepared to address this in ourselves and our society?
6. We seek to **engage spiritually**, to deepen our relationship with others we inhabit this world with. We know we must campaign and make practical changes in the ways we live our lives, yet have we fallen out of the right relationship with that which is sacred?

In Quaker Faith and Practice 24.13 Marian Fox, wrote 100 years ago "I remembered the familiar words about William Penn's sword – and it seemed clear to me that if William Penn had given it up from self-interest or cowardice, or for any reason short of the 'witness of God in his own soul', he would have been wrong.

7. We often heard of the importance of **acting from and through love**. Whilst at times we are angry or afraid, we must ensure the bedrock of our action is love, the power of love. Remember Advices and Queries 28 "Attend to what love requires of you."

8. Finally, **Connection**. There are many opportunities to strengthen our connections with others. With those with whom we share common journeys but perhaps equally importantly with those we don't. We need to be able to listen and seek to understand what motivates others as well as communicating clearly our own message.

What to do next (in Scotland)?

BYM has formally advocated the 1.5°C limit, and in our Canterbury Commitment we committed ourselves to making the changes, but we are not sure that – collectively - we realise the enormity and the urgency of the task.

Quaker Stewardship Committee have asked Meetings to provide information about the carbon emissions of their meetings (or other similar information). We hope this is not seen as an extra chore but as an opportunity to engage the wider Quaker community in the issue of climate change.

We have considered how Quakers in Scotland could move forward on this using a simple common approach and suggest the following steps:

- a) **measure our current emissions related to our meeting houses**. We have already developed a simple methodology which has been used for Glasgow Meeting and hope to extend this to all Scottish Meeting Houses (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Wigtown, Aberdeen and Dundee)
- b) **measure the travel footprint for these meetings**; again, we have developed a simple questionnaire for Glasgow Meeting
- c) **roll out the travel footprint for all other meetings**.

Referring back to theme 2, **“working out what a zero carbon Society of Friends would really look like”**, we consider the three above steps to be Scotland’s initial contribution to this task.

Meeting for Sufferings needs support – now – to begin the process. We in Scotland have a unique opportunity to be an example to the rest of BYM – let’s grab it. ■



The Flow Country, Caithness

Britain Yearly Meeting Sustainability Gathering
Friday 19th October to Sunday 21st October 2018
Valerie Weir, Inverness Meeting

North of Scotland Quakers asked me to represent them at this Gathering at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick near Derby. Before attending the conference I gathered information from Local Meetings so thanks are due to Aberdeen, Forres, Inverness and particularly to Papa Westray, Orkney whose Sandy and William McEwan e-mailed me amazing information and photos about renewables and their wonderful sustainable island.

At the gathering there were approximately 112 participants. It was heartening to see so many Young Quakers taking part. The conference centre is set in woodland with small lakes and gardens. The accommodation is comfortable and for me the vegetarian food was a bonus.

The Gathering began after dinner at 8.00pm. Laurie Michaelis gave a short introduction mentioning the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report that indicated that should global warming rise by 1.5°C this would be highly dangerous. Laurie pointed out that Quakers have committed to being a low carbon sustainable community but this is not specific enough. How do we go about achieving zero carbon? It was mentioned that George Monbiot thinks it would be a good idea to substitute Climate Breakdown for Climate Change as this might be more easily understood and more immediate.

Anne Ullathorne clerk of MfS Sustainability Group updated us on the work of the group and their recent meeting on 6th October. They support Gatherings like this, concerned

with the Canterbury Commitment, Minute 36 and AMs in carrying forward the commitment.

Mey Hasbrook travelling in the ministry from Lake Erie Yearly Meeting U.S.A. was the Gathering Artist and the next speaker. Throughout the weekend she added to a mobile installation using sustainable materials that pairs of participants used creatively.

Rici Marshall Cross, co-clerk of Young Friends General Meeting initiated a group discussion on Sustainability. This was a way of getting to know your immediate neighbour and one or two others.

Saturday 20th October.

The Gathering was subtitled 'Bridging the Gap -Hope and Action'. Three speakers talked about engaging with climate change and in particular about making new connections.

The first speaker was Paul Hoggett who co-founded the Climate Psychology Alliance and works as a psychotherapist. Paul talked about the rise of authoritarian and populist movements which tend to arise when social collapse is imminent. The politics of victimhood feeds into these movements. Even perpetrators can feel that they are victims and in the right. The word Paul uses for what victims feel is 'résentement' – which means 'nursing a grievance'. He asked 'Is résentiment in us too?' If you are a 'Remainer' this résentement is in you against 'the other', 'the government' etc. 'Brexiters' may feel that 'the present is a foreign country'. How do we connect? Paul said that the enemy within is incomprehension of the views of others, but the rules and expectations that we apply to them we need to apply to ourselves. This is called exceptionalism. We think of humans as a superior species that is here to exploit the earth. Nations that think they are God chosen have an unhealthy form of nationalism. e.g

Soldiers thought to be from an exceptional nation could not possibly have committed war-crimes. There is a 'have your cake and eat it' attitude. Also there is complacency e.g. 'I've been a political activist for 40 years. I've done my bit I can retire now. I deserve it.' We should aim for solidarity with 'the other' rather than difference.

The second speaker was Jo-anne Veltman a children's doctor and one of the litigants in Plan B, bringing legal challenges to strengthen government policies on Climate Change - 'Litigate to Mitigate.' She spoke of the IPPC report and her message was that 'the time is now.' Risks are rising so quickly. People world-wide are affected, usually the most vulnerable. The technology to help does not exist yet. Feedbacks and Tipping Points are usually linear and put in little boxes instead of being connected. e.g. In the Arctic the ice is melting and thinning and the Albedo effect is exacerbating this. In one area anthrax has come out of the melting ice. Arctic ice-melt is affecting climate elsewhere. Jo-anne's message was to stay optimistic and act boldly together. The following are worth a look:-

1. www.earth-policy.org
2. Carbonbrief.org (data driven articles on climate change)
3. James Hansen, American adjunct professor directing programme on Climate Science, Awareness and Solutions, of the Earth Institute at Columbia University
4. Drawdown (action against desertification)
5. Climate Action Norfolk

Jo-anne pointed out that 80% of children are affected by climate change yet in some countries there is childhood obesity.

We need to keep fossil fuels in the ground and stop exploration in the Arctic.

Jo-anne's advice is - When scary things happen, look for the helpers. Check out www.earthguardians.org (Earth Guardians are young activists artists and musicians across the globe stepping up as leaders and collaborating to co-create the future we know is possible. Youth is no barrier.)

She said that we need to hold a vision for the future.

The third speaker was Susan Mattingly, Sustainability Officer at Friends World Committee for Consultation. She interviewed, on film, Quakers around the world engaging with climate change. In the Philippines, from an Unprogrammed Meeting and from an Evangelical Meeting and in Kenya, a Programmed Meeting. Both places suffer from the effects of climate change. Food security is threatened. The Unprogrammed Meeting drew strength from corporate discernment, talking to like hearted people. They found that worship works. Their leadings help them to work together, letting their lives speak through Quaker simplicity. The Evangelical Meeting drew strength from the scriptures and found joy in helping others and in nurturing God's creation. In Kenya there was a consciousness of excessive consumption and they try to mitigate the effects and help their neighbours. There is urgency about tackling Climate Change because of suffering in vulnerable countries. Scientific proof of this was submitted to the UN by QUNO to urge action. Quakers need to review progress towards our targets. Faith communities and interfaith communities, through global connectedness, can help.. We need to live the change through our faith.

Next on Saturday morning was a plenary session in the form of worship sharing.

Delegates displayed posters)/ leaflets in the Derbyshire Hall and it was clear from those that there is much good work going on all over the country. Quaker Concern Over Population, now a recognised Quaker Body had newsletters/ information on display and the feeling was that Climate Breakdown could not be discussed without including discussion on population.

In the afternoon we attended pre-booked workshops.

I went to 'Love in Action' led by Cliodhna Mulhern - a reflection on spiritual activism and to 'Experiment With Life' led by Ian Marshall - outdoor guided meditation. During unstructured time in the evening I joined in music ,poetry and movement.

Sunday 21st October

There was a short presentation by Mey Hasbrook about the Art Installation, emphasising the sacramental nature of the whole of life.

Then there was a Reporting Back on the Feel of the Meeting by Robert Almond, Martina Weitsch and Chris Willmore, the Listeners Group.

There follows a short summary of the report of the Listener's Group. It begins:-

'We have been inspired and at times daunted by the urgency and scale of the task. But we trust that through faith and discernment we will have the power to achieve change in ourselves and our world.'

A number of themes had been identified by the group and it was hoped that these might help us identify what to do next. They are listed below in a shortened form.

1. The need to be joyful
2. The importance of envisaging the world we want
3. The importance of sharing inspiring stories of action by individuals and Meetings

4. The challenge of whether we should 'Bridge the Gap' or 'Inhabit the Gap'
5. The challenge of exceptionalism – the incomprehension that what we apply to others should also apply to us
6. We seek to engage spiritually. Have we fallen out of the right relationship with that which is sacred?
7. The importance of acting from and through love – we must ensure the bedrock of our action is love, the power of love
8. We need to strengthen our connections with others who may share a common journey with us and also with those who don't. We need to seek to understand what motivates others as well as communicating clearly our own message.

Friends, one of the messages that I took from the Gathering was that there is an urgent need to connect with those who may have opposing views to ours. It was not so clear to me how I might achieve this. Another message, as Jo-anne Veltman said, is the importance of the power of love and the feeding of positive thoughts into the collective consciousness. The Gathering has certainly challenged me to think about what further actions I could take. I might now e-mail letters that I have been meaning to send to my MP and MSPs. ■

Ecumenical Roundtable on Draft (Statutory) Guidance on Funeral Costs and Funeral Poverty, 31 October 2018. Barbara Davey, East Scotland Area Meeting

This was a small and generally well-focused meeting, chaired by Chloe Clemmons, with representatives from Church of Scotland, Scottish Episcopal Church, United Free Church of Scotland, Salvation Army and Quakers in Scotland. From the Scottish Government's Social Security Policy Division, Andrew Burke, Affordable Funeral Policy Manager, was in attendance. It was held at the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office in Edinburgh.

In preparing for the Roundtable, I had much helpful information and advice from Quaker Social Action's Down to Earth project, including an extended telephone conversation with their Project Manager Claire Brandon. Claire, along with two colleagues, had herself been consulted by researchers from the Scottish Government when the Draft Guidance was in preparation.

Andrew Burke explained that the Guidance will not in reality be statutory. It has come about as a result of increasing devolution and represents a major piece of work by the Scottish Government. The Guidance is addressed to Burial and Cremation Authorities, Funeral Directors and Local Authorities, and has important implications for the public's use of these services.

Andrew raised with us specific questions from the Consultation and seemed to be keen to engage. Some of these questions were quite technical and specific eg the practice of embalming, or the proposed Funeral Expenses Assistance Form. Others were more general eg whether funeral directors should display their costs online. Thanks to Down to Earth, I was able to raise further aspects, not addressed by Andrew.

A summary of topics covered (in no particular order) -

use of language and terminology
transparency of pricing and charges
Simple Funerals
burial/ cremation without using services of a funeral director
measures to reduce funeral poverty
Fair Funerals Pledge
Municipal Funeral Schemes
interfaith aspects
green issues
Public Health Funerals ('Paupers' Funerals')

Throughout the meeting there was a strong sense that Churches had a valuable role to play, and I was encouraged to hear about RIP - Funeral Poverty Action Group - a new initiative from Faith and Community Dundee. Their representative spoke warmly of QSA's inspiration and advice.

At the close of the meeting Chloe Clemmons and her colleague Eleri Birkhead offered to complete the Consultation's questionnaire on our behalf, and we agreed to be available for further discussion if required. ■



Faith In Older People

Barbara Davey East Scotland AM

For I was hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me

Faith in Older People is a Scottish organisation whose aim is *'to enable a better understanding of the importance of the spiritual dimension to the well-being of older people'*. In October 2018 they hosted a small consultative conference, 'The Role of the Church in supporting people with Dementia and at the End of Life'. I attended the conference on behalf of Quakers in Scotland, and I thank Friends for this opportunity.

It was a rich day, exploring how we might nurture the spiritual life of older people, and how they might nurture ours. The three speakers all had professional/academic experience working in the field, as well as personal experience of being active members of their faith communities.

In the morning Mary Marshall and Jenny Henderson began by focusing on our perceptions of dementia - the fear, the shame, the avoidance and denial. We each need to find ways of talking about it, in language that's appropriate and realistic, respecting issues of confidentiality, and coming from a place of compassion. We often fall back on reminiscence, but we were reminded that this isn't always easy or even a good idea - what about the life experiences that have left scars? This can be especially complicated for people with dementia. The speakers warned us also of the dangers of being sentimental and of making assumptions about family - not everyone has loving relationships.

There were stories of the positive part music and creativity can play, giving people an opportunity to express themselves and have pleasure, and how simple things like providing a quieter

space for the post-service coffee can help (noise is often an issue for those living with dementia). We were encouraged to find ways of sharing the responsibility of looking out for those living alongside someone with dementia, again without making assumptions about what help might be required, listening instead with sensitivity.

Mary and Jenny spoke of a ‘ministry of presence’ and in the open discussion that followed, representatives were keen to hear about our Quaker sense of stillness and silence. The speakers raised searching questions about the nature of hope and identity, recognising that for most of us, there are no straightforward answers. We need compassion, patience, love. Faith communities can help us access these gifts, and can offer space, care, and time - to be heard and to honour our experiences.

The afternoon speaker was Scott Murray, Hon. Professor in Palliative Care in the Community at Edinburgh University, who began his talk with the words from Matthew quoted above. Work in Africa had brought him face to face with the different ways we culturally approach end of life matters. Here in the UK, medical and cultural developments have shaped society’s current approach - we tend to die slowly nowadays, out of sight, out of mind. Although a specialist himself, Scott stressed that death is not a subject for specialists, we all need to address it - ‘life is a condition with a 100% death rate!’ Speaking practically, he advised that preparation was all-important, and in terms of palliative care, he spoke about KIS - Key Information Summary - which Healthcare Scotland plan to introduce and which will provide an Anticipatory Care Plan.

Facing death makes us think about the meaning and purpose of life. This can deepen our understandings of being human, and can enrich our experience of life. We can help each other reflect on these questions, and this in turn can strengthen and nurture our faith communities. I mentioned the recent Quaker Life *Love*

and Loss leaflets which are an invitation to Friends and meetings to explore end of life matters, and representatives helped themselves to all the copies I had brought.

Scott described the four areas of need - Social, Medical, Psychological/ Emotional and Spiritual. In his life as a GP he encountered spiritual distress as a very real and common condition. It runs in parallel with psychological distress and can be similar for both the patient and those close to them. Research shows most people value the opportunity to have open conversations that allow them to touch on the multiplicity of what they are living through.

Again, the question of hope was raised, not as something vain or futile, but how, realistically, might we hope to die well. For Scott this was to do with being 'fit to die' - physically as well as we can be, psychologically not distressed, spiritually at peace. Some aspects of this are in the hands of specialists and professionals, and he also talked about the funding models required to provide 'good enough' care for all, and how this was an ethical imperative. Faith communities have a wealth of gifts to offer. They can help us find strength to endure suffering and courage to face the passing. And there are so many ways we can share loving care one with another.

The conference was hosted by Faith in Older People in collaboration with Church of Scotland Guild and Action of Churches Together in Scotland ■

Faith in Older People 0131 346 7981 info@fiop.org.uk www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk

KIS Anticipatory Care Plan Healthcare Scotland 0131 623 4300

In memory of Esther Nicolson

Sila Collins-Walden and Alastair Simmonds Inverness LM

Our dear Friend Esther died recently. She was a long-standing, well liked and respected attender at Inverness Meeting over many years. We will always remember her as a lovely kind lady who could often be seen walking through the



town, she was a very sprightly lady in her nineties, with her white hair and distinctive wax hat and flowing cape. She would always stop and embrace you with a hug and “blessings dear” to whom ever she met. LM are planning a memorial for Esther at the L’Arche Community Centre on Saturday March 16th at 2pm to commemorate her life. She attended another church in the town and we will of course invite them to come along too. Alastair Simmons knew Esther well, he tended her garden for her and it was he who wrote this lovely poem. ■

Blue Poppies

She took ages to answer the door
In the heavy summer rain
Finally she fumbled open the catch,
Her hand was in a bandage, her eyes blackened, on a white face
“Err I’ve had a fall” she said, her hands still shaking
“Err I’ve come about the garden, gardening” I said
Suddenly her eyes sparked then ignited
Ninety plus years held in darkening pupils
The delicate filament in her blue iris illuminated
“Did I tell you about trekking in the Himalayas?
Right over the pass for 6 days,
I remember now, the blue poppies, wonderful” she said
She began talking, if she’d known me all of my relatively short
life
She took my arm and leaned hard on the old wooden stick
“Now let me show you the roses”
The summer rain pelted on like an Asian monsoon
We didn’t notice.

By Alastair Simmons (Inverness Meeting)

All Age Worship.
Sila Collins-Walden, Inverness LM.

We held our annual All Age Worship on December 9th with the usual entertainment along with delicious food and drinks. This is a regular occurrence and now that we have space provided by the L'Arche Community – which is comfortable, light and airy, with kitchen facilities and access to to the lovely gardens in summer – it's ideal.

The entertainment again was provided by Friends both adults and children. Brother and sister Angus Laird on the accordion and Rona on flute along with mother Jacquie also on the flute. Both these children are fluent in Gaelic – speaking/reading/writing – and attend the Gaelic school in Inverness. Angus Trevelyan and Sophie, another brother and sister performed on violin and accordion. Their little brother Kenny Erasmus gave his rendition of Jingle Bells.

It just gets better every year. Attendance has increased and it was nice to see our children, the Hitchen family, Trevelyans and the Lairds in attendance.

There was Julia on her accordion – she is a professional musician and composes her own music – Amanda and her mother Elizabeth on violin and drums, Alastair the poet, a reading by Pam. Most Friends had something to contribute on the day which was very enjoyable. It's good to see the children being part of meeting, they are after all our future. A very talented group. I hope I haven't left anyone out, if so I do apologize!! ■

Photos by Oriole Hall Inverness LM



Exciting News from Dundee Meeting!

Pamala McDougall

Sometimes discernment takes a long time. It must be 30 years since Dundee Friends started thinking, talking and exploring if a new meeting house should be part of the future or if another home could be found in an existing building to buy or rent. Part of the process was started because the present Meeting House was not meeting the needs of Friends, particularly its inaccessibility for those with mobility problems, as the ground floor is on long term lease to a property company and the meeting rooms are accessed by steep stone steps. After many discussions over the years, threshing meetings, search groups, feasibility studies involving a lift, visits to many locations and possible sites and even coming close to joining a community project, the Spirit has led us to the present situation—we are going home!

The Meeting House' which looks out on to Whitehouse Crescent in central Dundee, is a five storey handsome building with the letters MEETING HOUSE carved into its stone face. This Grade B listed building has been the home for Quakers for 125 years and is known by many in the City of Discovery including groups who rent rooms within, some who have lived within its Friendly walls, and many others passing by who may have noticed the facade and wondered about Quakers. Some we know have taken the steps to discover for themselves!

For the last couple of years, however, we have been holding our meetings in an office space around the corner of our Meeting House as we recognised the present situation could not continue. This move helped focus on our future needs but as the ground floor of the Meeting House was still unavailable and installing a

lift was not possible, the Dundee Friends Property Trust and Dundee Friends began actively to consider other options.

Then, in the summer of 2017 our tenants at the property centre intimated their intention to leave in August 2019. This news gave the impetus for a Meeting for Clearance, consultations with architects and many further discussions on the wisdom of expending time, energy and financial outlay in returning to our Meeting House. At last we were in unity and could see the way forward for Quakers in Dundee to be accessible, visible, ecologically sensitive and be part of the community by offering more space to groups and for housing needs. The discerning process, although lengthy, is proving fruitful!

Friends have already invested much time and effort into realising our ambitious plans to convert the ground floor into wholly accessible meeting rooms and achieve the criteria for the needs of Dundee Quakers and those using the well loved and valued building. It has not all been plain sailing and some wondered if we had the collective energy and time to develop the Meeting House but we have now embarked on essential fund raising with faith and vigour to meet costs.

The total estimate for the work is around £125,000 of which Dundee Friends Property Trust will contribute £50,000 from the reserves, and we have applied for grants including from the Friends House Property Trust. We need to raise the short fall of around £50,000 and a small fund raising group has been set up to co-ordinate the efforts.

Our fund raising activities have started by selling good quality ball point pens inscribed with our name and contact number. Other plans in progress include a pop-up charity shop in April and producing a Quaker Baker cookery book. One talented

dancer and choreographer from our meeting has offered to run dance workshops to raise funds. We also need to appeal for donations to help us achieve our aim of returning to our historical and spiritual home when hopefully the work will be completed by Autumn 2019. Can you help? All donations will be thankfully received, and if you are a UK tax payer, please use Gift Aid to increase your donation.

For any queries or for a Gift Aid form please contact Administrator, Dundee Friends Property Trust, Tel. 01382225213 or e-mail **dundeequakermeeting@hotmail.com**

Cheques and CAF vouchers to be made out to Dundee Friends Property Trust (Property Account)

We hope you will be able to join us in celebration when we Dundee Quakers can return to our home! ■

Bernardo Alhucema: An appreciation of his life.

Philip Bryers Perth LM.

Bernardo came to Scotland with his family as a refugee after the overthrow of President Allende by General Pinochet in 1973. He described in an interview how he first came into contact with Quakers:

I had a friend who was a student at Glasgow University. She told me about a beautiful place in Sauchiehall Street where I would find someone called Hugh Pyper. The first Sunday I knocked on the door I was too late for worship. The same happened for the next two Sundays then I managed to arrive just in time. I immediately felt it was where I belonged. It was the place I had been looking for for a long time.

He was part of a community of Chilean refugees in the West of Scotland and some of them began to use the basement of the Meeting House in Newton Terrace as their studio. They produced vivid paintings capturing their experiences in Chile and these adorned the stairwell of the Meeting House for a long time. On one occasion Bernardo arranged an art exhibition in the church at Kelvinbridge.

During his years in Glasgow his wife died and he brought up his young family. It was a constant frustration to Bernardo, a former lecturer, that he could not obtain work in Scotland and in the late 1990s, some years after the end of the Pinochet regime, he decided to return to Chile because, he said: *“that is where I belong”*.

There were no openings for him in the city so he settled in a small town in the foothills of the Andes, where he acquired an old property in which he lived for the remainder of his life. From the beginning he worked with people in the community – helping a women’s cooperative to form and knit socks was one initiative. He soon realised the impact of the drugs business on the town and

became a campaigner against the drug trafficking which impinged on almost every family in some way. For a time he had a local radio slot on which he condemned the trade. This made him enemies and there were arson attacks on his home. Then he came up with the idea of introducing the young people of the community to sport.

He discovered badminton – a sport hitherto confined to the urban elite in Chile. He managed to acquire basic equipment and his badminton group took off in a big way. Over the years it was instrumental in keeping many young people out of involvement with drugs and in due course local young people started to go into higher education and obtain jobs. Neither of these possibilities had ever been a possibility before.

Bernardo constantly struggled to obtain enough income to live on. Friends in Scotland sent money on a regular basis which he used to build up the badminton group. He supplemented his income by using his garden to grow crops, by selling his photographs, and by short-term initiatives like making rain sticks from cacti – we still have one from a consignment he sent for us to sell. But there were constant setbacks - drought, earthquakes, floods, and the falling water table as the snow line in the Andes steadily retreated. Somehow he came through all of these episodes with his spirits intact.

He continued to witness his Quaker faith in his life. He later wrote:

It was one of the most beautiful things in my life when I was accepted as a member in 1982. How they accepted me! It didn't matter about my poor English. It filled my empty soul.

He started holding meetings for worship in his home and some local people came. But he commented that the influence of Catholicism in the region made it difficult for people to understand that they could think freely, and the gatherings often became simply social gatherings.

His badminton group was named 'Ovalle Friends' Badminton Team', and they proudly wore club T-shirts made in Glasgow. Over the years the team took part in tournaments across South America, giving members memorable experience of the wider world.

Bernardo returned to Scotland twice. On the first occasion he was able to attend Britain Yearly Meeting where he proudly announced, when introduced, that: *I am Chile Yearly Meeting!* On the second occasion his purpose was to gain a coaching qualification in badminton which would open the door to employment in the education system. He didn't quite manage the qualification but went home with a first aid certificate (in English and with an impressive letterhead) which did the trick and he was paid as a sports coach on and off for some years from 2008. Over time the badminton group welcomed a number of wheelchair users who gained in confidence through sport.

Of this period of his life, Bernardo wrote:

I have tried to give people the meaning of living in community through Quakerism and badminton. When the children decided to stop their involvement in drugs that was a real victory. The economic aspect of their free decision became something spiritual. The idea of universal love being stronger than aggression has taken root.

Bernardo's health declined over the past decade, with increasing respiratory problems, but despite this he remained active well into his seventies, gaining inspiration from his mother whom he described as indestructible. When a tsunami devastated the south of Chile, Bernardo joined the ranks of volunteers helping with the clear-up.

But circumstances were closing in on him. His house, and the vital well, were severely damaged by quakes, the population of Punitaqui fell dramatically as people were forced to leave by

climate change, and his income from sports coaching dried up. He investigated moving to Ecuador where he would be employed (on the strength of his knowledge of the English language) to guard an area of hard wood forest against illegal logging, in return for a house and the possibility of making a meagre living from bee-keeping. This was not to be and in one of his last communications, in April 2018, he wrote: *“Sorry friends for my silence am so frustrate even i can (cannot?) understand myself. In 5 months my full life collapse into nothing...sorry friends”*. A crowd funding initiative in Scotland raised money which paid for him to receive treatment for his cancer but the end came in early August 2018, with his elder daughter, Cristina, and other friends beside him.

A Chilean friend wrote on Facebook: *“I want to remind (remember?) you wise friend thank you for teaching us that you can be happy with the simple things of life thanks for those chat and follies fly high friend and rest in peace.”* (Claudia Cecelia Marin Cortes) A fitting tribute to a remarkable person, and a good friend to so many people. ■



A Peace Pole for Falkirk: Hope for a Better World

John and Mariot Dallas

There has been a Quaker meeting in Polmont for over thirty years and to mark the occasion, Polmont Quakers have presented a Peace Pole to the people of Falkirk. On Sunday 7 October we gathered at the Helix Park (home of the Kelpies) despite the rain and wind, to celebrate the inauguration of the pole. The guests included friends and Friends from Polmont Meeting, other local Meetings and General Meeting, Provost Billy Buchanan, Councillors Cecil Meiklejohn and Robert Bissett and Ben Mardell, representing Falkirk Community Trust. Many local churches sent representatives including Falkirk Central Mosque, the Falkirk Islamic centre, the Baptist Church, Bainsford Church and Christchurch.



Kate Arnot from Polmont Quakers welcomed everyone and explained that the pole says 'May peace prevail' in English, Gaelic, Polish and Urdu and is a celebration of our rich and diverse local culture.

The Freedom of Mind Choir sang 'Peace, Shalom, Salaam' and this was followed by two readings from Quaker Faith and Practice.

24:03

A good end cannot sanctify evil means; nor must we ever do evil, that good may come of it... It is as great presumption to send our passions upon God's errands, as it is to palliate them with God's name... We are too ready to retaliate, rather than forgive, or gain

by love and information. And yet we could hurt no man that we believe loves us. Let us then try what Love will do: for if men did once see we love them, we should soon find they would not harm us. Force may subdue, but Love gains: and he that forgives first, wins the laurel. William Penn, 1693

24:10

Public statement of the Yearly Meeting of Aotearoa/New Zealand, 1987, at a time when many Friends were making submissions to a committee established by their government to review defence policy: We totally oppose all wars, all preparation for war, all use of weapons and coercion by force, and all military alliances: no end could ever justify such means. We equally and actively oppose all that leads to violence among people and nations, and violence to other species and to our planet.

We must start with our own hearts and minds. Wars will stop only when each of us is convinced that war is never the way.

Cecil Meiklejohn, Leader of Falkirk Council, spoke about her pride in the diversity of Falkirk and how the message of the pole will be something that can be shared by all people. She also said that she hoped it will become a place where anyone can spend quiet time. The leaders of the two Mosques then expressed their thanks for their invitation and spoke of how we must all live together in peace and how all religions are one.

As the choir sang again two young Quakers gave out origami Peace Cranes and this was followed by a few minutes of silence followed by the shaking of hands. We went in to the café at Falkirk Stadium and enjoyed being warm and dry, more entertainment from the choir and a friendly afternoon tea.

Despite the wind and rain, this was a warm and inclusive occasion, celebrating peace and the hope of a better world. ■

BOOK REVIEW

EVE WAS SHAMED. Helena Kennedy, 2018, Penguin Random House.

Margaret Roy, Lanark Meeting

This is not the first book by Helena Kennedy, a high-ranking QC, on the inequality and injustice to women within the British legal system. Of course, it begs the question as to why women should be treated any differently. Why do they deserve different treatment?

Helena Kennedy may be a life-long feminist but she is a realist whose arguments are based on long experience 'at the coal face': *I was a child of the Glasgow tenements with strong class politics, which informed my way of seeing law. When the women's movement gathered steam I was in my early twenties, I went to the meetings, read the books and carried the banners, but it was at the coal face that I really learned a deep and visceral understanding of feminism, in the cells of my clients, in community advice centres and refuges, and most of all in courtrooms.* Equality to her goes beyond equal opportunity and pay. She seeks 'genuine parity', envisaging 'a world where each of us is valued for who we are, for our individual human qualities, rather than our gender or race or class or caste . . . valued not because we have learned to ape male rationality but because we have other kinds of intelligence and skills to bring to the table too'. 'A world where we are all respected simply because of our common humanity'.

Coming through the system, in the criminal justice courts, she starts with the difficulties of a women lawyer showing how the Inns of Court system is biased towards the monied elite of the old school tie type. Her answer was to set up new chambers of legal practice based on a more equal basis where women lawyers dealt

with more than the family courts and where they were not penalised for taking time for the needs of their own families.

Working from the bottom she is not a simple theorist. Her views are well informed. Hence she can go beyond the statistics that most crime committed by women is rarely violent and often 'petty'. So why are they in prison? The punishments designed for men (and by men) are often inappropriate for women, she says. One vision that sticks in my mind is of a woman going into labour in a locked cell on her own with a male guard on the other side. Another is of a woman who fails to keep up with the proscribed community service demands when she can't get child care so ends up in prison on a sentence that is greater than the punishment originally given.

Separation from her children can be a more drastic punishment not just for the mother. The new system evolving goes some way to rectify this when much smaller and more local units enable better contact with her family. However, the development of these is slow, deterred by economics and varying political commitments to them. *Where is Elizabeth Fry?*

Then here is the problem of violence towards women. Does she report it? Where will she go with her children if she loses the tenancy of her home when taking refuge outside the home? Why doesn't she leave him? And I know myself of one case where the mother retains contact with the violent partner so as not to deprive the child of his father!

HK looks at how women are stereotyped within the system. Good mother/bad mother. If she leaves the children behind she is a bad mother and can often lose custody. If she takes them with her she enters a poverty trap. Is she a whore if she dresses nicely for court? What profile does she present to the court and jury? How is she judged on her behaviour, her clothes and presentation even before the evidence is heard? When the shy victim gains

confidence, stands up for herself, she is a stropky virago. She can't win. Whilst there is so much we can do to be enlightened on the effects on women and their children within a justice system created for men by men, the stereotyping of women within our patriarchal society is much more difficult to deal with.

There is a helplessness that is all too difficult to articulate and also shows how we are so sunk in patriarchal structures that it is almost impossible to change the rules of the game without actually becoming part of it and thus perpetuating the double standards. We are 'lucky' in this country that some injustices against women are recognised: equal pay, equal opportunity in education and promotion, equal representation. Of course that is decried by the recent strikes of carers and co, mostly women's work that is undervalued and underpaid. Does it stop by ensuring funding for Rape Crisis and Women's aid, sending bras and knickers to Africa, supporting Side by Side for gender justice? Wearing black for Thursdays in black?

Bringing it home, we as Quakers like to project our concern into action. Consciousness raising is more subtle. If we are to model the Society we wish to see, how do we go about it? How does this fit within our Peace Testimony?

This book is a true eye-opener to how a patriarchal culture deeply affects women who can rarely be seen as real souls with that speck of the Divine. ■

Calling for General Meeting for Scotland Saturday March 9th

Dear Friends,

Please do come to Glasgow 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 Glasgow. To make this happen reasonably easily I need to know numbers and ages and have contact information for each young person. Please email me about this adwoabittle@hotmail.co.uk **LM Clerks PLEASE pass this on to young people and their parents in your Meeting and read guidelines below.**

General Meeting will be held on **9th March in Glasgow Friend's Meeting House, Elmbank Crescent, G2 4PS**. There is a carpark opposite, and Charing Cross train station is also just across the road. 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 supplied at 1 pm and we hope to finish with cakes at 4:30.

The business this GM will predominantly be focussed on "Scottish Arrangements" regarding finding people for roles such as clerks and trustees and how we organise this across Scotland. This is a very exciting time for Quakers in Scotland. I see it a bit like a Spring clean. Everything out of the cupboard, dusted off and put back. It's up to you what goes back, in what order and how it will be used in the future. Let's all be part of this discernment. Paul Parker, our Recording Clerk, Jonathan Carmichael, our Simpler Meetings project coordinator and

Sandra Berry, Director of Woodbrooke will all be joining us to listen and offer advice if we feel we need it. This GM follows the thoughtful work of the meeting held 13th Sept 2018 in Perth. Please read last Scottish Friend for lots of information on the subject so far.

Please do come. All decisions made are in your name and if you are not there, well what can I say!

If you would like B&B or local information, please contact Mary Alice Mansell mamansell54@gmail.com on the local arrangements committee.

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.

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

Glasgow 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-yearolds must be in groups with older Yps

6 If the YPs do not wish to have free time outwith 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.■

Adwoa Bittle

**Dates for Meeting for Worship at North Gate Faslane. 2019.
March 24th. - April 14th – May 19th- and June 16th.
Alison Burnley**

Please remember to bring along something to sit on, something to eat to give you the energy to get home along with waterproof clothing. You will notice we have only have dates up to June. When we hear from the Northern Friends Peace Board we will be able to add the rest. You can then be sure that November 10th is fixed. I look forward to seeing you there.