



February  
2009

# Scottish Friend



All Saints Church Hall, St. Andrews, where  
during November General Meeting  
early snow melted in the sunshine.

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Please send material for next *Scottish Friend* by 10th April to Margaret Peacock, 16 Drumlin Drive, Milngavie, G62 6LN, or [nmjpeacock@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nmjpeacock@yahoo.co.uk).

Many thanks to all who have made suggestions. Please go on sending me news, reports, thoughts and pictures. For the front cover I am particularly interested in photographs of your meeting places. My mobile phone took the current cover picture.

*Scottish Friend* will be posted on the GM website at the same time as it goes to the printer. If you would like an email copy instead of a paper one, please email [scotfriends@gmail.com](mailto:scotfriends@gmail.com), to let Bronwen Currie know.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writers and not necessarily the opinions of the Society of Friends in Scotland, Britain Yearly Meeting or elsewhere.

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Michael Wright (Teesdale and Cleveland AM) wrote the Guardian column "Face to Faith" - regarding Quakers speaking out - on 6 December. When I contacted him about reproducing it here he kindly offered to write this different version below.

It is very easy for faith organisations to get their priorities misplaced – or as Jesus vividly put it - strain out gnats while swallowing camels.

While so many people live in poverty, or are dying of Aids or through war, and countless suffer from injustice, persecution, and lack of basic amenities, it can seem as though some faith leaders are pre-occupied with matters of sexual relationships and gender roles, and others fuss about the naming of teddy bears, or the clothes they require women to wear.

There is too much pre-occupation with doctrines, traditions and practices which block the path to spiritual creativity. The focus in religious life too easily becomes diverted from foundation values of justice, compassion, integrity and peace.

For 37 years I was an Anglican priest. I resigned from its ministry in 1999 because I felt its priorities were awry. I wanted its focus to be on those highlighted in the gospels: the widow giving her mite; the madman among the tombs; the halt, lame and blind; the victim of robbers; and the wastrel son who returns home a penitent. This is a vision that captured my imagination.

I had grown up in a home where my family were not churchgoers, indeed my father was a convinced non-believer. As a teenager I sought to disprove in RE lessons "the Christian myth", but had an

experience that I thought was of God. Within a couple of years of being baptized I was encouraged to prepare for ordination. So when my father died, I took his non-religious funeral. I had never conducted a non-religious funeral before. Friends asked me for their relatives, and for some years I did so openly, when I was available. However after five years I was given an ultimatum from the Archbishop of York to stop. Because I had taken an oath to be obedient to him, I did. But after three years of this I could take no more.

When our local bishop would not ordain our curate because the curate's wife would be participating in the laying-on of hands, I just thought the leaders of my part of the church had lost an important part of the plot. Compassion had come second place to dogma. I joined and became a Quaker. How delighted I am that Britain Yearly Meeting has taken stock and identified a set of priorities for the next six years which I can feel committed to.

"A framework for action 2009-2014 sub-titled *"Together in worship and witness"* encourages Friends to offer new ideas for ways forward for our Society. I do like this characteristic bottom-up attitude of Quakers, coupled with an emphasis on evaluating ideas with discernment.

The document encourages us Quakers to relate our spiritual life to how we actually behave. George Fox and the early Friends strongly challenged the tendency of people of faith keep a rather tenuous link between prayer and practice. The historian G.M.Trevelyan in his *Social History of England* wrote that for Quakers "Christian qualities matter much more than Christian dogmas. No church or sect had ever made that its living rule before."

We are known for a lot of silence in our meetings for worship. We are also known for often being hesitant to articulate our values and beliefs: we do not do evangelism. The new set of priorities is asking us to look at this again. Our Quaker values seem to me to have become as important as they are topical in this economic, social, and moral climate.

Our framework for action wants us to find our tongues, and then to use all modern means of communication to get our message across. That message includes the encouragement, not to Quakers alone but to everyone in society, to live simpler lives, to help conserve our environment, and to act responsibly towards anyone we can help.

Is the current world economic crisis the result of neglecting the importance of building an economic and social system on sound ethical as well as economic values and principles? We are being encouraged to find a voice for today, and challenge those values and practices which have led to some of the economic and social consequences of our current world-wide crises. We call this "speaking truth to power".

Waging peace rather than war is integral to the Quaker way. We are being invited to look afresh at how we and other people deal with conflicts. The most constructive ways are those which lead to better communication, understanding, and imaginative ways of building better relationships. These are not just between individuals, and within local communities, but also on the national and international scene. Mediation, Alternatives to Violence Project, and Ecumenical Accompaniers in Palestine are just some of the typically Quaker methods of approach to these tasks.

The criminal justice system is badly in need of the fresh vision that Friends like Elizabeth Fry and John Howard brought to it in the 19th century. We are being asked to give priority to Initiatives that reflect Quaker values, like Restorative Justice (the process that brings victims and perpetrators face to face), and Circles of Support and Accountability (which support sex offenders to live in society after prison and avoid re-offending).

I see these as a call to look afresh at Jesus' view that the Christian ethic can be encapsulated as "love God, and love your neighbour as yourself". We long for the rule of Christ in the hearts of people, to see justice and compassion rule, for this world to be the domain in which the fruits of the Spirit flourish: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control". The creative bit is to apply that in life as we know it these days. It is a challenge not just to Quakers, or even just to Christians, but to all people of faith.

*A framework for action 2009 – 2014* subtitled *Together in worship and witness* – is available from Recording Clerk's Office, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ, or on line at [www.quaker.org.uk](http://www.quaker.org.uk)

\* \* \* \* \*

John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust

Felicity Kelsall

We are in the happy situation of having a modest legacy to disburse. John Wigham directed that grants should be made to 'deserving persons resident in Scotland who owing to straitened circumstances are unable to enjoy the usual pleasures of life, the purpose of such grants being to provide the recipients with some additional comfort or pleasure of an exceptional nature over and above the usual necessities of life'.

We welcome applications from Quakers and non-Quakers resident anywhere in Scotland, for grants large or small. £500 will normally be the maximum. It must be emphasised that grants cannot be made to reimburse someone retrospectively, for instance, for an event that has already occurred, or for goods already purchased.

To apply, you should complete a form, which can be obtained by telephoning 01620 829117 or 0131 447 3268. The completed form should be passed to a Quaker of long-standing, well known to their meeting, who will countersign it to confirm that (to the best of his/her knowledge) you fulfil the criteria in the first paragraph above. S/he will then send it to the trustees to arrive by 31 March or 30 September. Applicants will normally hear the result of their application within 8 weeks of these dates.

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Friendly Footwear

Liz Woods

I go into meeting with heart well prepared  
I'm still an attender but now quite as scared  
As I was at the start so I take up my seat  
But I find my attention diverted by - feet

Helen next door is sporting blue crocs  
Hilary's courts are straight out of the box  
Peter's been sailing and wears his deck shoes  
John's in red leather and his feet are HUGE!  
There are vegans in canvas and veggies in jellies  
And a gardening Quaker in green spotted wellies  
The Friend who wears sandals whatever the weather  
And the person of principle who eschews all leather.  
There's walkers in boots and a young friend in clogs  
And Jenny's all muddy from walking her dogs

Then there's me, and although I try hard to be plain  
I fail at the first post again and again  
And the reason my Quakerly character's tarnished?  
My toes - gaily coloured and scarletly varnished.  
I take a quick look round the toes in the meeting  
All cleanly unpolished and unless someone's cheating  
And under their sensible lace-ups or hose  
They've got a tattoo or they're gilding their toes  
I'm the only one here who's garishly painted  
My soul is in peril, my character's tainted.

So I'll sit here just quietly 'cos I've let down the side  
And I like my red toes, so I'm guilty of pride  
So not only not plain but sinful as well  
With my red painted nails I am destined for Hell.  
Then someone stands up, what they say is delightful  
Clear and profound, simple - insightful  
And I suddenly think of the joy in variety  
That in painting my toes there's no need for sobriety  
There's a place for all footwear as every Friend knows  
And maybe they'll take me because of my toes!



The Scottish Churches Social Inclusion network (SCSIN for short) is convened by the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer and meets around six times a year. Graham Blount is moving on from this post at the end of December.

It brings together a broad cross-section of church representatives and staff from church-related organisations active in social regeneration settings.

As General Meeting representative, I am often the only person round the table who is not in paid employment related to the business of SCSIN. As a result, it is easy to feel that Friends are less actively engaged in witnessing to the world in these areas. Our limited resources, and the fact that Friends are, in many instances, working through other groups, go some way to explaining this situation.

SCSIN invites guest speakers from the Parliament, or from the Scottish Government to attend, though this has happened less often in the past year. It receives updates on developments and initiatives in six broad areas:

- Poverty and Social Justice
- Debt
- Homelessness
- Racial Justice
- Asylum
- Community Regeneration

It also considers consultation documents such as the recent Scottish Government Discussion Paper on "Tackling poverty, inequality and

deprivation in Scotland". Where appropriate it makes representations on these.

In recent months it has undertaken work on proposed Government guidelines for the funding of faith groups in Scotland. There is concern that grant aid is becoming harder to secure for those groups in the voluntary sector, including local church initiatives, which do not have the capacity to cope with the increasingly prevalent contract culture. The fear is that small but dynamic and creative initiatives will be unable to find a place in the world of public funding.

SCSIN receives information on a wide array of conferences, events, campaigns and publications. Recent topics have included the "Get Fair" national poverty campaign, Racial Justice Sunday, the "Salt of the earth" report on the impact of faith communities on regeneration in Glasgow, the forthcoming "Poverty and homelessness action week" planned for February 2009, and anti-sectarian initiatives.

The work of other churches in Scotland challenges us to ask whether Friends are sufficiently engaged in addressing hardship and exclusion in our communities and whether there is more that we could be doing.



**Correction to 2009 Book of Members and Attenders**

Our clerk, Robin Waterston, points out that his email address is robin.waterston128@googlemail.com - i.e. with a dot in his name.

## SCOTTISH QUAKER COMMUNITY JUSTICE NETWORK ANNUAL GATHERING - 11.10.08

David Turner

The theme this year was "Children's Hearings in Scotland Today" and was presented by Joan Frondigan of Children's Hearings Training Unit. After a short brainstorming session to draw on our existing knowledge Joan took us through the essential components of the Hearings system, pausing frequently to allow questions and comments.

Despite the length of time Hearings have been in operation in Scotland - almost 40 years - we soon became aware that for most of us present (some are very well informed through present or recent involvement) there are deficiencies of understanding which will be shared more widely among Friends. The following is a summary of notes taken and aims to be an outline of how the system operates.

### BACKGROUND and PRINCIPLES

Children's Hearings were set up under the 1968 Social Work (Scotland) Act, implementing recommendations of the earlier Kilbrandon Report which carried forward ideas already developing, influenced by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was a complete break with traditional ways of dealing with children in difficulties through separate agencies such as welfare departments, children's services and courts. The new system focussed on needs, irrespective of how these come to public attention. The principle of "best interests of the child" is foremost of a number of basic considerations. Children and families take centre ground. Treatment, not punishment, is the underlying philosophy of all measures to be taken.

### LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Responsibility for Children's Hearings lies with local

authorities, each authority employing a Children's Reporter who is responsible for receiving referrals and reports, assessing information, arranging Hearings and Reviews, recording, acting also as legal agent (though not necessarily legally trained) in court proceedings where the facts are in dispute. If these are not proven no further action is taken.

## PROCESS of REFERRAL

A concern is raised with the Children's Reporter for an area - anyone may do this, though most originate with Health, Education, Social Work or Police. The local authority is asked to investigate and report, following which the Reporter takes a decision: (a.) no further action; (b.) voluntary support by the local authority; or (c.) child referred to a Hearing. There are 13 possible grounds for referral, common examples being neglect, truancy, offending, or out-of-control.

## CHILDREN'S PANEL

Of all the various aspects of the new system, the composition of the panel was among the most innovative feature, being wholly community-based. A panel is three in number, people specially qualified by knowledge and experience. They must be of mixed gender. In recruiting panel members efforts are made to have a spread of age-groups and social backgrounds. At the Hearing one member acts as chairperson. All serve unpaid, expenses only being covered. A comprehensive training programme is involved, with regular in-service training obligatory.

## THE HEARING

Present at a Hearing are the child, a relevant person (usually a parent or guardian), and a social worker. The Reporter attends but does not participate in the discussion, providing procedural guidance if required. Others may be invited to contribute, e.g. an

educational representative, or others having relevant information.

The aim is to have a full and frank discussion, with all matters openly considered - no adjournments to confer out of sight and hearing. The child's views are sought and when all have had an opportunity to be heard efforts are made to reach an agreed solution. Decisions open to the panel are: (a.) discharge of the referral, (b.) continue for further information, and (c.) make, continue, vary, or terminate a supervision requirement. Measures of care proposed are compulsory - this is prescribed in the legislation - and may include residential treatment and care if seen to be required.

A great deal more information could be given, but the above may suffice to give the main elements of the system set up and put into practice in 1971. Children's Hearings are admired worldwide and the system has inspired initiatives on the same principles in a number of countries. The Howard League includes such Hearings in its most recent campaign recommendations aimed at remedying the systems for addressing child offending in England and Wales.

From time to time there have been reviews of the system's operation and improvements made. However a more wide-ranging evaluation has now been under way, made necessary through changes in both national and European law regarding needs of troubled children.

The Scottish Government has endorsed fully the core principles of the system in addressing the question of Children's Hearings in the decade ahead. The system will continue to have a key part to play in its policy under the heading of "Getting it Right for Every Child". There are proposals for a non-departmental public body to be set up - the Scottish Children's Hearings Agency - for comprehensive oversight. Its functions would include

establishing a National panel on Safeguarding through which, should the child's views and interests be unclear, someone can be appointed to put these forward. Another responsibility will be to promote best standards across the range of local authority provision for Hearings throughout Scotland.

Factors which have implications for the future include increased concern for children's rights, increased referrals and the growing complexity of issues arising. An important development that relates to European legislation is the requirement of legal representation in prescribed cases.

These examples make clear some of the ways in which the system is responding and adapting, while maintaining its original principles, to the challenges of today.

The discussion following Joan Frondigan's presentation was broad-ranging, and to reflect adequately the many issues it raised is beyond the scope of this report. Among these were questions on restorative justice and reparation, which do arise now in the Hearings setting, though the former has most value at the pre-panel stage. The advent of Anti-social Behaviour Orders seems to have made less impact in Scotland than elsewhere. Local Authorities, while making some use of intensive Supervision and Monitoring Orders and Movement Restriction Orders (tagging) apparently regard ASBOs as having very limited application in the context of the philosophy which inspired the Hearings system.

Those present with 'hands on' experience made a particularly useful contribution to much of the discussion. We were reminded that the system is no 'magic wand', depending as it does on the availability, the appropriateness, and the effectiveness of care and support on the ground, ever reflecting difficult political choices over use of resources at both local and national levels. Some provision is woefully adequate, possibly harmful, e.g. for children with special needs such as result from mental health conditions,

treatment of which, in cases where suitable accommodation is needed, may be found only in adult establishments. As with other forms of social provision a `post-code lottery' operates.

The influence of the media in the demonisation of children and young people is a feature of UK society generally which can distort public perceptions of the Hearings system's achievements, focussing on its apparent failures or its `soft' decisions on some cases of persistent offending, choosing to ignore that, to an ever-increasing extent, children are being referred as in need of protection rather than over law-breaking.

The minimum age of criminal responsibility in Scotland - 8 years, is seen by many as an anomaly in today's world. European practice is generally much higher with nothing that suggests adverse consequences.

Altogether, this was a session of exceptional interest and quality, the highlight of a memorable day of sharing our involvements and concerns.



LOOKING AHEAD - GM SPEAKERS IN 2009 Beryl Milner

June 20 In Glasgow, Gillian Ashmore, Recording Clerk, BYM.

September 12 Dundee Restorative Justice - Marian Liebmann.

November 21/22 Aberdeen - residential GM

"The World Family of Friends. "

Information about the speakers will follow.

# Native American 10 Commandments



1. The earth is our mother, care for her.
2. Honor all your relations.
3. Open your heart and soul to the Great Spirit.
4. All life is sacred, treat all beings with respect and kindness.
5. Take from the earth only what is needed, nothing more.
6. Do what is needed to be done for the good of all.
7. Speak the truth, but only of the good of others.
8. Give constant thanks to the Great Spirit for each new day.
9. Follow the rhythms of nature, rise and relax with the sun.
10. Enjoy life's journey, but leave only the tracks of love behind.



## WHAT IS MEDITATION?

Margaret Roy

Meditation is a tool that enables greater access to our mental abilities, to gain greater possession/knowledge of our Self. We use only a fraction of our brain. What does the rest do??? Is this something we can use in a Quaker meeting?

Most of our society functions on a level of Newtonian physics, i.e. cause and effect in 3 dimensions. How would our consciousness differ if we functioned in terms of Einstein's approach and Quantum physics and 11 dimensions?

### STAGE ONE

Letting Go - a Deep Relaxation. *My Body is relaxed but I am not my Body.*

Some start from the toes and move their consciousness upwards tensing and relaxing muscles, re-aligning the skeleton if necessary. Use the outbreath to let go and relax deeper.

The traditional posture is a straight back with the head slightly bent forward to open the back of the neck. The hands rest in the lap. (In cranio-sacral terms this allows the longitudinal tide to rise up the spine and over the head to the forehead. This is the great healer that allows the energy to move, to eliminate stagnancy. When it comes over the top to the forehead consciousness may shift and clairvoyance occur. You need to stabilise the energy by settling it in the heart centre, focusing on compassion, or love of the Divine – the Buddhist's call this the Supreme Abiding.)

The difficulty may be that, once relaxed, you fall asleep. Open the eyes, or close them to balance the attention. Focus on an object to steady your concentration.

## STAGE TWO

Increasing Awareness. Staying in the present.

*My Emotions are still but I am not my Emotions.*

Thich Nat Hanh calls this washing the dishes to wash the dishes. Give full attention to whatever you are doing. A great practice whilst driving. This is not an effort but once again allowing the state.

Now you will find distraction of the emotions, of unresolved attachments or aversions pulling you in one direction then another. These may be linked with the 6 negative emotions of jealousy, pride, ignorance, hatred, greed and desire, all underpinned by fear. Fear is the great force that dissolves unity. You can follow these distractions to understand the nature of your attachment or aversion, so you have no need of them any more, or you can work to tame the tiger of the mind by simply bringing the attention back. Do not force the issue or cause further attachment.

A useful tool in this stage is concentration on the breath to keep the mind at the point of awareness, neither following what is without nor getting involved in the internal turmoil. Count the breaths in and out up to 10 then down again to 1. Or count the breaths in and out up to 21 then repeat and repeat. Or breathe in for a count of 4, 5 or 6; hold it for the same number; then breathe out for the same count. Let go (relax) the emotions. This is the world of polarity where most of us will spend our energy. Stay aware, on the edge.

## STAGE THREE

Rest the Mind in its True Nature. *My 'mind' is quiet but I am not my thoughts.*

We are looking at the cognitive mind and how thoughts arise now.

The cognitive mind is a learned phenomenon. In Buddhism it is another means of perception in the sense that it is how we construct the world we see, and as such the world we see is our own invention, or illusion. In terms of Western psychology it is attitude or even personality.

At this level there is a perpetual stream of thoughts. One technique in mediation is to see this stream as white noise that does not need your attention. Or it is like looking at one of those puzzles where you can see a different picture by allowing yourself to focus differently. Or it could be 'reading between the lines'. To reach this level you need to rest the 'mind' of thoughts and allow yourself to experience differently.

If you cannot avoid the thinking process, then use it by concentrating on a prayer of particular thought, or tunes can be very powerful. Concentrating on an image may help. My favourite is Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane – *Can no one stay awake with me?* Or listen to the Silence, and rest in it. Technically you are engendering Bodhicitta – setting the mind in the heart, in compassion.

## STAGE FOUR

Serenity     *I am the Self; strong, pure, filled with light and love; one with all Creation.*

Here you will find peace and love, in the Silence, in the unity of all creation. This could be the Collective Consciousness of Jung, or Union with God.

If it is really difficult at first then break down the concentration time to 2 minutes then 5 minutes then 10, etc. Take in just one book to study and use it to keep the mind alert and interested. Think of training a puppy. Be patient. Arrange your digressions to feed the 'habit'.

## Diary Dates

Alison Burnley

Quaker Tapestry Embroidery courses.



Foundation or refresher courses - 2 days - £120

May 27-28

June 24-25

August 4-5

September 29-30

Stage Two - Design and Lettering - 3 days - £140

August 18-20

Stage three - Embellishment - 3 days - £140

October 18-22

### Faslane Meeting for Worship and Witness

8 February,

12 April, (Easter Sunday),

7 June,

30 August,

27 September,

8 November.

North Gate, 11-00 am.

Bring something to sit on,  
something to eat, and warm/waterproof clothes.

As I write, the new 2009 Book of Members and Attenders is in process of preparation. Indeed, by the time you read this you may well have a copy of it in its shiny red cover, up to date at last with new addresses and telephone numbers, and the contact details of those new attenders whom you've been meaning to invite to lunch but never remembered to ask for their phone number.

But wait – no.... The 2009 book was up to date at the end of November, when I had inserted all the information sent to me by overseers and correspondents. Since then of course someone will have moved house, have acquired a new phone number, and possibly even a new baby! By the summer I dare say your book will be annotated with as many scribbled additions and amendments as my 2008 copy was. And my 2007 copy. And my 2006 copy. And what do I do with all those old copies, full of protected data that I must not put in the bin? (OK – now that I have a wood-burning stove, no problem, but it used to take a lot of shredding.)

It occurs to me that it's time for us to think about getting our directory of Friends and Attenders online, in a secure searchable database that could be kept up to date all year as changes took place and accessed by any authorised person with internet access from anywhere in the world.

Now I know that whilst some Friends are eager technophiles, already accustomed to internet banking, eBay and Facebook, others have been dragged somewhat reluctantly into the world of email and web-searching and are deeply suspicious about the security and powers of cyberspace, and some have refused to be dragged

anywhere at all. So let me offer some reassurance and some more information about what I have in mind.

First of all, what do I mean by “secure” and “authorised”? Well, the online database would not be open to any Tom, Dick or Harriet. Only a person listed in that database would be able to access it, by means of a login and password, and the database would therefore actually be more secure than our current book, over which we have no control as to who looks at it once it is out in Friends' homes.

Of course only those with internet access would be able to use such a database. So please be reassured: the book would still be necessary and would continue to be produced for as long as it was needed (though admittedly over time, as the print run decreased, the price would rise). In any case, there are many times when you just need a printed directory at your fingertips (eg Overseers' meetings!), but I would like to think it would eventually be possible for users of an online database to be able to search and print out subsets of information, such as Local or Area Meeting lists, for such times.

We have the technology to establish such a database already but not at the moment the available time of the people with the skills to set it up, so nothing is going to happen in the immediate future. At the moment these are just ideas Friends – something to get you thinking. I would like to hear your views, so please get in touch with me with any questions, thoughts and opinions you may have: [scotfriends@gmail.com](mailto:scotfriends@gmail.com), 01496 850006 – or of course my details are in the Book (I hope!!!)

Having just completed a year in the newly created post of Representative Friend I feel in reflective mode – but first let me report on some of the events I have attended on your behalf since the last SF.

In October there were 2 main events:. Feeling the need to restore my own soul I took the advantage of attending a one day conference at the Church of Scotland HQ at 121 George Street entitled 'He Restores My Soul'.

Ecumenical participants engaged in a novel bible study session; hearing about others' church activities; uplifting shared outreach work; ongoing plans for 'Edinburgh 2010, and some rousing hymn singing. Just the thing for a flagging Rep. Friend and my soul was duly restored!

A whole day was spent at Scottish Churches House (SCH) at the invitation of the Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relationships (QCCIR). After the business we were led by Stephen Smyth, General Secretary of Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS) on the theme of Mission. This was particularly relevant and helpful in relation to Quaker involvement in the planning and participation of the Ecumenical Gathering 'Edinburgh 2010' and our own understanding of the interpretation and meaning of Mission for us today. Our clerk, Robin Waterston, and several other Friends also attended this day by invitation. A booklet 'What Mission Means', a collection of comments on the definition of Mission, now includes a Quaker view of Mission and can be obtained from ACTS office in Alloa on 01259 216980 or email [ecumenical@acts-scotland.org](mailto:ecumenical@acts-scotland.org)

An overnight stay at The Bield, a Christian Conference Centre in Perth, on 12th November allowed for precious time with ecumenical officers of some of the member churches in a more relaxed setting. The venue and set-aside time led to deeper conversations and sharing of local, national and worldwide concerns on which we might work closer together both at personal and church levels. We also found time to share the joys and fun of being together as 'ecumaniacs', acknowledging that not all our church members are as enthusiastic as we are!

Another day at SCH on 14th November – a venue whose ethos I always enjoy – as a planning day for 'Edinburgh 2010' organised by the Scottish Co-ordinating Team for Edinburgh (SCoT). Friends may remember the first Scottish ecumenical assembly in Edinburgh 'Breaking New Ground' when 7 Friends were appointed to attend. It is hoped that there will be Friendly participation in 2010 which seems to be a long way off, but in terms of planning is actually getting quite near. A new leaflet is being produced to advertise the event and should be available soon. Watch this space!

Having been nominated to represent ACTS on the panel for selection and appointment of the new post of NHS Director of Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care, I knew this needed time to devote to the process which led to the day in Edinburgh to interview the 5 short listed applicants. And so it came to pass timewise, but it was a fascinating process in which my Quakerly input seemed appreciated. My completed working life in the NHS, my interest in holistic care, and my background in counselling, all appeared to be of use so I was glad to be involved in the final selection of this important post. As a Trustee of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) my duties took me to Swanwick for the first time for a residential conference of the new set-up of CTBI Networks and Forums. My



education of the CTBI organisation was well boosted and there were 3 excellent speakers. As always I enjoyed the brief social times and was delighted to meet up with other Quaker reps., especially Janet Scott who is clerk of QCCIR and also Shona who works in the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Liaison Office in Edinburgh.

My Rep. year ended by attending the Holyrood Christmas Carol Concert on 17th December. This was Graham Blount's last official event as Scottish Churches Parliamentary Liaison Officer ( SCPO) before he left the post for an academic one and tributes were rightly paid to his work. Local children sang, MSPs read the Lessons and some played in the band, and the Presiding Officer presided over it all. We, religious 'leaders' and civic dignitaries, were entertained to festive refreshments and mingled with MSPs and Holyrood staff. (My confession – I never miss an opportunity in parliamentary circles to do some outreach and lobbying!)

Reflections.

As Robin and I reported at the last GM in St Andrews, the last year for us has been an experiment to split the clerkship into Clerk and Representative Friend which we recommended to continue. Friends seem happy for us to do this and we intend to carry on until November 2009 when hopefully a new Representative will be appointed. After dealing with a few grey areas to begin with, it now seems clear how we divide our responsibilities and have settled happily into our roles with Robin dealing with all clerky duties and me dealing with external, mostly ecumenical, affairs. On a personal note, it would be good to have some feedback on which areas Friends would like me to develop and prioritise, if more – or less - reporting would be welcome. At present I discern how my time (and your money e.g. for travelling expenses) are spent, with advice and support from various Friends and the Central Committee if I ask for it.

The Friend has been interested in how this experiment is working as it's a new way of addressing difficulties in finding Friends to cover unfulfilled posts and I have been asked to write an account of our first year. If you can let me know how you think it is going it would help me in reflecting GM members' views as well as my own (maybe myopic?) overview!

PS

TOWARDS WHOLENESS' – A Conference for Peacemakers.  
Aviemore 18th-20th Jan. 2009

The Ministries Council of the Church of Scotland is taking a major initiative in addressing issues that have come to light as a result of its research into conflict situations within its congregations. The research showed there are many instances where mediation could help and where peacemaking and reconciliation are needed. It was felt that other church communities might benefit from its findings and so it was that I accepted an invitation, all expenses paid, along with around 40 others including representatives from other denominations and organisations, in Aviemore at a planning meeting for a major conference to be held in November.

It transpired over the two days that most churches experience conflicts within their own communities that are difficult to deal with – and conflicts there certainly are! Are Quakers immune? I think not, although we are good at mediation in wider, particularly global, situations.

In the conference centre at Aviemore we shared our visions for a healing community to equip ourselves to promote peaceful outcomes in both internal and external situations. I shared some of our history of conflict resolution which was remembered, understood and valued. We are encouraged to be part of the four-

day conference in November. There will be an international keynote speaker, and various sessions and workshops on the understanding of conflicts and mediation focusing on our own communities. It was suggested that an ecumenical mediation service – and probably a virtual mediation centre, could be set up. As Quakers we have much to offer this initiative e.g. ?AVP taster, and perhaps much to gain. If you want to know more or can offer support, please contact me. Otherwise, watch this space!

\* \* \* \* \*

Pam can't manage to accept all the invitations she gets, so I got doing this one, and great fun it was! Margaret Peacock

### Launch of the first Romanian Orthodox parish in Scotland

A Romanian is studying for the ChoS ministry in Shettleston, Glasgow, and lodging in the old manse. He asked the local congregation if the Church of Scotland could consider offering a home to the Romanian Orthodox parish, and they agreed. The sports hall is now a dual-purpose space, furnished with many colourful icons and banners and the customary fretwork rood screen in front of the altar, itself being screened off during badminton, etc.

The launch was a lavish affair with the Romanian ambassador, senior representatives of most Christian churches, Glasgow Corporation, the First Minister, and the Romanian royal family!

I had to blink when I heard "Her Royal Highness the Princess Margaret"! To entertain us for the afternoon we had a girls' choir in national dress, singing folk songs and a men's church choir in black singing ecclesiastical chants. Following that there was Romanian/Scottish food. Very enjoyable and interesting.

Residential General Meeting was held this year on a cold and snowy weekend in St. Andrews. The hall was freezing when we got there, but expert intervention by Alastair Milner happily got the heating going.

It was a different GM from usual in that there were few items of formal decision-making. This meant that other, more reflective topics could be properly considered. Yes, of course, some decisions had to be made. There were a few appointments to be made; next year's budget was agreed (with an increase in our donations to supported organisations gladly approved).

But the rest of the weekend was spent listening to and considering presentations - reports from Friends who had been appointed to various bodies and inspiring presentations from two returned QPSW volunteers.

Of the internal reports, Philip Bryers gave us an insight into the working of the Scottish Churches Social Inclusion Network (commonly abbreviated to SIN). It is a network of church members, without executive power, but tackling issues such as poverty, debt, homelessness, racial justice etc. Many Friends gave examples of their own practical experience and Philip would be glad to hear from Friends of any local activities of social concern.

Then Robert Thompson, as Outreach Function Group Convenor, reported that National Quaker Week had again been a success. It is an opportunity to show people who we are and to show us that the world is not the Religious Society of Friends.

Pamala McDougall gave us a run-down on her activities as Representative Friend as she has been reporting in the Scottish Friend. She reflected that she is often the only woman at some of the events she attends, and sometimes even the only non-paid individual. She and Robin Waterston agreed that splitting the erstwhile Clerk's job into Clerk plus Representative Friend has been successful. In fact Pam has been so busy that she would value having an Assistant.

Peter Kennedy reported on Meeting for Sufferings. Much of the business has already appeared in The Friend. But there were a few high-lights including the news that during Quaker Week one Meeting had conducted a pub quiz posing questions about Quakers. And the observation that we are exhorted to be crucibles, but that a crucible not only produces a precious metal but also scum.

An item rather closer to home was the consideration of the future of residential General Meeting. It places a lot of work on the hosting Meeting, and perhaps November is not the best time of year to hold it. One possibility would be to combine residential General Meeting with the spring conference held at Kindrogan. The audience this weekend was obviously not a representative group (we had all come to residential General Meeting for one thing) so ways will be explored of getting soundings from the wider membership.

All those items were well worth considering but the highlight of the weekend was the presentation by Robert Rhodes and Charlotte Smith, two returned Quaker Peace and Social Witness Peace Workers. The enthusiasm with which they spoke of their experiences of taking a year out to work on a QPSW project was inspiring.

Robert had spent a year in Serbia and Montenegro in 2004 working with the Youth Initiatives for Human Right. His biggest challenge had been coming to terms with those he was working with - not to be judgmental but to try to change opinions with hope, realising that their attitudes are a result of the condition they are in.

Charlotte had worked with the Oxford Research Group. Like all the Peace Workers, she had a time of training at Woodbrooke learning about Quakerism and Quaker structures and preparing for challenges. In the Oxford Research Group she realised that dialogue, diplomacy and negotiation can achieve more than war. Groups of high ranking scientists and diplomats meet with poets and philosophers with spaces of silence where they can really listen to each other and respond.

The snow remained with us until we left on Sunday afternoon, but it could not cool the feeling of a weekend well nurtured - both in spirit and in body.

## How to get to Edinburgh Meeting House

Directions and a map were given in SF of October 2007 so I don't propose to use up two pages for them in this issue. There are also good directions and a map on line at [www.quakerscotland.org/](http://www.quakerscotland.org/)

General Meeting for Scotland - Edinburgh 7<sup>th</sup> March 2009  
11am until about 4pm

“We do not own the world, and its riches are not ours to dispose of at will. Show a loving consideration for all creatures, and seek to maintain the beauty and variety of the world. Work to ensure that our increasing power over nature is used responsibly, with reverence for life. Rejoice in the splendour of God’s continuing creation.”  
Advices and Queries 42

Dear Friends and Attenders throughout Scotland,

Our special topic this time is Sustainability. It will be introduced by Alastair McIntosh, author of “Soil and Soul” and “Hell and High Water”. Alastair, of Glasgow Meeting, is one of Scotland’s leading writers and campaigners on community empowerment and non-violent change. His writings explore how we can have a renewed relationship with the natural environment, and what sustainable living can mean in practice. He will be leading us in reflection of these themes as they affect our practical witness.

We will also discuss a variety of business items including stewardship of our financial resources over the last year and the progress of the Quaker residential youth event now known as Summer Shindig.

Please join us in Edinburgh, keep up to date with Scottish Quaker work, meet Friends from across the country and uphold our business method, depending as it does on good participation from as many of us as possible. You might consider inviting someone from your Meeting who hasn’t been before?

Robin Waterston, Clerk

# Scottish Friends Summer Gathering

## Kindrogan Field Centre

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2009

### ***Focus on Scottish Quaker History - linking up the past with the present***

Who were our predecessors as Scottish Quakers? How did their lives speak? Are our lives today influenced by theirs? We are looking forward to learning about our Quaker past from knowledgeable Friends, and also to some lively discussions, perhaps even touching on what we might bequeath to our successors. We also hope to put together an anthology about Scottish Quakers past and present for the Scottish Quaker website. Maybe everyone attending would like to contribute to this, telling something about what their own Meeting means to them, for example.

For Friends aged 11 to 17 years, volunteers from the Leaveners are coming to help them produce a play about Scottish Quaker history, to be presented at the last session on Sunday morning. All Friends within this age bracket are invited to apply, but should come to the weekend as part of a family group, as parts of the weekend will be unsupervised by children's helpers.

Activities for younger children and a crèche for babies and toddlers are provided during the main events.

There will be free time and more informal activities on Saturday afternoon, depending on the interests among those attending the gathering. Alison Burnley will give a short talk about the Quaker Tapestry, and help us try out the stitches. Musicians might like to get together during this period. Also there are many interesting walks around Kindrogan, and a visit to the nearby SEER Centre can be arranged.



## Our Accommodation

Kindrogan is a Field Centre situated in beautiful grounds, bounded by the River Ardle. Otter and salmon swim in the river and deer and pine marten have been seen in the grounds. Kindrogan is 10 miles east of Pitlochry on the A924 off the A9 Perth to Inverness road. Pitlochry can be reached by train or bus and we can arrange for lifts from the town to the centre.

There are single, double, triple and family rooms available. We will allocate rooms as helpfully as possible, but it will probably not be possible for all those who wish a single room to be allocated one. Please indicate on the form if it is not acceptable to share.

All meals will be vegetarian.

**Bursary assistance is available; families are encouraged to apply to their own Elders and Overseers and to the correspondent. Please do not hesitate to ask for help if you need it – no one should be discouraged from coming because of the cost.**

Our **correspondent's address** this year is:

Margaret Peacock

16 Drumlin Drive, Milngavie, GLASGOW G62 6LN

Tel: 0141 956 1183

Email nmjpeacock@yahoo.co.uk

Our **hosts** are Kate Arnot (Polmont Meeting) and Margaret Gladden (Milngavie Meeting).

### **The venue**

Kindrogan Field Centre

Enochdhu, by Blairgowrie, PH10 7PG

Tel: 01250 870150

Email enquiries.kd@field-studies-council.org

Map Ref: NQ 054 630

**The cost:** *For those staying in the house*

Adults - £130; for children and adolescents there is no cost.

*For non-residents off-site*

	Adults
Conference Fee	£25
Dinner (Each)	£7.80
Lunch (Each)	£6.25

*Camping.* It is not possible to camp at the Kindrogan Field Centre. If Friends wish to camp, for example at the campsite in Pitlochry, and do not have their own transport, transport between Kindrogan and the campsite will need to be arranged.

If you are NOT willing to share a room please tick

If there are other considerations we should take into account (e.g. near toilets, avoid stairs) please let us know here.

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Any other requirements (e.g. special diet, lift from Pitlochry Station)

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First time at a Scottish Friends Summer Gathering? YES/NO

Do you wish to receive Bursary help? YES/NO

Can you offer any help at Kindrogan e.g. with the ceilidh, the children, free time activity, lifts to or from Pitlochry etc.? YES/NO

If so please state \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

# Kindrogan Summer Gathering

12 - 14 June 2009

Booking Form

Name	M/F	Age (if <18)	House	Non resident	Total Cost
Donation to Bursary Fund					
Total					
Deposit (£20 per adult)					
Balance to follow					

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

cheques should be payable to

**GM for Scotland Friends Education Committee**

Cheques for the deposit should be sent with this form to  
the correspondent, reaching her by 14th April 2008.

The whole cost is required by 4th May.