

SESAME

Number 239: January 2022

AM on 17 January/Friendly Folk Dancers/God Within/Edward Hicks/
NFPB/Meeting for Sufferings/BDRC update/Fáilte update/The Gospels –
a new translation reviewed/Nuclear Weapons: Preventing War, Avoiding
Arms Races/200 years in Languedoc/2022 events/November minutes/ &c



The Peaceable Kingdom by Edward Hicks, 1834 (see page 6)

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) or by post to 10, East Parkside, Edinburgh EH16 5XJ, to be received at the latest by **Tuesday 15 March**. The Editor reserves 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 Editor.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

The first Area Meeting of the New Year will be on Monday 17 January at 7.00 pm. In view of the high level of COVID infection locally, it will be held on Zoom, and not as a blended meeting, as was possible in November.

DRAFT AGENDA

(other items may be added)

1. Worship and introductions
2. Minutes of the meeting of Saturday 27 November 2021
3. Matters arising from previous minutes
 1. *Friendly Folk Dancers* (2021 / 11 / 5.3 refers) [See page 4]
 2. *Britain Yearly Meeting contribution – thanks received* (2121 / 11 / 6.2)
4. Membership matters
 1. *Report on membership visit*
 2. *Application for membership*
 3. *Transfers*
5. Testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the life of Pat Lucas
6. Proposal: to prepare a testimony to the Grace of God as shown in
the life of Jim Pym
7. Festival Committee: gauging enthusiasm for Venue 40 in 2022
8. Reports
 1. *Meeting for Sufferings* [See page 11]
 2. *Failte Edinburgh* [See page 17]
9. Appointments
10. Closing minute

All who have a connection with Quakers in South East Scotland are welcome at Area Meeting – it is not necessary to be a member, though we ask attenders to identify themselves as such when we open the meeting.

Failte Edinburgh (item 8.2) is the welcoming project for a refugee family that we agreed to support at our meeting last September. A small and very active group has made great progress in preparing the necessary application to the Home Office, setting up a bank account and so on. I am looking forward to hearing their report.

Other news

In the lead up to COP26 in November, many Quakers in Scotland took part in *Stitches for Survival*. [See Sesame 235] Jane Lewis of Portobello & Musselburgh meeting has written a piece about what was learned, offering some reflections on how we can keep turning towards hope. You can read it here:

<https://stitchesforsurvival.earth/stitches-for-survival-what-we-learned-and-turning-towards-hope/>.

This is a tribute both to the original vision for Stitches for Survival, and to the many clever hands making it real.

Jane writes:

to act with hope in the climate crisis we cannot wait until we know all the answers or the perfect plan for action or know for sure that what we do will have the desired impact. We need to come together, to act with integrity and love and be that active hope that keeps showing up and that can inspire others to keep showing up alongside us.

Maison Quaker in Congénies, France, is marking 200 years of activity this year, and is seeking financial support to nurture Quakerism in France through 'Une Nouvelle Vie'. Any donations should be made by emailing centre.quaker.congenies@gmail.com. [See page 23]

Quaker Voluntary Action is starting to organise in-person volunteering in the UK and overseas, following a fallow period caused by the pandemic. You can catch up with their activity here: <https://qva.org.uk/>. Forthcoming events include a non-residential working retreat at Horton Community Farm in Bradford, West Yorks in February; a working retreat at the Borgo Basino eco-village in Italy in March; and an encounter-based study tour in Israel-Palestine in October.

Best wishes, and wishing you good health

Alastair Cameron
Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

The Editor wishes all readers of Sesame a Happy New Year.

The Friendly Folk Dancers

The following is taken from a note by Meri Goad of St Andrews Local Meeting which was circulated ahead of General Meeting in November.

THE Friendly Folk Dancers (FFD) are an informal group of international Quakers who uphold the testimonies of peace and equality (and also of reconciliation). They achieve this through international tours demonstrating medleys of folk dances from countries that are or have been in conflict and then inviting participation through more interactive dances. Examples I have experienced include circle dances from Romania or the USA. Their website is: www.friendlyfolkdancers.com.

My own association with them dates from 1999 when they toured New Zealand when I was Resident Friend in Wellington. Subsequently, I have joined them in Australia, the USA and in Ireland. The group now wish to visit Scotland in the Spring or, more likely, Autumn of 2022. I would be willing to oversee arrangements for this, as I did for their Australian tour, and would welcome support from other Friends. Cooperation from Friends in Scotland is obviously essential. Invitations from Local Meetings who could host the dancers would be an important start. This would mean accommodating one or two of the dancers for a couple of nights, for example, whilst they stay at a particular location, and giving them breakfast. The group would find their own lunches and evening meals although opportunities to meet informally at occasions such as pot-luck suppers would be warmly welcome and give Scottish Friends an opportunity to learn first-hand about Friends' activities in other countries.

Suitable venues (Meeting Houses, local halls, schools, *etc*) and audiences to perform to would also need to be organised. This is also a great opportunity for outreach. Primary schools, in my experience, have been keen to invite them, as have local country dancing/folk dancing organisations. The group would probably use a minibus to travel and expect to stay in any location for about two or three days, depending on how much is organised for them to do. The group pay their own air fare and expenses and raise money to enable participants to join them from various African countries who would otherwise be unable to take part.

Dancing ability is not necessary! The testimony of equality could not be better expressed than when I saw a wheelchair being wheeled into the centre of our circle so that no-one was excluded! This thread runs through all that they do.

The possible support I hope Friends may offer include:

- Being able and willing to provide B&B accommodation and possibly the occasional pot-luck supper. Dancers are likely to come from the USA, UK and possibly Africa and other countries.

- Providing the funds for the provision of a minibus for the duration of their tour, to travel between venues.
- Help with the organisation: I would be the central coordinator but would need help from Friends in Local Meetings across Scotland who are keen for the FFD to visit.

This is an exciting opportunity to meet, socialise and dance with Friends from across the globe. I have found their ministry to be full of joy and Light, with an effervescent energy that is magnetic and I look forward with great anticipation to an exciting and fulfilling time with them once more in 2022.

God Within

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24, KJB). “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him... “ (Genesis 1:27, KJB). Thus, there is “that of God” in everyone. All humans are spiritual beings, on a spiritual journey, who survive after the death of the physical body. We are spiritual beings with a body, rather than bodies with a spirit.

However, the mind interferes and tries to prevent the spirit from directing our lives. It is as though the mind wants to draw down a blind over the window to the soul. In our silent worship, prayer or meditation, we open that blind and allow the God Within to envelope our whole beings, our decisions and activities. It is both the process of discernment to guide us, and the ‘juice’ that gives power to our Quaker Witness. It is what helps us to avoid becoming merely another well-intentioned pressure group, and to “...walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one”.

When we pray or meditate, a physical change also takes place. Our brains go into alpha waves, which is a very healing mode. This state can be palpable to those nearby and can influence their brain waves into synchronicity. This is how we affirm the “Presence [of Christ] in the Midst” of our Meeting for Worship (as opposed to ‘the peasants in the mist’ – as a ministering Friend was misheard to say recently). This is how we can recognise when our Meeting for Worship is ‘gathered’, and thus enhance our experience of group worship. It is the elusive missing element from the experience of our online Meetings for Worship, that have nevertheless been so essential during the lockdown. It is why so many of us will welcome the opportunity to attend Meeting for Worship in person again, in addition to enhancing our experience of Quaker community.

Annie Miller

[The Presence in the Midst (*which gave its title to the 2009 Swarthmore Lecture*) is a 1916 painting by James Doyle Penrose, now at Friends House – see Sesame 202]

“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain”

The painting on the front page is in the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC: it is one of 62 extant versions of *The Peaceable Kingdom*, by Edward Hicks. All depict, in varying detail, the vision of Isaiah 11:6-9:

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

(In at least one rendition, the lion has straw sticking out of his mouth, and – I think – a doubtful expression like that of Tigger eating haycorns; art historians reckon to date versions in which the animals have sad faces to the 1830s, reflecting the painter's dismay at the division within American Friends, a rupture also symbolised in some by a blasted tree trunk.)

Edward Hicks was born at his grandfather's mansion at Attleboro, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, on 4 April 1780; his father, Isaac, was an Anglican and a Loyalist whose fortune was lost in the Revolutionary War, and who, after his wife died, sent the young Edward, not yet two years old, to be brought up by David and Elizabeth Twining, family friends who were Quakers. At 13, he was apprenticed to a firm of coach builders, and trained as a coach painter; he left in 1800, and in 1801 moved to Milford (now Hulmeville) to work for Joshua C. Canby, another coach maker. Having drifted away from Friends, he began to attend meeting for worship regularly again; in 1803 he was accepted into membership, and in the same year married Sarah Worstall, whom he had known since childhood.

Hicks was recorded as a minister in 1812, and from 1813 onwards travelled throughout Pennsylvania as a preacher. His pictures funded these tours; it was in about 1820 that he first made a version of *The Peaceable Kingdom*, the theme he painted about a hundred times again before his death in 1849. In early versions, such as the one dating from 1822-25 at Amherst College, much is clearly copied from a picture by Richard Westall (1765-1836) as used to illustrate an 1815 Bible: the pose (though not the scanty clothing) of the little child leading the lion, and the branch in his right hand; the calf, resting its head on the lion's shoulder; the goat, and the sleeping leopard.

In nine extant versions – the so-called 'Banner Kingdoms' – there is, on the left in the middle distance, a throng of Quakers holding a streamer with text: in the one owned by the Terra Foundation for the Arts, in Chicago, this reads: "Mind the LIGHT within. IT IS GLAD TIDING Of Grate [sic] JOY.

PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL to ALL MEN Every where.” William Penn commonly stands at the front of this group, with George Fox and Robert Barclay, less confidently identified, standing further back; beside Penn is the hatless figure of Elias Hicks (1748-1830), Edward’s second cousin, who became the figurehead of the liberal faction of Quakers after the schism in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of 1827. Neither Edward nor Elias was a liberal, nor sympathetic to the unitarian and anti-scriptural tendencies of those called ‘Hicksite’; for them, the main issue was the readiness of wealthy urban ‘Orthodox’ Quakers to use the Bible *against* the Inner Light as a source of authority, since, as Elias wrote in 1826, *those who profess to consider them the proper rule of faith and practice, will kill one another for the Scriptures’ sake* – and, of course, find in them justification for upholding the existing order of things. Hicksite Friends tended, at the outset of the separation, to be poor and rural; many kept to ‘plain speech’ (the use of *thee* and *thou*) and ‘plain dress’, both of which had fallen out of use in towns and cities.

In place of the Quakers with banners, most versions of *The Peaceable Kingdom* show, in the words of an eight-line verse on the frame of some early examples, the scene *When the great Penn his famous treaty made/With Indian chiefs beneath the elm tree’s shade*. Penn stands in the middle, with the chiefs on the viewer’s left and the Quakers to the right, one man wearing a long red cloak. (The grouping resembles that in Benjamin West’s *Treaty of Penn with the Indians* of 1771-2 but reversed, suggesting it was taken from an engraved black and white copy: the red cloak is a grey coat in West’s painting.) Hicks saw this agreement as putting into practice the values of brotherly love and peace that Christ came to teach us. Voltaire called it “the only treaty never sworn to and never broken”, but it *was* broken – by Penn’s sons, William, and Thomas, who commissioned West to depict it.

Edward Hicks used to sell his paintings for twenty dollars. In a note of 1844 he told a buyer he was adding \$1.75 for the frame (“*I thought it greatele cheaper than thee would be likely to get a fraim with ten coats of varnish any where else*”). At Christie’s in New York in 2020, an 1847 example with a pair of leopards in the foreground was sold for \$4,575,000, more than a million dollars above the upper estimate. It had last changed hands in 1980 for \$270,000, a price then considered remarkable. (Editor)

Edward Hicks painting ‘The Peaceable Kingdom’, 1839, by his son Thomas Hicks (1823-1890)



Northern Friends Peace Board: 27 November 2021

The Board's first meeting since 2019 at which at least *some* members hoped to gather in person (at Bolton Meeting House) was largely thwarted by the effect on the rail network of Storm Arwen and the closure of roads across the Pennines; I think only two were present apart from Philip Austin, the co-ordinator, and our clerk, Susanne Wilson. 23 others were on Zoom.

After opening worship, participants shared reflections about COP26 which had taken place earlier that month: glimmers of hope had been discerned although dissatisfaction (if not surprise) was expressed at the meagreness of what had actually been achieved. Several mentioned the lack of discussion about the role of military forces in the climate emergency: the Pentagon on its own is a worse polluter than many nation states, for example (see the 30-minute video at <https://youtu.be/EhPyVslGkTc>; the interview with Stuart Parkinson [of Scientists for Global Responsibility] on Talk World Radio at <https://youtu.be/Cz8J1uta2eA>; and <https://militaryemissions.org> a new website which tries to track the unreported greenhouse gas emissions attributable to armed forces).

Trustees presented the draft of a new NFPB constitution: the Board's charitable objects are unchanged, but the document seeks to be clearer about the duties of trustees, and follows guidance from the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations on suitable wording in respect of virtual meetings. We had a financial report. Phoebe Spence, standing down after ten years as treasurer, was thanked; we welcomed her successor, Deryck Hillas.

Jo Frew, the outreach co-ordinator of the Rethinking Security network (see <https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/>) led us in a discussion of what 'security' means; she began by contrasting the pictures thrown up by Google Images for *security* (heavily armed guards, barbed wire, surveillance cameras) with those for *safety* (children with parents, hugs). [Although when I tried this subsequently, *safety* gave me pictures of hard hats and accident prevention posters – nevertheless, the point was well made that there is little overlap.] In particular, Jo spoke about the UK Government's 'Integrated Review' of security issues (see Sesame 235 for the responses to it from Church Leaders and supporting organisations of GCOMS-UK). In collaboration with the Centre for Trust, Peace & Social Relations at Coventry University, Rethinking Security is producing an Alternative Security Review, on which there is more at <https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/find-out-more/alternative-security-review/>. It was an interesting session which I felt could usefully have gone on longer; conversation over lunch at a normal meeting would have kept it going.

After the –sadly chat-free – break, Janet Fenton reported from the Nuclear Weapons working group. There is to be a first Meeting of 'States Parties' (*i.e.* signatories) of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, in Vienna, 22-24 March 2022, and civil society bodies will be attending, as well as, it is hoped, some non-signatory states as observers: Norway is ex-

pected to do so, and the new coalition government in Germany is said to be in favour. (Opinion polls show a majority of Germans support TPNW.) There is more on the meeting at:

<https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/disarmament-fora/nuclear-weapon-ban/1msp>

The twice-postponed conference to review the UN Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) *was* due to take place in New York in January; COVID-19 has delayed it again, but it is hoped it will happen in some form in 2022. In the response dated 1/2/2021 from the Ministry of Defence to our AM Clerk's letter on the TPNW, the NPT is cited as providing "*the only effective way to achieve disarmament*", and is the subject of a laudatory paragraph on how it "*delivers tangible benefits to all its signatories*" [see Sesame 234, page 7]. Despite this stated enthusiasm, used to justify its opposition to the TPNW, the UK Government has been accused of breaching Article VI of the NPT by proposing to enlarge its stock of warheads, with "a damaging effect on global stability" according to the spokesman of the UN Secretary General [see Sesame 235, page 7]. There is more on the Conference here: <https://reachingcriticalwill.org/disarmament-fora/npt/2022> [and see also page 20].

Having been appointed in 2018 to serve for three years, the members of the working group were asked to continue for a further three.

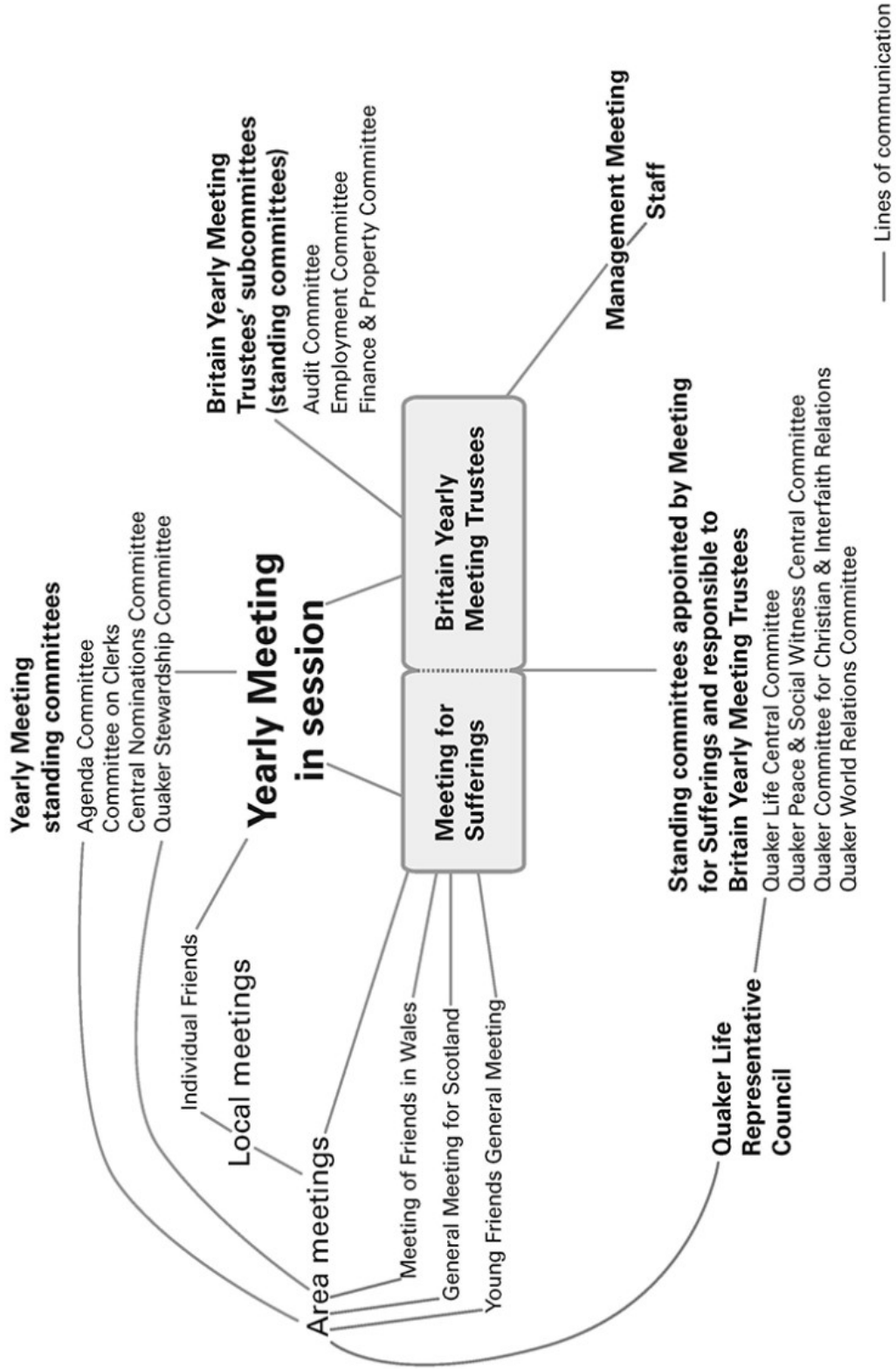
The final agenda item was the members' forum. Sponsorship of refugees, as well as being discussed in South East Scotland, is a project of Friends in Harrogate; a vigil in Chesterfield had been held the previous evening for those drowned in the English Channel, and an event in Penrith, *Together With Refugees*, had had about sixty people in attendance. Also in Penrith, a new CAAT group [Campaign Against Arms Trade Cumbria] had met in person for the first time. Friends in Yorkshire hold a weekly vigil and a bi-monthly Meeting for Worship at Menwith Hill, the US communications and intelligence base which has sought planning permission for three new radomes (the 21-metre diameter "golf balls" which dominate the site); the base is believed to be involved in drone attacks worldwide. Welsh Friends are working on peace education projects with the universities of Aberystwyth and Cardiff; they are also involved in Interfaith for Palestine, which has highlighted the presence of the Israeli arms firm Elbit in England (see <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/protesters-return-oldham-factory-vow-20677867>)

'Rethinking Security' was mentioned as a possible theme for a 2022 peace event in Carlisle; and the Secure Scotland network was recommended by Janet Fenton as a model for Friends elsewhere to connect conversations on diverse issues and concerns (see <https://www.securescotland.scot/>).

The meeting closed in worship. The Board next meets on 5 March 2022; at a blended meeting, if face-to-face contact is thought to be safe by then.

Alan Frith

A simplified plan of the governance and committee structure of Britain Yearly Meeting (from Quaker Faith & Practice, 5th edition, chapter 8.)



Meeting for Sufferings: 4 December 2021

I had the privilege of attending my first Meeting for Sufferings on 4 December 2021 by video conferencing with nearly 100 other people. I found the lead up to, and the meeting, exciting, exhausting and enlightening in equal measures.

The papers for the meeting are available at:

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-2021-12-calling-letter-agenda—papers;>

(and the Minutes of the meeting are at:

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-2021-12-follow-up-package>).

After reading the former (96 pages), and attending Zoom sessions to ‘meet with representatives of BYM Trustees, QWRC, QCCIR & the Book of Discipline Revision Committee’ as well as with my fellow Scottish AM Reps, I realised that I was just a tad overwhelmed by it all and needed a bit of clarity and perhaps some simplification before ‘going’ to the Meeting.

My first question was “What is Meeting for Sufferings?” followed by “Where does MfS fit into Quakers in Britain?” Whilst I had a vague idea, I didn’t really know. Chapter 7 of *Quaker Faith & Practice* is devoted to Meeting for Sufferings, beginning with its history, but I found in chapter 8, on ‘the centrally managed work of Quakers in Britain’, a useful diagram which helped me put everything into context. [See opposite.]

The meeting began with worship during which was read the poem ‘The World has need of you’ by Ellen Bass; see:

<https://apoemaday.tumblr.com/post/656825251908452352/the-world-has-need-of-you>

The Agenda consisted, in the main, of updates and reports from committees and others which I have put into a table. [See overleaf.]

I would however encourage you to look at the papers, linked above, for more information.

Katrina McCrea

The BYM representative at Finland YM was our Friend Mary Woodward – a version of her report was included in Sesame 236.

The two QRBs which had their registration renewed at the meeting are both registered charities, so categorised as ‘external’, (i.e. they are subject to regulation by non-Quaker bodies.) Living Witness (Quakers for Sustainability) has a website <https://www.livingwitness.org.uk/index.html> and produces a quarterly newsletter, earthQuaker. RJ Working is based in Cornwall; it “exists to equip young people with the principles, language and confidence to build a more compassionate and fair society” (see <https://rjworking.co.uk/>). (Editor)

Meeting for Sufferings, 4/12/21		
Body reporting/ Matter reported on	Summary	Action/ comments
Book of Discipline Revision Committee (BDRC)	<p>The BDRC's second report to MfS gave a full picture of the scope of its work – there is still a long way to go.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">[See also page 14]</p>	<p><i>How can Friends get involved?</i> You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pray for and uphold the Committee • look at our webpage at https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/quakerfaith-andpractice/revising-quaker-faith-practice • contribute to our online project <i>Open to New Light</i> https://padlet.com/bdrc/OpenToNewLight • share ideas for the new book, including telling us of inspirational and helpful pieces of writing. These can be offered using an online form https://forms.quaker.org.uk/qfp-ideal/ or by contacting the Cttee Secretary by email or writing to Friends House • engage with our social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (search for <i>revisingqfp</i>) • invite BDRC members to talk with your meeting about the work (subject to their availability).
<p>Quaker World Relations Committee (QWRC) <i>Annual report</i></p>	<p>QWRC and QCCIR brought us news of their activities and future plans. Both have a role within BYM but are also outward-facing: QWRC connects us with the global family of Friends; QCCIR with ecumenical and inter-faith groups. The terms of reference of both committees are currently under review and it is possible that their reporting arrangements may change in future – reporting to MfS rather than Trustees – so it is important that we understand and appreciate the breadth of their work.</p>	<p>QWRC has been asked to share the draft EMES travel policy with BYM, in the hope that it might contribute to reducing the carbon footprint of our activities. This matter will be forwarded to the Recording Clerk; QWRC would be happy to receive comments from Friends by the end of January.</p> <p>Tracey Martin, Clerk to QWRC asks: <i>“How might we best use our limited capacity to create opportunities for British Friends and Friends from other YMs to engage with each other and work together on common concerns. What would be of most value to you?”</i></p>
<p>Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations (QCCIR) <i>Annual report</i></p>		

<p>Other European Yearly Meetings</p> <p><i>Reports from Friends appointed to attend</i></p>	<p>We are reminded of our place in the worldwide family of Friends and are grateful to the service of the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) and its European & Middle East Section (EMES) for helping bind us together.</p>	<p>We received reports from Friends appointed to attend Finland, France, Netherlands and Switzerland Yearly Meetings. There are links to their Epistles as well as from the German, Ireland, Norway and Sweden Yearly Meetings.</p> <p>These reports are inspirational.</p>
<p>Sustainability Monitoring Group</p>	<p>The Sustainability Monitoring Group (SMG) gave its annual report and drew particular attention to the progress made by the Quiet Company [<i>which runs the catering at Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall</i>].</p>	<p>An additional member is needed for the SMG: if you are interested, please contact sufferings@quaker.org.uk. The nominations committee also needs strengthening so please consider whether this could be your service to BYM.</p>
<p>UN Climate Change Conference (COP26)</p>	<p>The minute records the power of working in partnership with so many other faith communities, and the leading role Quakers played in organising the Global Day of Action. Civil society groups had a huge presence outside the negotiations. We were reminded of QUNO's role on the 'inside' and the long-term work of quiet diplomacy.</p>	<p>The item on COP26 was the most moving part of the meeting. Friends may be interested in page 78 of the meeting papers, with many links to further information about the conference.</p>
<p>Quaker Recognised Bodies</p>	<p>We agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) to renew the registration of <i>Living Witness</i> as an 'External Group' for a period of five years (ii) to register <i>RJ Working</i> as a Quaker Recognised Body ('External Group'), also for a period of five years. 	
<p>BYM Trustees</p>	<p>QPSW has been through a turbulent process of refreshing its strategy; Quaker Life is looking at how it will do the work of the soon-to-be laid down Quaker Stewardship Committee. A restructuring of Quaker communications is complete and that of QPSW is almost finished. Recruitment of Local Development Workers is well underway and should be completed by mid-year.</p>	<p>Income and expenditure have both been below budget in 2021. Next year's income is forecast to be about £1.1m more, but expenditure will still exceed it. Nevertheless, a balanced budget is hoped for in 2023, but there are still many uncertainties. The Treasurer urged Friends to consider whether they can give more to support the work we want to do.</p>

Book of Discipline Revision Committee – an update

It's been some seven months since I've written on our work, largely due to health problems: blood clots in my lungs landed me in hospital in August and slowed me down dramatically for several months, meaning that I had to step back from most of the committee's work, while still continuing as 'gigs manager', working on the planning and delivery of sessions about our work to AMs and other interested Quaker groups.

Fortunately I'm making a good recovery, and others were running the committee's sessions at Yearly Meeting Gathering. I had to miss most of the October meeting, but our 'buddy' system and frequent conversations with other members have kept me 'in the loop'. Our next committee meeting is at the end of January, and I expect to be fully involved in it and our subsequent work.

At this distance it is hard to report all that went on at the July weekend. We discussed what our future work might be: still in small groups, but on which topics, and in which order? Some have finished their task and are itching to move on, while others are still working; and yet others are feeling the need for a rest while they juggle the rest of their lives... We were asked to tell the clerks where we sat on this spectrum, and what new topics interested us, so that they could consider how to take our work further.

The report from the group working on Trusteeship and Charitable Status raised a number of questions for us. Some of the concepts within that topic might need separate explanatory sections: but the same arise elsewhere. How do we make discrete entries intelligible while avoiding excessive repetition/explanation? We can't assume everyone will read the Book from start to finish: if they dip in, how do we ensure they fully understand the concepts behind what they are reading? An electronic version can contain hyperlinks to explanations, quotations, illustrations; a hard copy can't.

We are also still discerning quite what the 'Voice of the Book' will be – the language, tone, and 'feel' of the introductions and topic sections – and a group has been set up to look at the topic papers already produced to see what can be learned from them, while also beginning work on a glossary. The use of extracts was also discussed – whether they are placed within or after specific pieces of text, and whether we could/should use extracts from non-Quaker sources. There was a wide range of opinions, and we are only at the beginning of what will be a long threshing process. Meanwhile, all submissions to the committee continue to be tagged, and I'm hugely grateful that others on the committee are not only competent to do this work, but also enjoy it!

The key messages from our July committee meeting:

We have completed more draft text of topic areas and will begin to undertake work on further aspects. Pieces we complete are banked until we are ready to undertake further development in the future.

We are still seeking the definitive 'Voice of the Book' and a group will work on this over the next few months, using draft material to consider the choices we are making.

We have discussed our use of quotations, and will continue to develop our understanding of their place and importance in the new publication.

We continue to develop the practical processes and structures which play a significant part in supporting our work.

My participation at the October committee sessions was limited to a brief appearance to reassure everyone I was still alive but without the energy to play any meaningful part in the weekend's work. I was delighted to learn that Finola O'Sullivan, new to BDRC in 2021, had accepted nomination as co-convenor of the Communicating with Friends group, replacing Nuala Watt. I'm glad Nuala will still be on CwF, and look forward to getting to know Finola, as we work together on visits to AMs and other groups.

Feedback from our sessions at Yearly Meeting Gathering was invited, so I was able to say how much I'd appreciated the creative session I'd attended, and how impressed I was by the many new contributions to our website *Open to New Light* which were posted during and after YMG. Go to www.padlet/bdrc/opentonewlight and have a look! It also became clear from Friends' feedback that there were a number of misunderstandings about our work, particularly about its boundaries – we have *not* been appointed to solve the problems being aired in the Society today, though we do need to reflect these concerns in our work – and we need to make this clear in our visits and other communications with Friends.

The new topic groups were announced – *Reviewing Text and Compiling Glossary; Testimony; and Meeting for Worship for Business* [sic]. Friends who were currently working at capacity were invited to let the clerks know when they felt able to take on more work, and if they felt particularly drawn to an area among the topics still awaiting our attention.

Given the then state of the pandemic, the committee felt that our January and October meetings next year should be via videoconferencing, but that we would hope to hold a blended meeting at Woodbrooke in July, thus allowing us to spend more time getting to know each other and working on areas that would benefit from a longer period of discernment than is usually possible in our weekend meetings. I can hardly wait!

Our small group work on Discernment continued over the summer, and a final 'first version' was received by the committee at the October meeting, along with texts on Nominations and Outreach – which latter the task group suggested should be renamed *Sharing the Quaker Experience*. These will be kept until the time comes for further work on them.

Discussion continued on the use of extracts and quotations. It has become clear that we need to be sure *why* we are including particular passages, which may not be the same for every topic. It is important to include mat-

erial written since the publication of *Quaker Faith & Practice*, but not throw out everything else!

The key messages from the October committee meeting:

We really appreciated hearing from everyone who attended our sessions at YMG online and have spent time thinking about the questions which were raised. Thank you for asking them!

We continue to work on creative approaches to the challenges involved in producing an inclusive expression of Quaker tradition and experience. We continue to welcome your contributions, especially from those who may feel their experience is less well reflected in the current Quaker faith & practice. We are also interested in reflections on race, gender, climate justice, and related topics – and anything else on Friends' hearts at present.

We are working on draft material in a range of forms. Text, images, video, music, and other materials can work together, and we are exploring when and how we can share our thinking with the rest of the Yearly Meeting. Until then, we welcome your specific suggestions, invitations to Area Meetings and other events, and continued upholding.

Prior to our clerks' reporting to Meeting for Sufferings in December, committee members were invited to take part in a session with MfS representatives, to answer any questions they might have. The clerks' report to MfS was well received [and was printed in the 10 December issue of *The Friend* – do read it!], and has already prompted an invitation to us to visit Gloucestershire AM in 2022. This is in addition to those already planned at East Sussex AM (February) and Cambridgeshire AM (March). I really enjoy the preparatory meetings with AM clerks and others, and am delighted to be joined in them by Finola, both for her company and insights, and because, if I fell under a bus tomorrow, there'd be someone else who knows what's going on... We have an increasing number of committee members who not only take part but also lead these sessions, which has been extremely helpful these last few months – though I do still love doing them!

It's been another difficult year for the BDRC as we continue to work remotely, but there's also been a lot of joy in working together and beginning to get to know the members who were appointed earlier this year. I was delighted to learn that another Welsh representative has been appointed by MfS – Christine Trevett – and look forward to getting to know her.

One of the topics we will be considering at the January committee meeting is membership and as a starting point we have been asked to write a few sentences on "what membership means to me". I commend this exercise to you, too, as we look forward to what we hope will be a more peace-full, hope-full, and joy-full 2022.

Thank you all for your prayers and support as we work on your behalf: we can't do it without you!

Mary Woodward

Failte Edinburgh

Community Sponsorship of Refugees – an update

Failte Edinburgh is made up of Quaker Members and Attenders from three Local Meetings within South East Scotland Area Meeting and several other volunteers not associated with the Society of Friends.

Our aim is to make a difference by sponsoring one refugee family to come and live in Edinburgh and by supporting them through their first year's residence. This is being done through the UK Government-UNHCR Community Sponsorship Scheme:

<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/community-sponsorship5f9825b34.html>

It is a great privilege to be able to work together in this way.

We have now completed the paperwork for our Application in Principle and have produced our own Safeguarding and Complaints Policies, Volunteer Code of Conduct, *etc.* These are currently being reviewed by the Refugee Resettlement Officer at the City of Edinburgh Council. Once he has given his approval we will submit them to the Home Office early in 2022. Our bank account has also been approved in principle and may be operating by the time you read this – final documents are currently being scrutinised. You can, however send cheques made out to *Failte Edinburgh* c/o: Mark Bitel (Treasurer), whose address is in the Book of Members.

Thank you for your support.

Lynne Barty
Project Lead

According to Markos and Maththaios, Loukas and Iōannēs

The Gospels, Sarah Ruden's new translation which appeared last year, is dedicated "To the Quakers"; and her Introduction to it begins:

As a Quaker – a member of perhaps the least theological, most practical religious movement in the world – I'm supposed to be open to looking first at a thing in itself, whether it's a head of Swiss chard, money, a gun, a book, a belief, or anything else. As a Quaker translator, I would like to deal with the Gospels more straightforwardly than is customary, to help people respond to the books on their own terms ...

She is not the first Friend to try to tackle them in this way. Norman Marrow published his *The Four Gospels* in 1977, in which, consciously avoiding 'biblical' language, he made angels 'messengers', and, after much thought, preferred 'happy' to 'blessed' in the Sermon on the Mount (see *Sesame* 229). He also rejected *prophet*, rendering it as one 'who spoke for God', or (e.g. in *Matt.* 1:25) just as 'spokesman' – a word I found jarring at the time, suggesting someone on the TV news saying that something or other was "totally

unacceptable” (as so much was in the 1970s – and, I suppose, for Hosea and Amos too, in their time, though I still don’t like it). Twice he felt the need to explain his choices: the phrase *Son of Man* was rendered differently according to its context; and the passage in which (as the *Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* describes it) “St John unfolds the mystery of the Incarnation”, which in most English Bibles starts “In the beginning was the Word ...”, began, in his translation,

“The Ground of all being existed from the very first ...”

For Sarah Ruden, *disciple* is another word to change, though her alternative – ‘student’ – has, for me, the same drawback as ‘spokesman’ in carrying distracting associations. She stays with ‘prophet’; her angels too are ‘messengers’, and the blessed are ‘happy’ likewise. Other word choices which differ from familiar translations are set out and explained in a 24-page ‘Discursive Glossary’ following her Introduction. Like Norman Marrow, she recasts the start of the Fourth Gospel completely, as

“At the inauguration was the true account ...”

– but while she may be right that the sense of the Greek calls for something grander than ‘beginning’, this opening phrase evokes for me an accurately reported swearing-in – Biden’s in contrast to Trump’s, perhaps – rather than a divine mystery. (Still, at least she attempts to make sense of it, unlike another recent translator, David Bentley Hart, who in his version of *The New Testament* (2017) renders it as

“At the origin was the Logos ...”

as if the difficulty of conveying the sense of what the writer meant by *λόγος* could be sidestepped by leaving it in Greek.)

Transliteration is, however, a major feature of Sarah Ruden’s Gospels. Her most obvious departure from convention is in using it for the names of people and places – so Farasaioi not Pharisees; Kafarnaoum, Hierosoluma and Aiguptos, not Capernaum, Jerusalem and Egypt; and unconventional forms of personal names, including those of the Evangelists, as in the title of this piece; and, of course, Iēsous. This is certainly distancing, but I am not convinced it is helpful; all revert to their usual spellings in the copious and interesting footnotes.

This translation is at its most thought-provoking in recounting conversations. In John’s Gospel, the reader can sympathise with the bewilderment of Nicodemus over the elliptical talk of being “born anew”. Both accounts of the woman whose daughter was possessed and is healed (*Mark* 7:25-30/*Matt.* 15:22-28), in which Jesus is usually made to refer to Gentiles as ‘dogs’, are transformed: here, he talks of “little doggies” and the tone of the exchange is quite different. (A footnote explains that these two places are the only occurrences in the Greek Bible of a diminutive for *dog* which is “a rare and comical word”, and that, in the Marcan version, four diminutives – for *daughter*, *demon*, *dog* and *child* – follow in quick succession: “a

style ... suitable to a more light-hearted narrative".) Some single utterances are particularly startling, as when Jesus, kissed by Judas, says "Do what you came for, pal" (*Matt.* 26:50); or when Pilate, presenting Jesus to the mob, says "Look at this guy" (*John* 19:5). In the former, the word for *friend* is "ironic[al] and condescending"; the latter (*Behold the man!* in the King James Version) has to convey pitying contempt, and so although, on first reading, *pal* and *guy* both seem incongruous, they probably cannot be improved on.

In more formal passages, as might be expected from a translator whose rendering of the *Æneid* has been acclaimed as the best in English since Dryden's, Sarah Ruden produces a version which is fresh but lucid. Here, by way of example, is her translation of the shorter version of the Lord's Prayer from Luke's Gospel (*Luke* 11:2-4); with, for comparison, those of Norman Marrow, on the right, and the New Revised Standard Version, below:

Father, let your name be spoken in holiness.

Let your kingdom arrive.

*Give us day by day tomorrow's loaf of bread,
And set us free from our offenses [sic],*

*Since we ourselves have set free everyone
bound to us likewise.*

And do not bring us into the ordeal.

Father, may your holy name be praised.

May your reign begin.

*Daily provide us our bread for the day to come
And scrub out our shortcomings for us*

For we ourselves do the like

*For any against whom we have a grievance;
And don't bring us to a test of our
endurance.*

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial.

Random House, the publishers, describe *The Gospels* as "destined to become a definitive edition of these canonical texts" which I think does it no favours. (It will be interesting to see what revisions, if any, are made in the paperback edition, whenever it appears.) However they also call it a

robust and eminently readable translation [which] is ... a resource for new debate, discussion and inspiration for years to come

with which most readers, Quakers or not, surely can agree.

Alan Frith

Sarah Ruden, *The Gospels, a new translation*, Modern Library, ISBN 978-0-399-59294-2 is at present only available in hardback or as an Ebook.

Norman Marrow's *The Four Gospels* (White Crescent Press, ISBN 978-0-9505565-0-5) is long out of print, but copies occasionally appear for sale online.

David Bentley Hart, *The New Testament, A Translation*, Yale, ISBN 978-0-300-24844-9 (paperback) is o/p in hardback, but available as an Ebook or an Audiobook.

Nuclear Weapons

A Statement and Responses

In the first week of the New Year, a *Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races* was issued from the White House. The full text is available here:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/01/03/p5-statement-on-preventing-nuclear-war-and-avoiding-arms-races/>

Presumably intended as a positioning statement ahead of the conference to review the working of the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), scheduled for this month but now postponed, the five states designated the P5, whose possession of nuclear weapons was a *fait accompli* at the time of the Treaty – the USA, the USSR (now the Russian Federation), the UK, France and China – are recognised in it as holding such weapons, but committed themselves not to enable other states to develop them (Article I), and to work in good faith towards “a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control” (Article VI). Although other states *have* since acquired nuclear arms – India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea – this is far fewer than the 30-40 envisaged at the time the Treaty was negotiated; three former Soviet Republics, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan, which (nominally, at least) inherited them at the break-up of the USSR, transferred them to Russia and acceded to the NPT in 1994; and South Africa (which, with Israeli help, had developed a bomb in the 1980s, possibly for use against its own people) signed the Treaty in 1991 when a change of regime was in prospect, and dismantled its weapons before it too acceded.

The P5 leaders assert in the statement that “*a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought*”; but that nuclear weapons should (and presumably, therefore, do) “*serve defensive purposes, deter aggression, and prevent war*”, in which case it is surely illogical that they “*believe strongly that the further spread of such weapons must be prevented.*” They “*reaffirm the importance of addressing nuclear threats and emphasize the importance of preserving and complying with our ... non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control agreements and commitments*” [citing NPT Article VI in particular]. Further, they announce the intention of each of them to strengthen measures “*to prevent unauthorized or unintended use of nuclear weapons*” and aver that “*none of our nuclear weapons are targeted at each other or at any other State*”. Finally, they express the wish “*to work with all states to create a security environment more conducive to progress on disarmament*” and say they are “*resolved to pursue constructive dialogue with mutual respect and acknowledgment of each other’s security interests and concerns.*”

Scottish CND issued the following response to the statement:

“We welcome any genuine commitment to stepping back from the possibility of

nuclear war, especially as there is now a growing and glaring gap between the words and actions of the nuclear states. The gulf between the words of the UK government and their actions is illustrated by the upturn in convoys delivering nuclear weapons to Scotland, reflecting the 2021 decision to increase the cap on the stockpile of nuclear weapons¹, despite the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

“Tragically, all of the nuclear states continue to squander billions on new means of delivering nuclear devastation while re-stating their commitment to the Non-Proliferation Treaty – including Article 6 which requires them to pursue negotiations that end with complete nuclear disarmament under strict international control. The repetition of this commitment, referenced in the P5 statement, is more like a mantra than a meaningful or intentional statement and is in any case a self-delusional denial of the escalating risks of a continued nuclear arms race.

“The majority of UN member states wish is for nuclear states to join the growing number of countries that hope for universal adherence to the TPNW. We must ask if it will take an independent Scotland to bring the UK government to its senses, when no UK nuclear weapons will be based on the Clyde estuary and the UK’s nuclear weapons will have nowhere to go.”

1. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/integrated-review-of-security-defence-development-and-foreign-policy-2021-nuclear-deterrent>

Janet Fenton comments:

The statement contains a couple of notable positives. The admission that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought” – a deliberate echo of the Reagan-Gorbachev statement of 1985 – was made in a Biden-Putin statement in June 2021 and it is good to see it re-affirmed here by all the P5. The obvious logic of that stance (as Reagan and Gorbachev understood) is that nuclear weapons must be eliminated.

The second plus is more subtle and indirect. Even superpowers have to pay attention to their global reputational status and will attempt to deflect criticism before it sticks for good. In the context of the NPT Review Conference that criticism has focused on the P5’s failure to make any progress on Article VI of the Treaty; which is why the statement defensively quotes it. If we put our justified cynicism about their motives to one side for a moment, we can see that the fact that they have said this indicates a measure of power behind the barrage of criticism and challenge that has come their way, specifically from the accelerating credibility of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). This is a huge incentive to keep calling them out for the vast chasm between their words and their actions.

A quick look at the actual terms of Article VI shows up that chasm. Signatories are obliged to “... pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

Cessation of the nuclear arms race? In Scotland we would say 'Aye right!' What about China's burgeoning silos; the talk of moving US nuclear weapons further eastward in Europe; Russia's hypersonic missiles; the UK's increase in its warhead numbers? Oh, and that "treaty on general and complete disarmament" when the TPNW, which the P5 states have regularly disparaged, is precisely that? Give us all a break.

Then there is the standard kicking of disarmament into the long grass, as we wait, patiently or otherwise, for "a security environment more conducive to progress". There is no plan, no proactive step-by-step programme, no hint of recognition of urgency as the risks to the planet increase day by day.

One junior member of the P5 gang deserves special mention. The UK has been particularly blatant in its NPT-related hypocrisy, claiming to comply with Article VI while increasing the size of its WMD arsenal by over 40 % and prompting UK CND to report it directly to the United Nations. Yet the UK may now acquire international significance in a way never envisaged in the 'Global Britain' propaganda. Scottish independence is very much back on the agenda. A new Scotland, given the current popular and parliamentary rejection of the UK's nuclear weapons, will very likely, with the full backing of the TPNW and huge international support, insist that the remnant UK removes its WMD from Scottish ports and Scottish waters. Without viable alternatives elsewhere in Britain to the bases at Faslane and Coulport, the UK may find itself the first P5 state to be truly Article VI compliant. Going back to the issue of reputation: how much better it will be for the UK to claim the high ground by easing itself towards TPNW acceptance, rather than waiting for circumstances to force it to do so.

Rebecca Johnson, of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, has written a new report on how the UK could respond to the TPNW, which is to be published to mark the anniversary of the Treaty's coming into effect. Although the webinar at which it was to be launched has had to be postponed, details will be available at: <https://cnduk.org/events/nuclear-weapons-are-banned-what-does-this-mean-for-britain-cnd-webinar/>; and her PDF briefing from last year is still at <https://www.unhscotland.org.uk/post/nuclear-weapons-are-banned-what-does-this-mean-for-britain>.

THE BOOK OF MEMBERS

The Book of Members and Attenders 2021 is published by General Meeting for Scotland and lists the names, addresses, and other contact details of members and known attenders, arranged by the Local Meeting which they usually attend. Copies are available (at £3.99) to anyone listed in it; however it is a **confidential document** only to be used for Quaker purposes. It is assumed that *Sesame* readers have access to it.

Maison Quaker

THE FIRST (AND ONLY) PURPOSE-BUILT QUAKER MEETING HOUSE IN FRANCE was erected in 1822, so celebrates its bicentenary this year. It stands in Congénies, a village in the South, between Nîmes, Montpellier, the Cévennes and the Camargue, and was the heart of a sizeable and active meeting. (There were estimated to be some 200 Quaker families in the Gard *département* when it was built.) The Quaker missionary John Yeardley and his wife-to-be, Martha Savory, stayed with Friends there in 1825-6, and again in 1842, their second visit coinciding with one by Edward Pease (the railway pioneer) and his son John; other prominent English Quakers who passed through included Joseph John Gurney and his sister Elizabeth Fry, and Thomas Shillitoe (*see* Sesame 236) – who reproved the Protestant pastor for playing bowls with members of his congregation after service, and persuaded the mayor to close the dance hall on Sundays. Earlier, Stephen Grellet had visited, on his unsuccessful mission to meet Napoleon in 1807.

The Languedoc region has a history of religious unorthodoxy dating back at least to the Eleventh Century, when the heresy known as Catharism became established; the Cathars were defeated in the crusade declared against them by Pope Innocent III which ended in 1229, and it is reckoned that the Inquisition had succeeded in eradicating them by 1350. Nevertheless, other sects arose to challenge the teachings of the Catholic Church. In the 1600s, *les Inspirés* were a pacifist community in Congénies and the surrounding villages, a group without pastors, set apart in a predominantly Protestant area which saw violent conflict between the forces of the State and the *Camisards*, who sought to secure religious liberty through armed struggle. *Les Inspirés* became known as *les Couflaires*, from an Occitan word meaning ‘filled’ ‘inflated’ or ‘sighing’, because during worship they felt filled by the Holy Spirit. In the mid-Eighteenth Century, one of their number, Paul Codognan, who spoke only Occitan, travelled on foot to Holland and then on to England, in the hope of meeting like-minded believers; one English Quaker described him as “*a poor and illiterate man who only speaks his local dialect, which renders his visit useless*” although he was at least able to take back books – in French – about Quakerism. Then, after the American War of Independence, an English Friend named Joseph Fox, whose share in a shipping venture had won him unwelcome profits after his partners instructed their vessels to attack French merchant ships, as was permissible during wartime, sent his son to Paris to trace the owners and make restitution. After a long vain search (during which time his father died), Edward Long Fox advertised in the *Gazette de France*, which within weeks brought in claims totalling £22,000¹; and the recipients also advertised in the *Gazette* to acknowledge their gratitude. These notices were

1. This was not the full amount to be repaid; the balance, plus interest, eventually went to a charity “*for the relief of non-combatants of the [French] merchant service*”.

seen by five of the *Couflaires*, who wrote saying that they had no claim but shared Fox's pacifist principles. Jean de Marsillac² was sent to London to meet Quaker leaders, despite his being a captain in the French army at the time.

In 1788, a party of English, Irish and American Friends travelled to Congénies to visit the *Couflaires*, and agreed to accept them as Quakers, albeit with reservations. Somewhat patronisingly, Mary Dudley, from Ireland, wrote:

Their appearance and their manners are not at all like those of our Society, but they bespeak a simple honesty and are clearly conscious of their own faults. Their spiritual sensitivity confirms our hope for a better situation in the future. Many people attend their meetings, 80 or 90, and some of them become very agitated.

The visitors also disliked the habit of meeting behind closed doors; but although worship had been permitted to Protestants by an edict of 1787, the holding of "public assemblies" had not. After the Revolution, tolerance of Protestants, Quakers and Jews was more than nominal. However it did not extend to recognising pacifist principles: de Marsillac petitioned the National Assembly in 1791 for Quakers to be excused military service, but Mirabeau, the president, refused – politely, it was said.

The Congénies Quakers founded a free school for boys and girls, which was attended by non-Friends' children as well, and which existed from the 1790s until the mid-Nineteenth Century. However from then on, the Meeting was in decline, as young people left the area. The last Quaker in the Gard *département* died in 1928, 21 years after the Meeting House had been sold; the last meeting for worship there had been held in 1905.

In 1994, Friends again began meeting in Congénies, and in 2003 the old Meeting House was re-acquired by France Yearly Meeting, opening its doors in 2004 for meetings, retreats, workshops and discussions. (Ed.)

2. De Marsillac's subsequent Quaker career was to be chequered. After resigning his military commission he went to Montpellier to study medicine, and joined the *Couflaires*; in 1791, he published the first French life of William Penn, which was more a panegyric than a biography. He later went to America. In 1798, Congénies Monthly Meeting was the addressee of what would now be called a Certificate of Transfer from Philadelphia MM, commending "our esteemed Friend John [*sic*] Marsillac who has resided in this city near three years past", but it was never received; American Quakers were dismayed to learn that

soon after he got to sea, he laid aside the Friend [i.e. plain dress], & joined the rest of the Company in fiddling (in which he is said to excell) & dancing &c. & when he landed he got Fashionable Clothing, his hair que'd and Powdered, &c.

It was conjectured that he had been a French spy, using membership of the Society as cover; whether or not that suspicion was justified, one of the four Friends appointed to visit him when he applied had told his nephew privately "mark my word; he will turn out a rascal".

EVENTS IN 2022

Art Retreat with Erik Dries:	27 May – 5 June
Writing Retreat with Kim Hope:	10 – 19 June
Music Retreat with Jeff Dershin:	9 – 18 September
Art Retreat with Kate Hale:	24 September – 2 October

For more information email: centre.quaker.congenies@gmail.com

or contact the *amis-residents* at:
amis-residents@maison-quaker-congenies.org



La maison de l'assemblée Quaker, Congénies – 1864

Quakerism, in its essence is not a system; it is a spirit. If we could go back to the living experience of the early days, all that would be needed would be to go out and communicate it, and leave the results with God. This is exactly the point of view from which we ought to work ... The task is not to be measured by the numbers who are in religious fellowship with Friends. Let us rather measure it by the greatness of the truths for which they stand.

Henry T. Hodgkin, 1916

Is COP26 enough? Peace, Militarism, and the Climate Crisis: a missing piece

The Northern Friends Peace Board, the Quaker Council for European Affairs, and Quaker Peace & Social Witness are jointly organising a virtual interactive event with the title above; it is to take place **10.00 – 11.30 am on Saturday 29 January 2022**. To register go to:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/join/register/tZwocOCtpzgoH9Oa3LmDstHt2BAbtNz5nFYF>

The event aims to:

- Draw out the outcomes from COP26 in relation to Climate and Peace.
- Hear from communities affected by militarism, the climate crisis and its interplay.
- Offer approaches to bridge the gap between policy and actions in communities,
- Reflect together, support and promote actions that will make a difference in challenging militarism and its climate impacts.

There is growing consensus that we are rapidly moving towards climate and ecosystem collapse and that urgent action is needed. COP26 saw widespread civil society mobilisations: resulting pressure triggered heightened ambitions at the negotiating table. Despite some welcome progress on CH₄, deforestation and the Paris rulebook, commitments in the Glasgow declaration remain insufficient, with warming on track to exceed the 1.5° limit. Greenhouse gas emissions by the military sector continue to be excluded from climate neutrality pledges and military emission did not make it to the COP26 agenda. The UNFCCC framework compels some states to report emissions on a yearly basis, yet reporting on military emissions is often incomplete if reported at all, and military expenditure is increasing year on year. The voices of those most affected by the climate crisis continue visibly to be excluded from the negotiating table, and COP26 was no exception. Communities that are affected by militarist policies, also come from territories that are living the impacts of the climate crisis. Any credible climate negotiation should amplify the voices of those who, having contributed the least to the climate crisis, are shouldering the costs.

This event will provide a space to share ways forward to raise momentum, working to ensure adequate, transparent reporting of military emissions at climate summits. This includes opposing hard security approaches and forefronting *human* security, which prioritises human rights safeguards, prevention work and well-equipped public services over militarised responses. Funds dedicated to the military could be better used when to support climate action: including loss and damage, adaptation and mitigation. We hope to inspire the audience to challenge manifestations of militarism in their daily lives, as well as organise to build momentum and ensure that military emissions make it to the COP27 agenda.

Rethinking Security:

Steps to sustainable peace with justice

24 February – 30 March 2022

Tutors: Joanna Frew, Philip Austin

Peace and security have never been simply about not carrying or using weapons. For security to be real and lasting, issues of social and climate justice, of economics and human rights need to be addressed alongside disarmament and conflict resolution. How can we reshape thinking about what security is and how it can be achieved?

This course will explore the concept of human security, helping you to articulate the connections between different issues of peace and justice. It will outline what different approaches, issues and people need to be included in defining security in order to achieve true human and ecological security, and how you could be part of creating that through Rethinking Security's Alternative Security Review. You can find out more about Rethinking Security at <https://rethinkingsecurity.org.uk/>

Participants will be able to read and discuss current thinking and research on what security is and what we need to do to achieve it. This will involve challenging current narratives about the need for a military solution. In the final week you will have the opportunity to train to collect information for the Alternative Security Review.

The start date for the course is when the online content and discussion forum becomes available; you can work on this material at any time to suit yourself.

The live Zoom sessions are at 18:00-19:30 (UK time) every Monday during this period.

On the booking form, there is a chance for you to let us know about any accessibility or communication adjustments that will enable you to participate more fully in the course. Automated Zoom closed captions are available for all live sessions, but if you feel you require more accurate closed captioning please email us directly in addition to booking.

For further information, email enquiries@woodbrooke.org.uk or call 0121 472 5171.

To book a place go to: <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/basket/>

The fee for the course is **£45.00** but bursary help may be available; contact your local meeting treasurer, or overseers/pastoral care team.

For other online Woodbrooke courses, see:

<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/our-courses/>

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

**Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 27 November 2021
at 7 Victoria Terrace Edinburgh, and by remote videoconferencing**

2021/11/01 Worship and introductions

During worship, we have heard read *Quaker Faith & Practice* 26.39, in which we are made aware of the value of going forward in uncertainty.

We ask Gareth Rae to serve as Elder for this meeting.

We have made available the names of those nominated for appointments. We will record our decisions at item 7.

We have ensured those present know each other's names and local meetings. The attendance will be recorded in the concluding minute.

2021/11/02 Minutes of Meeting of 8 September 2021

The minutes of our meeting held by remote videoconferencing on 8 September 2021 have been signed and entered in the minute book.

[The full minutes are included in both the print edition of Sesame, and in the PDF emailed to Members and Attenders on the circulation list, but are redacted in this publicly available version. – Editor]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

2021/11/09 Closing minute

We thank Central Edinburgh LM for hosting us today. 33 Friends (30 members and 3 attenders) have been at all or part of this meeting.

Local meeting attendance is indicated below:

Central Edinburgh 16	Central Fife 1	East Lothian 1	Kelso 1	Penicuik 1
Polmont 2	Portobello & Musselburgh 6	South Edinburgh 4	Tweeddale 1	

We next meet on Monday 17 January at 7.00 pm, at 7 Victoria Terrace and by Zoom.

(Signed)
Alastair Cameron, Clerk
Cath Dyer, Assistant Clerk

CONSULTATION CLOSING – HURRY FRIENDS!

*The Group which has been conducting the EDINBURGH SLAVERY & COLONIALISM LEGACY REVIEW for the City Council wants to hear thoughts about the most constructive ways that the city could address issues of historic racial injustice as a means to stem modern-day discrimination. However the consultation closes on **Wednesday 19 January**: responses can be made online at:*

<https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/edinburgh-slavery-and-colonialism-legacy-review-on/consultation/>

Quaker Meetings for Worship in South East Scotland

Contact details of named Friends are in the Book of Members. 'QMH' = Quaker Meeting House

MEETING IN PERSON

Central Edinburgh – QMH, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL

At present, Central Edinburgh is NOT meeting in person. Sunday meetings are on Zoom. Midweek Meeting is suspended for the moment.

Contact the office, centraledinburgh@quaker.org.uk or 0131 225 4825, for information and updates.

Central Fife – The Old Kirk, Kirk Wynd, Kirkcaldy KY1 1EH

On the 1st, 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays at 10.30 am; no limit on attendance; no pre-booking required. Meetings on 1st Sundays in Dunfermline will resume when a venue is available.

East Lothian – Dunbar Town House, 79 High Street, Dunbar, EH42 1ER

*On the 2nd & last Sundays of the month at 11.00 am. NB The Town House is closed until further notice; contact **Di Simcock** for updates.*

Kelso – QMH, Abbey Row, Kelso TD5 7JF

*Sundays at 10.30 am; please contact **Marianne Butler** in advance to book a place.*

North Edinburgh worship group – St Mary's Church, 12 Bellevue Cres., EH3 6NE

*4th Sunday in the month at 7.00 pm. – contact **Tony Gross**.*

Penicuik – Venue to be confirmed: contact penicuikquakers@blueyonder.co.uk

*1st Sundays at 11.00 am – contact **Mark Hutcheson** for updates and further information.*

Polmont – Greenpark Community Centre, Greenpark Drive, Polmont FK2 0PZ

*Sundays at 10.45: contact **Marriot Dallas** for updates, and if bringing children.*

Portobello & Musselburgh – Bellfield, 16B Bellfield Street, Portobello EH15 2BP

On the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 11.00 am.

1st Sundays: Evening meeting at 7.30 pm. Children's meetings at morning AND evening mtg.

*Please contact **Mary Jane Elton**, if you plan to attend at either time.*

South Edinburgh – The Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 5HY

*At present, NOT meeting in person; contact **Rici Marshall Cross** for information/updates.*

Tweeddale – No meetings in person at present. Contact **Anna Lawrence** for updates.

MEETING BY ZOOM

Central Edinburgh – for login details contact centraledinburgh@quaker.org.uk

Every Sunday at 9.30 am; and at 11.00 am.

Central Fife – for login details contact **Laurie Naumann**

On the 1st 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays at 10.30 am, blended with the meeting in person.

East Lothian – for login details contact **Di Simcock** or **Phil Lucas**

Tuesdays at 7.30 pm; NO meeting on the 1st Tuesday in the month.

Kelso – for login details contact **Marianne Butler**; blended with mtgs in person, as above.

Penicuik – for login details contact **Mark Hutcheson**

Polmont – for login details contact **Mariot Dallas**

Also Wednesdays at 8.00 pm (online only).

South Edinburgh – for login details contact **Rici Marshall Cross**

Sundays at 10.30 am, blended with meetings in person, when they resume.