

# SESAME

Number 223: May 2019

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Area Meeting in May / A Note on May Drummond / An Appeal – *help needed at GM* / EIFA on Climate Emergency / Inclusion & Diversity / World Day of Prayer / Meeting for Sufferings / Children & Young People / AM March Minutes / Political Action – two new books / *etc.*

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May Drummond, an Edinburgh Friend, c. 1755 – *see page 3*

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Published by South East Scotland Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Material for the next issue should be sent to Alan Frith (email: [ar.frith@btinternet.com](mailto:ar.frith@btinternet.com)) or by post to 10, East Parkside, Edinburgh EH16 5XJ, to be received at the latest by **Tuesday 4 June**. The Editors reserve the right to condense articles. If possible, please submit articles by email sending as an attachment *and* in the body of the email. An email version of *Sesame* is available in PDF format. Contact the Editors.

## SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Area Meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 May 2019 at the Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL at 7.00 pm.

### DRAFT AGENDA

1. Worship and introductions
2. Minutes of the meeting of Saturday 23 March 2019 in Kinghorn
3. Matters arising from the minutes
  - 3.1. Festival Committee
  - 3.2. GM in Edinburgh, 8 June 2019
  - 3.3. *Looking through the Lens of Privilege*
  - 3.4. Edinburgh Interfaith Association – letter to civic leaders  
(see page 6)
4. Membership matters
5. Appointments
6. Britain Yearly Meeting 2019
7. Prison chaplaincy – report from Jenny Copsey
8. *Roots of Resistance* – Quaker response to DSEI arms fair, London,  
September 2019
9. Annual report for 2018 of the John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust
10. Extinction Rebellion
11. Conferences & events
12. Correspondence
13. Closing minute

There will also be a report from Meeting for Sufferings (see page 12).

## “NOTE ON MRS. MAY DRUMMOND”

*[The following sketch of the Friend whose portrait is reproduced on the front page is taken from William Law & 18th. Century Quakerism by Stephen Hobhouse, published in 1927; it appears as a brief digression between the first two chapters of the main text. William Law (1686-1761) was an Anglican clergyman who lost his position because he refused to swear allegiance to George I; he became a tutor to the Gibbon family, and taught Edward Gibbon, father of the historian who wrote The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Law's own writings, such as A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life (1729), combined mysticism with a respect for the scientific advances of Newton and others, and influenced John and Charles Wesley, Samuel Johnson and William Wilberforce; Aldous Huxley quotes extensively from Law's Serious Call in his anthology The Perennial Philosophy (1946), pointing out how its insights echo those of Taoism, Buddhism, Sufism and other Eastern traditions. Nevertheless, although he too held the doctrine of the Inner Light, William Law was no admirer of Quakerism, and strongly condemned it, seeking to dissuade those who felt attracted to it, such as the Fanny Henshaw mentioned in the Note, whose "case" was drawn to his attention in 1736, and to whom he addressed several letters.]*

“Mrs. (*i.e.* Miss) May Drummond was a very remarkable woman. She was born about 1710 of a ‘good’ Scotch Presbyterian family, her brother being Provost of Edinburgh in 1731. In that year she was convinced of Friends’ principles through the preaching of one of the greatest and most cultured of Quaker evangelists, Thomas Story. She began to preach almost at once among the Scottish Quakers, and in 1735 crossed the border and held great public meetings in the West and South of England. The next year she repeated the tour with still greater effect. A contemporary newspaper records that ‘Mrs. Drummond, the famous Quaker preacher, came to town on Thursday night, having been the admiration of the countries, where she made her progress’. (It was probably in the course of this journey that she spoke at Manchester and came within reach of Fanny Henshaw. A copy of a letter, which she wrote to Fanny about this time – it was dated 1736 – was in existence a few years ago, but is now unfortunately untraceable.) Her social position and the report of an interview which she had had with the Queen, excited special interest in her, and she apparently possessed both an eloquent speech and an attractive presence of a kind that was rare in Quaker woman preachers. At this period (*i.e.* until women began to preach among the Methodists) public speaking by women was, as far as I can discover, unknown except among the Quakers.

“We are told that ‘many thousands flocked to hear her’, and that ‘more of the gentry and nobility than was ever was known before’ attended Quaker meetings. Doubtless many of the same persons came to her who three or four years later were crowding to hear the more soul-stirring open-air preaching of George Whitfield or John Wesley. An acute Quaker critic,

who had taken pains to see a good deal of May Drummond in Devon and Cornwall in 1744, when she was still drawing crowds (and especially the 'young folks'), speaks highly her private character, and for her preaching his only criticisms are that 'her style is rather too learned' and that she became at times slightly theatrical. He adds (and this is significant of the 'quietist' spirit of the day), 'she makes inward silence and attention of absolute necessity ... she dares determine nothing about the disposing of herself (in her journey, for instance) without this internal influence' (*Memoir of William Cookworthy*, pp. 10-16.)

"In later years she confined her ministry more to regular Friends' gatherings. By 1765 she had developed certain failings that caused Edinburgh Friends to cease to recognize her as a Minister. She died about 1772 at Edinburgh, still faithful to Quaker principles though fallen into some disesteem.

"The preaching of May Drummond may surely be accounted a landmark in the Women's movement. So it was at the time by at any rate one enthusiastic feminist, who wrote in praise of her in the chief literary magazine of the day,

'No more, O Spain, thy Saint Teresa boast—  
There's one outshines her on the British coast',

(*Gentleman's Magazine* for the year 1735, p. 555)

and much more in the same strain. Before the nineteenth century I doubt whether a woman speaker ever swayed audiences of the size she is said to have held. We may well believe that some at least of her many hearers became better men and women and less nominal Christians through her preaching, even if conversions in the usual sense of the word did not result. As far as I have been able to discover, she seems to have been entirely neglected by the historians.

"In a curious apocalyptic book, *The Great Crisis*, published by Richard Roach in 1725, there is a passage in which the author emphasizes the age as one in which women are beginning to draw men up to heaven; and instances the influence and writings of Antoinette Bourignon, Madame Guion, and Mrs. Jane Lead (of the 'Philadelphian Society') together with 'the appearance of the she-preachers among the Quakers'.

*Stephen Hobhouse (1881-1961), the writer of this note, was himself interesting. Born into a 'Liberal élite' when the phrase was more meaningful than now – his maternal great-grandfather, Richard Potter (1778-1842) had been one of the radical Members of Parliament whose agitation led to the Great Reform Act of 1832, his father, Henry Hobhouse, a Liberal Unionist MP, was the architect of the 1902 Education Act, Beatrice Webb, the Fabian, was his aunt, and Sir Stafford Cripps, the Labour politician, his first cousin – he was brought up in the Church of England and went to school at Eton. He became a pacifist in 1902, through reading Tolstoy and under the influence of his cousin Emily Hobhouse who was an active opponent of the Boer War; and during the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 he resigned*

*from the Civil Service to go to work in Constantinople with a Quaker mission helping refugees. As eldest son, Stephen Hobhouse stood to inherit a large fortune, but he renounced it, and, with his wife Rosa (née Waugh), whom he married in 1915, set up home in Hoxton, then a slum area of the East End of London, where they joined the Society of Friends. In 1916, he was offered exemption from military service if he joined the Friends Ambulance Unit, but he refused, and was eventually sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour. On 9 July 1917 his was one of two cases raised in the House of Commons of Conscientious Objectors whose health was being undermined by "vindictive and futile" punishment (the other was Clifford Allen); the campaign to get him released was supported by General Smuts and Lord Milner, and led to some 300 C.O.s being released from prison on health grounds by the end of the year. While in gaol he had met Fenner Brockway, and together they wrote English Prisons Today (1922), which is credited with initiating reform. His health, however, was permanently impaired and for the rest of his life he was a semi-invalid. He wrote many books and pamphlets, including Christ and Our Enemies, urging reconciliation and forgiveness, which was officially issued to all army and air force chaplains in 1945. An extract from the Testimony of Hertford & Hitchin Monthly Meeting to the Grace of God as shown in his life is extract 23.51 in Quaker Faith & Practice. He died in 1961.*

## *An Appeal*

General Meeting for Scotland will take place at 7 Victoria Terrace on Saturday 8 June, hosted by us, the Friends in South East Scotland Area Meeting.

I am sharing the catering arrangements with Alison Burnley, with a lot of help from Sue Proudlove. We hope that Friends (there may be eighty present) will bring their own lunch, but we will provide soup, bread and cheese at midday, and tea (a meal, not just a cup) afterwards. Offers of **teatime food** should go to Alison (0131 229 4481); of supplements to **lunch** (different spreads, fruit *etc*) to me. I already have volunteer soup makers, but we both need **helpers** for clearing up and washing up after morning refreshments, lunch and tea. We shall be so pleased to hear from you.

**Rachel Frith**  
([rachel.frith@waitrose.com](mailto:rachel.frith@waitrose.com))



## Edinburgh Inter-Faith Association

*An Appeal to the Scottish Government, the City of Edinburgh Council, and all those leading our major institutions in the capital, April 2019*

### **Climate Disruption: Actions Speak Louder Than Words**

As members of Edinburgh's faith communities, we are deeply concerned for the future of our city, our country and all who inhabit this sacred Earth – which is our common home and for which we are all responsible.

With climate disruption upon us, the pace of change is outstripping predictions in both speed and consequences. We already witness its effect on the environment and therefore on ourselves: chaotic weather events, floods, droughts, wildfires, extinctions of species, rising sea levels, and that is quite literally, just the tip of the iceberg.

We acknowledge that some steps have been taken to address the climate emergency; but much more needs to be done. Humankind is author of this dire situation and it is up to us all to solve it. On a personal level we need to simplify our lives and make educated choices for the good of all.

Current focus on other political challenges should not distract our civic leaders from the more serious issues threatening the very future of the planet and all its inhabitants, not least our children who are striking in an effort to awaken our political leaders to take immediate, direct action to safeguard their futures and avert mass extinctions.

**With the UK Government otherwise occupied, we urge leaders in Edinburgh – as our capital – and Scotland as a nation, to take the lead. Please act decisively, pass radical legislation, allocate budgetary resources, implement the necessary laws and do everything possible to pull us back from the brink of self destruction, caused by ignorance and greed. Please re-set our course on a more intelligent, sustainable and equitable direction that benefits us all.**

**We especially encourage you to bring forward the dates for achieving carbon neutrality.**

**Be ambitious in this regard. Act now with courage and commitment. We realise we have a role to play and much to learn but we look to you to provide the leadership.**

*Signatories:* Bishop John Armes (Scottish Episcopal Church), Father Jeremy Bath (Roman Catholic Church), Wege Singh (Edinburgh Sikh Community),

Jean Fowler (Scottish Pagan Federation), Shabir Beg (Chairman Scottish Ahlul Bayt Society), Alastair Cameron (Clerk, South East Scotland Area Quaker Meeting), Ani Rinchen (Kagyü Samye Dzong, Edinburgh), Edinburgh Baha'i Community, Carole Sneddon (Director of Public Affairs, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), Louisa Gupta (Brahama Kumaris), Imam Muhammad Asim (East Edinburgh Muslim Forum), Rev Fiona Bennett (United Reformed Church), Sukkat Shalom (Edinburgh Liberal Jewish Community), Church of Scotland (Edinburgh Presbytery), Anandale Mosque, Joan Cook, President (Scottish Unitarian Association), Rev. Peter Fairbrother (St Mark's Unitarian Church), EHMCC (Hindu Community), Puneet Dwivedi (Vice President, Scotland for Hindu Forum Britain/Trustee Member of Edinburgh Hindu Temple), Bill Crook (Order of Interbeing), Ali Newell (Edinburgh University Chaplaincy), Imam Yahya Barry (Olive Tree Madrasah)

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## Thoughts on Yearly Meeting

*Yearly Meeting 2019 takes place at Friends House, London,  
24-27 May*

No organisation or planning can produce a good Yearly Meeting if those who attend come for an inadequate reason. When the Religious Society of Friends gathers for its annual assembly, it does so because it seeks to come to know the mind of God on the various affairs to be brought forward ... We are ordinary people, with the shortcomings of ordinary people, and there is laid upon us the necessity of patience with one another in all our gatherings, and especially in Yearly Meeting, and the willingness to accept the imperfect arising from our human limitations. When therefore we find our Yearly Meeting falling short of the standard which it should reach, whether in worship or in deliberation, it behoves each of us to listen more intently for the voice of the Spirit, and to seek the more earnestly that every contribution, be it by spoken word or in silence, is that which is in accord with the divine leading. In our worship at Yearly Meeting, it is laid upon us with special weight to listen. It is not *our* ministry that is required in worship, nor *our* inspiration in deliberations, but we seek to hear the true word of God speaking through our frail humanity and leading us to the place where he would have us be. This is the Right Holding of Yearly Meeting.

**Right Holding of Yearly Meeting Committee, 1960**

## Diversity and Inclusion

### National Gathering, Woodbrooke, 18-20 January 2019

We had an enjoyable and fulfilling weekend at the Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) Diversity and Inclusion National Gathering. This event was one step on a journey which will be revisited at Yearly Meeting (in London, later this month). It focussed on the privileges we hold, both visible and invisible. We heard from three speakers: Robert Beckford, Sabah Choudry and Lynne Cullens, who each spoke about their experiences. We had time to attend workshops, to chat informally with other participants, and to enjoy the food and surroundings of Woodbrooke.

**Robert Beckford** spoke about how whiteness was the 'elephant in the room', the baseline against which others are given a label. Through the example of the privilege walk, Robert demonstrated how privileges and disadvantages accumulated for individuals. We found this to be a useful illustration of what is called "intersectionality".

**Sabah Choudry** described themselves\* [*see the note at the end*] as "hairy, trans, non-binary, Muslim, Pakistani and middle class". They spoke of Peggy MacIntosh's analogy of an 'invisible rucksack' that we all carry with us containing our identities/privileges. We were invited to explore what was in ours, and how it has changes across our lives and between the environments through which we move.

**Lynne Cullens** spoke of her experiences of how social class was a barrier to entering and progressing through the leadership structures within the Church of England. She highlighted the benefits of having a more diverse leadership in reaching a more diverse congregation; as part of which she mentioned how leadership potential is often identified based on a 'middle class leadership skills'. She spoke of how recognising the diverse gifts of our current congregation could be valuable.

Of the optional workshops, between us we attended three different ones:

In the workshop on "**belonging**", we shared memories of situations in which we had felt visible and invisible. In this case, feeling visible where others blend in can make us feel that we don't belong in that space. One of our examples of feeling "visible" is in playing mixed sport. I myself often feel that my performance is seen as the performance of a 'women' rather than the performance of me as an individual. I find myself thinking: "if I drop the ball, will others think it's because women can't catch?".

In the workshop on "**guilt**", we looked at how we can better direct the guilt that we feel regarding our own privilege and the benefits this has had for us. Guilt can make us feel unable to act, but Quaker theology – Robert Barclay's *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity* (1678) – aided us in exploring this topic. Barclay suggests that within each of us is 'the seed of

the serpent' (which would lead us to exploit our privileged over others), but also 'the seeds of light', which helps us to act for justice and equality. We recognise that it is important to acknowledge the inherited beneficial consequences of the structures that we are part, but do not have to inherit the guilt. (See <https://jollyquaker.com/2017/06/15/quakers-and-white-privilege-the-seed-of-the-serpent/>)

In the workshop on "class", we shared our experience of our class backgrounds and how this made us feel. We spoke about how some elements of our backgrounds were considered privileges in some spaces but disadvantages in others. One of our examples was in the experience of having a Southern English accent; within England this delivers advantages, but sometimes, living in Scotland, this has led to being treated as an outsider.

In terms of moving forward, we would encourage Friends to:

1. Watch the videos that Woodbrooke will be circulating soon-ish
2. To do the survey on diversity in your meeting:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/quakersurvey>
3. Try out the privilege walk with your meeting
4. Explore what is in your rucksack

**Ellie Harding and Rici Marshall Cross**

*\* For those who are not familiar with non-binary gender pronouns, they or their are used as gender neutral pronouns, typically for people who do not identify as either male or female; but they can also be useful if you don't know whether a person is male or female.*

*The full text of Barclay's Apology is available online in his own translation (the original text was in Latin) at <http://www.qhpress.org/texts/barclay/apology/>*

## **World Day of Prayer, Friday 1 March 2019**

***"Come, everything is ready"***

### **Service written by Christian women of Slovenia**

In the past this was the *Women's* World Day of Prayer, when women all round the world came together to take part in worship and in prayer using an order of service produced by the women of one country. In these gender-sensitive days, the event is open to everyone, and the title altered to reflect this change.

Having been appointed by AM to be the Quaker representative on the Edinburgh World Day of Prayer committee, and having heard from Alison

Burnley a great deal about how enjoyable it was, I looked forward to attending a preparation meeting, two Bible study sessions, the Day of Prayer itself and the AGM that followed. I knew there would be challenges for me – I don't often find it particularly comfortable to take part in 'organised religion' – but I enjoy the challenge and generally have a very good time. I approached my first meeting at 121 George Street (the Edinburgh headquarters of the Church of Scotland) slightly apprehensively, but need not have worried: I was made most welcome, and my questions received kindly responses.

The preparation meeting introduced this year's service to those women who were organising their church's service. My first glance at the table set with bread and wine was 'oh no, not a communion service' – but it was not so. The table was set for dinner, with bread in a basket, wine and water in two jugs, and salt: all Slovenian products. Red carnations and rosemary in a vase signified a celebration, a banquet. Name labels indicated the high status of the guests – but, as in the parable in Luke's gospel, the invited guests all made their excuses, and the host sent out servants to bring in "the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame" and anyone else they could find so that the table would be full.

During the service we would hear from Slovenian women: Marjeta, who was born when her country was part of the Marxist socialist republic of Yugoslavia, and who had to leave her home and seek work abroad; Mojca, a young woman who was born in the newly independent Slovenia, became pregnant while at university, was abandoned by her boyfriend, and struggles with the dual burden of working and raising a family; Marija, an eighty-year-old lady living with her unemployed son and his family in a small house – her pension sustains them – while her neighbour lives alone in a huge house; Ema, badly affected by the alcoholism of first her parents and then her husband; and Natasha, a Roma who, unlike many Romani in Slovenia, has rarely been rejected or disadvantaged because of her ethnicity.

The parable of the banquet would be read, followed by an opportunity either to explore the meaning of the parable in small groups, or listen to a meditation written by Susan Brown, the current Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland – the service I attended used the meditation, which was excellent. Prayers and hymns wove around the readings – the simple, moving words written by the Slovenian women, the hymn tunes mainly well-kent or easy to pick up.

The two Bible study meetings were – potentially – another sort of challenge to a Quaker who is no longer used to being 'told what's what' by a priest or minister, but I found them both extremely interesting. Janet McKenzie chose to look at the passages from 1 Corinthians (11: 23-29) and Isaiah (25: 6-9) about 'eating and drinking unworthily', and God preparing a banquet 'for all nations'. She related this to the communion service, in-

viting us to consider whether we can forgive us for our self-perceived unworthiness and take part while at the same time considering how we can change our ways; to stop concentrating on the rules and regulations surrounding communion and concentrate on its meaning for us; and to consider the banquet at the end of time [Revelation] and ask ourselves how do we invite EVERYBODY to take part.

Alison McDonald concentrated on Luke, storyteller *par excellence*, whose narrative includes more women than any other gospel, and emphasises the 'upside down' nature of the world Jesus is preaching, where the poor and meek with inherit the earth rather than the wealthy and powerful. She reminded us how Jesus loved his food – food and drink are shared on many occasions, both for real and in parables. The whole of Luke's chapter 14 is all about banquets, one after another, ending with the one read in the service. Banquets were important affairs, with much formality surrounding them: invitations were sent out long in advance, and on the appointed day guests would hold themselves ready for when the host's servant arrived to say the food was prepared and they should come. The excuses offered are thus pretty flimsy – guests would know the date and make alternative arrangements to go and see their new field, try out their new oxen or take a new wife!

The parable again turns things upside down – the 'posh' people who should have been prepared for the invitation chose at the last minute to ignore it, and all the people regarded as 'unclean' were invited instead. Jesus meant his audience of Pharisees to feel uncomfortable and maybe make them think. We were challenged to consider what barriers we raise – whom do we invite, whom do we avoid, and how does this story change us as we listen to it?

I surprised myself by enjoying the service itself more than I had expected to, thoroughly enjoying singing my head off in a fairly empty and delightfully resonant church – especially *the day thou gavest, Lord, is ended*, which I've always loved for the picture it paints of an unending hymn of praise encircling the globe. The meditation was thought-provoking: I said what I could of the prayers and was silent where I felt I couldn't. I particularly appreciated being invited to join in saying the Lord's Prayer "in whatever version is comfortable for you".

Afterwards we were invited to stay for tea and biscuits – ooh! There was a Tunnocks caramel wafer... People were very friendly: I spoke with some of the local organisers who were very pleased to welcome another Quaker, having greatly enjoyed our AM Clerk's talk about Quakers to the Northesk Parish Guild. I hope these initial contacts will develop in years to come.

At the AGM area secretaries reported on the services held, the numbers attending, the amounts raised in collections for 'programmes that enable women and children to lead better lives', and the general feeling that the

women of Slovenia's service spoke to many in the congregations, both for the light it shed on the lives of Slovenian women and for the meditation provided by Susan Brown. Next year's dates were fixed. The service will be on 6 March 2020, and the women of Scotland are providing it, the theme being "Rise, take your mat and walk". I'm really looking forward to it!

Mary Woodward

## Meeting for Sufferings: 6 April 2019

All the papers for the meeting are available online at

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-2019-04-agenda--papers-package>

The minutes and other follow-up material are available from

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-2019-04-follow-up-packagev4>

There is not really much to report from this meeting. The main item of interest was a summary of the external review of the 'Vibrancy' project, and Trustees' consideration of whether, and, if so, how, it might be continued.

The goal of the Vibrancy project is to "reinvigorate Quakerism"; see

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/support-for-meetings/vibrancy-in-meetings>

The problem is that the average [median] size of local meetings has dropped from 24 members to 18 over the last ten years.

Trustees' reponse:

*"How best [can] the essence of the vibrancy work help us achieve the priorities that we have identified towards 'A simple church supported by a simple charity to re-invigorate Quakerism'[?] We have to find an affordable, sustainable and spirited solution for the whole of the yearly meeting and not only in the pilot areas."*

There was some interest in the idea that not all centrally-managed work has to be managed by someone actually in the centre (*i.e.* London, or, for Woodbrooke, Birmingham).

### **Report from Trustees**

Apparently we have, or rather Trustees have, a Risk Register. Two entries in it caught my attention:

With respect to Britain Yearly Meeting as a whole: the "lack of a transmissible Quaker culture"; and

With respect to Woodbrooke: a recent big drop in Quaker attendance at Woodbrooke events.

**Henry S. Thompson**  
South East Scotland AM representative

## Children and Young People in Meeting

On Saturday 22 March at all-day Area Meeting in Kinghorn, Fife, we spent the morning discussing Children and Young People in our meetings, asking in particular how we, as the Religious Society of Friends project ourselves as welcoming and all-inclusive. We acknowledged that all our local meetings are different and that the age range in any of them can change quite quickly, for instance if a family with younger members either starts coming to meeting regularly or moves away.

The discussion was interesting and far-ranging as we shared experiences and ideas. Some meetings, such as Kelso, have no children at present but do have enough space to have a children's room with a big cupboard for equipment, while others, such as Portobello & Musselburgh have a lot of young people and also have space, and East Lothian (having just had to move again) has no suitable accommodation should children turn up. Some, like Central Edinburgh have regular, monthly all-age worship and Children's meeting on the 3rd and 5th Sundays. Others, like Polmont, have found this more difficult to do because families often have other things on on Sundays.

Out of the discussion a number of questions arose:

- What do we do if children or young people just appear at meeting?
- Do we have people with PVG who are able to look after children?
- How do we manage children with "difficulties" such as ADHD, autism *etc*?
- What if the accommodation is unsuitable?
- What if the timing is unsuitable?
- How do we support young people, accepting that they may communicate quite regularly with each other using social media but seldom, if ever, choose to come to meeting?

Local meetings might like to continue to discuss these questions taking into account their own particular circumstances.

Cath Dyer

**T**he freedom of the kingdom of God involves membership one of another and responsibility towards God and man. Check in yourselves and discourage in others the tendencies which lead to gambling and speculation. Do not, out of the spirit of emulation or through the offer of easy terms, buy what you do not need or cannot afford; and do nothing to encourage others in these practices.

*From Advice IV (1964)*

# SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

## Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 23 March 2019 at Kinghorn Community Centre, Burntisland KY3 9SS

### 2019/03/01 Worship and introductions

During worship, we have heard a reading from *Quaker Faith & Practice* 25.07, which reminds us that the damage we do to the world is an offence against later generations. We have ensured those present know each other's names and meetings. The attendance will be recorded in the concluding minute. At a session in the morning, we heard from each LM about how they encourage participation of children and young people in their meeting. A number of questions were noted, which will be taken forward in coming months. [See page 13.]

### 2019/03/02 Minutes of Meeting of Monday 28 January 2019

The minutes of our last Area Meeting held on 28 January 2019 at 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh, have been signed by the Clerks and entered in the Minute Book.

### 2019/03/03 Matters arising from the minutes

#### 1) *Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture – QCAT (minutes 2018/11/04 and 2019/01/03 1 refer)*

We have received the following minute from East Lothian LM:

#### ***Meeting for Business on 24th February 2019:***

*2019/12 Area Meeting request re QCAT: Five of our meeting met with Martin Whitfield on February 8th (rearranged from January 18th) and raised the concerns minuted (2019/3). He responded supportively and seemed aware of Quaker work on militarisation in schools. He appears keen to keep in contact with us and suggested he would like to visit Meeting. We will return to this matter at our next business meeting, and in the meantime we ask our Clerk to write thanking him for his support. We will send this minute to Portobello & Musselburgh Meeting and to Area Meeting Clerk for information.*

We note that Portobello & Musselburgh LM have had correspondence with Tommy Sheppard MP, who has been informed that the question of a judged enquiry into torture is with the Prime Minister for decision: he awaits the outcome of correspondence with her.

We have heard from our Treasurer Team that the sum of £100 has been paid as a subscription to Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture (Q-CAT).

We encourage local meetings to supplement this sum through collections.

#### 2) *Extinction Rebellion (2019/01/08 refers)*

A meeting was held on 11 March at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House to encourage dialogue with Extinction Rebellion (XR). This was felt to be a useful event, attended by about 50, the majority of whom were Quakers. We will return to issues relating to XR later in this meeting.

## 2019/03/04 Membership matters

### *Applications for membership*

1) Paul Slifer has read a report dated 4 March 2019, on the meeting he and Madeleine Harding held with **Robin Naumann** (Portobello & Musselburgh).

Robin feels now is the moment to officially be recognised and identify as part of the wider Quaker family.

Born into a Quaker family in Kinghorn, Fife. Robin was exposed to Quakers from his earliest years, which include many happy memories.

In his later teenage years he was keen to explore other ideas and philosophies. While at university in Dundee, Robin would attend meeting for worship on an irregular basis, for peace, solace, comfort and care that meeting can provide. He developed good friendships, a deepened awareness and connection with the natural world, conservation and activism.

He continued to search and practice a spiritual dimension in his life that was annually punctuated with depression. 15 years after leaving university, Robin moved to Mull and began attending Meeting there. He felt a part of the community, was regularly attending Meeting for worship and applied for membership. Before submitting his application, Robin was asked to be correspondence clerk for the meeting. This was something that overwhelmed Robin, and he withdrew his application.

Robin now works with the charity Garvald Edinburgh. He combines this with running fund-raising events and ceilidhs for charities and environmental causes.

Robin's partner, Anna Liebmann, is a basket weaver. Anna has two children, Roisin (13) and Jack (12), from a previous relationship who spend half the week with their father and the rest with their mother and Robin. Robin and Anna are engaged to be married in November 2019.

Robin is familiar with the Quaker structures in Scotland and within Britain Yearly Meeting. Though Robin has always been generous volunteering his time and skills, he feels a commitment to a regular post could impair his responsibility to family, work and well-being at this moment. He asks, if accepted into membership, that he is excused from nominations committee requests for a minimum of one year. He believes that, given time, he will gladly grow into the space to accept longer-term Quakerly commitments.

We are pleased to accept Robin into membership and ask Katrina McCrea to welcome him and inform Portobello & Musselburgh Local Meeting.

2) Laura Pearson and Henry Thompson met with **Philip Corrie-Hawes** (Central Fife) on 24 February 2019.

Philip went to Church of England schools, but let go of any idea of religion on leaving school. He considered staunchly that he was an atheist, while recognising that that was a belief in itself.

After working in financial services he took a job as support worker in a mental health setting, but after three years or so he burned out. Counselling

helped him: he considered how hiding his sexuality had meant being his true self. But there was still something missing, and Philip began to explore faith.

It took a long time to get to the point of attending a Meeting for Worship in Kirkcaldy. Philip describes this as a "phenomenal experience". He found he understood the structure and felt the silence utterly fulfilling. He explains that he "felt quite held". Philip reflected that he drove home smiling: "I've found something I want to go back to". That was two years ago, and he's been attending regularly since then. He feels that he's now reached the foundation of where he needs to be.

He is now the Central Fife Local Meeting treasurer, he goes to Area Meeting when he can and he is organising the new monthly Meeting for Worship in Dunfermline. He describes Quakerism as an anchor to come back to when he gets worried or things get too much 'a way to reflect and re-energise'. Sitting in silence and going regularly to the discussion groups are both part of what has become a very big piece of the jigsaw which makes him who he is. For him, membership is an outward symbol of commitment, a pledge.

The visitors let Philip know that they were touched by the sense of a journey from a base that he had expressed. They were grateful that they had been able to share it with him.

We are pleased to accept Philip into membership; we welcome him, and ask John Eccles to inform Central Fife Local Meeting.

### *Transfer of membership*

We have received a request to accept the transfer of Rob Quin's membership from West Scotland Area Meeting to South East Scotland Area Meeting. We accept this transfer and ask our Assistant Clerk (Membership) to send a Certificate of Acceptance of Transfer to West Scotland Area Meeting.

We welcome Rob, who is now attending Portobello & Musselburgh Local Meeting.

### *Terminations of membership*

#### **1) Eleanor Boeing – notice of resignation**

We have received a resignation of membership from Eleanor Boeing (Penicuik LM). We accept Eleanor's resignation, and ask the Clerk to write to let her know.

**2)** As part of the process of seeking consents for Data Protection purposes from Members within South-East Scotland it has become clear that a number of Friends have moved away without providing us with a forwarding address, or we have simply lost contact with them. Our Assistant Clerk (Membership) proposes that Membership of the following Friends be terminated:

Jean Bolton, John Catford, Nancy Davis, Jane McFadyen, Andrew May, George Pease, Matthew Pease (all Central Edinburgh LM).

Friends in each of the Local Meetings involved have been advised of the proposed terminations of membership. We agree this proposal, and ask Andrew Farrar to contact Priscilla Bartle (Central Edinburgh), and Alison

Burnley to contact Sheena Roberts (Polmont) to seek to ascertain their wishes.

### **2019/03/05 Tabular Statement 2018**

Richard Williams, our Assistant Clerk (Membership), has presented the tabular statement for the year to 31 December 2018. Copies have been sent to the Recording Clerk's Office in Friends House and to the General Meeting for Scotland Administrator.

We accept the Tabular Statement for 2018 and note the following:

Compared with last year the number of members has increased marginally to 245 (from 243); the number of attenders has decreased to 271 (from 354). This includes 65 children not in membership, (72 recorded in December 2017).

40 % of the Area Meeting membership and 36 % of the recorded Attenders are associated with Central Edinburgh Local Meeting. South Edinburgh is the next largest meeting by number of Members. Portobello & Musselburgh has increased its number of Members by two. South Edinburgh has a net increase in membership of three; Central Edinburgh has had a net decrease of five Members.

The numbers of Attenders recorded for Central Edinburgh includes 1 Attender who solely attends the Mid-week meeting, and 1 Attender who solely attends the North Edinburgh worship group.

During 2018 2 convincements are recorded (4 in 2017). During 2018 there were 3 terminations of membership and 3 deaths (11 and 3 respectively in 2017).

A reconciliation has been made of membership reported to the Assistant Clerk Membership and that reported to the General Meeting Administrator. During 2018 6 members and 5 Attenders changed their local meeting within the Area. This is the largest intra-area movement for several years.

We note that the non-binary gender designation is available, but has not yet been used.

We thank Richard for his work in preparing the Tabular Statement; also the General Meeting for Scotland Administrator, and those in local meetings who have assisted Richard.

### **2019/03/06 Local Meetings**

**1. Polmont** We have received a request from Polmont LM to assist with the expense of installing a bench adjacent to the Peace Pole in Helix Park, Falkirk, which was inaugurated in October 2018. The bench will be installed by Falkirk Community Trust. We authorise our treasurer team to make payment up to £500 towards this venture.

**2. Central Fife** We have received the following report from Laurie Naumann on behalf of Central Fife LM:

Central Fife LM (CFLM) encompasses south Fife roughly stretching from Kincardine in the west to the whole of Levenmouth in the east

and the surrounding inland areas around Glenrothes and Cowdenbeath. North and East Fife is covered by St Andrews LM, a constituent part of East of Scotland AM.

For over forty years meeting for worship has been held regularly, two or three times a month, in different venues in Kirkcaldy. Recently a request was made by CFLM members and attenders living in west Fife that meeting for worship might additionally be held in Dunfermline on a Sunday when no meeting for worship takes place in Kirkcaldy. The Friends were keen to emphasise that there was no desire to separate from the existing LM, but simply enhance it with more opportunities to worship in the area. The LM was fully behind this proposal and two Friends have identified a suitable room in the new Duloch Library in the town's extensive Easter Expansion Area of both housing and industrial sites. The room has been booked for a trial run on the first Sundays in March, April and May. The arrangement will be evaluated afterwards with a view to making this a permanent arrangement. The March meeting has just taken place and was considered to have gone well with 13 adults, I think, and one child from over the area worshipping together. AM will be kept informed about developments.

We are delighted to hear of this initiative, and wish the meeting well.

**3. Portobello & Musselburgh** We have received the following minute from the meeting of Portobello & Musselburgh LM on 24 February 2019:

***2019/02/06 Support for the School Strikes for Climate and Extinction Rebellion***

*At the prompting of Elders and Overseers, we adopt the statement below and ask our clerk to forward it to Area Meeting on our behalf:*

*We note that some young Friends in our meeting have recently taken part in the School Strikes for Climate initiated by Greta Thunberg in Sweden in August 2018 and which began in Scotland in January 2019.*

*We also note that some other Friends in the Meeting have taken part in actions calling for urgent action on climate change organised by Extinction Rebellion.*

*We have heard that a report by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), released in October 2018, said that urgent and unprecedented changes are needed within the next 12 years if we are to keep a rise in global temperatures between 1.5°C and 2°C. In response to this, both the School Strikes and Extinction Rebellion are calling for urgent action to be taken on climate change and are a protest at the lack of action taken by governments in this area.*

*In response to this crisis, some Friends may be led to undertake nonviolent direct action which involves breaking the law. We remind them of section 35 of Advices & Queries:*

*“Respect the laws of the state but let your first loyalty be to God’s purposes. If you feel impelled by strong conviction to break the law, search your conscience deeply. Ask your meeting for the prayerful support which will give you*

*strength as a right way becomes clear.”*

*Portobello & Musselburgh Local Meeting welcomes these efforts by our Friends and we hope to offer both practical and spiritual support to all who choose to take action in this way at this time of climate crisis.*

We note this minute.

- 4. South Edinburgh** We have received the following minute from the meeting of South Edinburgh LM on 10 March 2019:

***Quakers and Extinction Rebellion (XR)***

*We heard more about XR and the planned Meeting to be held at 7 Victoria Terrace at 7-9pm Monday 11 March – where activists from local groups involved will share the background to this “Rebel Uprising”. See newsletter sign up at <https://rebellion.earth/>*

*They will open discussions with Quakers who have experiences of other civil disobedience campaigns e.g. in Trident Ploughshares. We heard some concerns about how the movement is working and how effective it might be. We ask Friends attending to share their thoughts on the former and only time will tell on the latter.*

*We hope Area Meeting might discern a way to corporately support XR as well as individual engagement in actions advocating more be done about climate disruption.*

*We also heard of the planned Global School Strike #FridaysForFuture on Friday 15 March at Scottish Parliament, where school students invite all to support them.*

We note this minute. We have also heard that over 3,000 attended the event on 15 March. We also note that the second reading of the Climate Change (Targets) (Scotland) Bill will be held on 2 April, and that an action will likely take place at the Scottish Parliament on that occasion.

- 5. Central Edinburgh** We have received the following minute from Central Edinburgh LM, held on 10 March 2019:

***2019/03/05 Brian Mayes***

*We note the death of our dear Friend Brian Mayes at his home in Edinburgh on January 24th 2019, “after a short illness, borne painfully, died laughing”, as he wished it to be described. His funeral service was held on February 1st 2019 at Warriston Crematorium, Edinburgh. We give thanks for his life. We send this minute to South East Scotland Area Meeting. We ask Simon Jackson, Jane Angel (subject to consent), Madeline Patterson, Margaret Anderson (s/c, South Edinburgh LM) and Rachel Frith to prepare a Memorial Minute to Brian and bring this to a future Local Meeting for Business.*

We note this minute, and join in offering thanks for Brian’s life.

- 6. Memoranda of understanding**

We have already received Memoranda of Understanding from the following local meetings:

- Central Edinburgh; Kelso (minute 2017/11/09)
- East Lothian (2018/01/17)

- Tweeddale (2018/08/10)

We have now received Memoranda of Understanding from South Edinburgh; Polmont; Portobello & Musselburgh; Central Fife.

We note this; also that we have not yet received the MoU from Penicuik LM.

### **2019/03/07 Extinction Rebellion (XR)**

Following the open meeting on 11 March to hear about the work of XR (2019/03/03(2) above), Mary Jane Elton has offered to contribute £1,000 to support XR in using our meeting house at 7 Victoria Terrace; she suggests that this be done through a fund administered within the Area Meeting accounts. She has spoken about her proposal.

We have heard from John Phillips that the treasurer team have reservations about holding funds on behalf of an outside organization.

We are clear that XR is a vibrant, active organisation, working on a set of principles similar to those of Quakers.

We find we cannot adopt the proposal put forward by Mary Jane Elton. We encourage individual friends to support XR through direct financial and practical support.

We will continue to consider our relationship with XR locally and nationally.

### **2019/03/08 Appointments**

Nominations Committee has put forward the following names for consideration:

1. *To serve from April 2019 until March 2020*
  - a. Dorothy Buglass (SE) Pastoral Care Team
2. *To serve from April 2019 until March 2022*
  - a. Joanne Swanson (SE) Elder.
  - b. Megan Davies (CE) Elder (Reappointment)
  - c. Sarah Martin (P&M) Elder (Reappointment)
  - d. Susan Noble (SE) Pastoral Care Team
  - e. Karina McIntosh (CE) Northern Friends Peace Board (Reappointment)
  - f. Lynne Barty (CE) Edinburgh Interfaith Association (Reappointment)
  - g. Marilyn Higgins (CE) Meeting House Staffing Link (Reappointment)

The following Friend has requested that she be released from service: Mary Woodward (P&M) Quaker Life Representative Council.

We appoint those nominated, and ask the Assistant Clerk to inform them. We agree to release Mary Woodward from service on QLRC. We note that Mary has been appointed to the revision committee for *Quaker Faith & Practice*, and wish her and the committee well in their important work.

### **2019/03/09 Festival Committee**

Janet Grimwade has outlined plans for Venue 40 during the Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2019.

There will be a slightly reduced programme this year. Slots are almost finalised, with a variety of shows. The Eating House will once again be providing food, opening from 10.00 am. Luath Press will be arranging a series of talks in the Meeting Room in Week 3 and the committee will be looking at proposals for Weeks 1 and 2. The advertisement for national volunteers will be in *The Friend* in April. Requests for help with accommodation and other tasks will be circulated shortly.

We thank Janet for her progress report, and encourage Festival Committee in their work. We note the following minute of Festival Committee, and agree to support the charitable work outlined:

*Charities for 2019.* We agree to continue support for Quaker work at home and abroad and Mary's Meals. We recommend that The Grassmarket Community Project should be the third nominated charity for 2019. This project provides support to homeless and vulnerable people by helping them develop skills enabling them to reach their full potential. It is a near neighbour of the Meeting House and our Managers sometimes refer people on there for support. We pass this minute to AM for approval.

#### **2019/03/10 Report on a threshing meeting on finance, held on 16 February 2019**

We have received a minute from this meeting, which is attached to these minutes.

We note the minute, and look forward to further consideration about the use of this unexpected and remarkably generous legacy.

#### **2019/03/11 Review of STIR process**

The 'STIR' process was a review of Area Meeting arrangements, carried out during 2015 and 2016 by an extensive set of consultations with local meetings and other groups. It resulted in changes to how AM is held, starting in January 2017. The minute establishing this change in June 2016 (2016/06/04) recorded, among other things,

*'In prayerful worship we have shared our thoughts on the STIR report's recommendations. We would like to try them out for a period of two to three years, and then review the situation.'*

Our clerks have asked for our views on how this review should be carried out.

We feel that while things are generally going well, there is not urgency about a review. We ask local meetings to consider current arrangements. We ask the clerks to prepare an outline of those who have attended for consideration at a future AM, and particularly to encourage young people to attend that meeting. We hope to find a way of gathering views from those who do not attend AM.

#### **2019/03/12 General Meeting for Scotland**

- 1) Hosting GM in Edinburgh on 8 June 2019 We have heard that Central Edinburgh LM is planning to provide food, co-ordinated by Rachel Frith. Other members of AM are asked to provide other items to supplement

this. We thank Central Edinburgh and particularly Rachel Frith for taking this on, and ask Alison Burnley to co-ordinate with her in providing additional hospitality. This will be publicised through AM and LM networks. [See page 5.]

- 2) We note that the next visit of GM to Edinburgh will be 7 March 2020, and ask the Clerk to make necessary arrangements.

### 2019/03/13 Conferences and events

- 1) *Looking through the lens of privilege*. We have heard that there will be a series of conversations in advance of Britain Yearly Meeting, on the theme of privilege, organised by our Diversity & Inclusion Group. These will take place at 7 Victoria Terrace on Tuesday evenings during April and May. All are welcome, whether or not you are planning to attend Yearly Meeting.
- 2) *Roots of Resistance* is a Quaker response to the DSEI arms fair planned for London in September 2019. Support is being sought from all over GB, and a number of members of our AM are considering how to be involved. We will return to this at our AM in May. More information is available at <https://rootsofresistance.org.uk>.

### 2019/03/14 Correspondence

- 1) We have received a report [*published in Sesame 222*] on General Meeting for Scotland held in Glasgow on 9 March 2019, and thank Phil Lucas for preparing this.
- 2) We have heard read a letter prepared by Edinburgh Interfaith Association, which our Clerk has signed on our behalf. This calls on the Scottish Government, City of Edinburgh Council and those leading our major institutions to take a lead in responding ambitiously to the climate emergency. We ask our Clerk to circulate this with the minutes, to arrange its publication in *Sesame*, and to send it to the Parliamentary Engagement Officer [see page 6].

### 2019/03/15 Closing minute

26 members and seven attenders have been at all or part of today's meeting. We thank Central Fife for hosting us. Local meeting attendance is indicated below:

Central Edinburgh 11	Central Fife 9	East Lothian 2	Kelso 1	Penicuik -
Polmont 4	Portobello & Musselburgh 4	South Edinburgh 2	Tweeddale -	

We next meet on Tuesday 14 May 2019, 7.00 pm at 7 Victoria Terrace  
Edinburgh.

(Signed)  
Alastair Cameron  
Clerk  
Cath Dyer  
Assistant Clerk

## *Books of possible interest*

*How We Win: A Guide to Nonviolent Direct Action Campaigning* –

George Lakey, Melville House: ISBN 978-1-61219-753-1

*Political Action: A Practical Guide to Movement Politics* –

Michael Walzer, NYRB Classics: ISBN 978-1-68137-353-9

Despite both claiming to be guides for action, and for people probably involved in the same causes – both writers opposed the Vietnam War, and were white men active for Civil Rights – these are quite different books.

George Lakey's campaigning was described when he visited Edinburgh in October 2017 (see *Sesame* 213): this new book elaborates on how Quakers might go about halting the business of a bank, say, or stalling an AGM, if such disruption seemed justified; without, of course, using – or provoking – violence. This is the activism of “blocking entrances, boycotting, fasting, tree-sitting, planting gardens where a pipeline is supposed to go, and hundreds of other kinds of actions”. The book sets out how to identify specific demands and a target, and how then to proceed from there.

For Michael Walzer, campaigning means creating and energising support for a cause; thus although modern social media was unimaginable when he wrote the book – its text is unaltered from 1971, though it comes with two new introductions – the omission hardly matters, he says, because

the new media can help raise money and, maybe, get people to a demonstration ... [but] I don't believe that they can replace the face-to-face encounters that build and sustain movement politics. It is still necessary to get together in small groups to argue at meetings, to knock on doors to talk and listen ...

Is it trite to say that both may be needed? To engage in direct action calls for a confidence in one's own rightness that might be mistaken; to build up a mass movement might be too slow in the face of looming crisis. At any rate, as Walzer says “we need movements of resistance and we need citizen activists” and here are suggestions on how to mobilise them. *Ed.*

***Quaker Meetings for Worship in South East Scotland*****Every Sunday**

Central Edinburgh: 7 Victoria Terrace	9.30 am & 11.00 am
South Edinburgh: Open Door, 420 Morningside Road	10.30 am
Polmont: Greenpark Community Centre	10.45 am
Kelso: Quaker Meeting House, Kelso	10.30 am

**Every Wednesday**

Mid-Week Meeting: 7 Victoria Terrace	12.30 – 1 pm
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**First Sunday in the Month**

Penicuik: Valleyfield House, 17 High St., Penicuik <i>Children welcome, bring and share lunch</i>	11.00 am
Portobello & Musselburgh: Bellfield, 16B Bellfield Street, Portobello EH15 2BP <i>Half an hour – no children's meeting.</i>	7.30 pm

**Second Sunday in the Month**

East Lothian: Dunbar Town House, High Street, Dunbar	11.00 am
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**Second and Fourth Sundays in the Month**

Portobello & Musselburgh: Bellfield, 16B Bellfield Street, Portobello EH15 2BP. <i>Children welcome.</i>	11.00 am
Tweeddale: Nomad Beat, 10-11 Cavalry Park, Peebles <i>All welcome, but please phone to confirm 01721 721 050 or 01896 850 389</i>	10.30 am
Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am

**Fourth Sunday in the Month**

North Edinburgh Meeting: Broughton St Mary's Church, Edinburgh	7.00 pm
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**Fifth Sunday in the Month**

Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am
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**Last Sunday in the Month**

East Lothian: Dunbar Town House, High Street, Dunbar	11.00 am
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So far as we know, there are no regular meetings for worship on University premises. **Mark Borthwick** is the named Quaker contact on the University of Edinburgh Chaplaincy website, and there is a Facebook Group at [www.facebook.com/groups/EUQuakerSoc](http://www.facebook.com/groups/EUQuakerSoc)

**Distribution of *Sesame* and *Scottish Friends Newsletter***

The current practice is to distribute one copy of *Sesame* and the *Scottish Friends Newsletter* to every Member and Attender household. Contributions to the costs of *Sesame* are always warmly welcomed by the Area Meeting Treasurer, Mark Hutcheson. An email version of *Sesame* is more ecological and is free; if you would prefer to receive it this way, or to change the address to which a paper copy is sent, or if you would like to get one by post and currently do not, please contact **Joanna Swanson** at [jmswanson69@gmail.com](mailto:jmswanson69@gmail.com). A large print version is also available on request. Published by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, South East Scotland Area Meeting, Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL. Scottish Charity No. SC019165. Printed by Footprint UK, Riverside Works, Edinburgh Road, Jedburgh TD8 6EE.