

Tayside Quaker

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Closing date for the next edition is Saturday 2 November 2019

Please send copy to the editor, Felicity Bryers

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East Scotland Area Meeting

Scottish charity number SC0020698

All opinions in Tayside Quaker are those of the individual writers and not necessarily of The Religious Society of Friends.

East Scotland Area Meeting, St Andrews, 17 August 2019

Dear Friends,

The next Area Meeting will take place in St Andrews, at 11 am with refreshments available from 10.30 am. All are welcome. The venue is the Quaker Meeting House, 2 Howard Place, St Andrews. It is quite close to the bus station, and there is charged parking in the Argyle Street car park a few minutes' walk away. Soup will be provided at lunchtime, but please bring your own sandwiches to supplement this.

We will have reports in the morning about the work of Meeting for Sufferings, our Children and Young People's Advocate, and the Quaker Universalist Group. We will also, at the request of General Meeting, think together about how we might make our Quaker ways of working more effective, both locally and across Scotland. To help with this, please read the paper on the subject that follows, and bring along any thoughts you might have.

In the afternoon we will have an introduction to labyrinth walking by Liz Baker from Perth, and will then experience this through a visit to the St Andrews Labyrinth. This is in the beautiful Kinburn Park, a short walking distance from the Meeting House, and was created by an initiative of St Andrews Friends a few years ago. Lifts by car will be available on request.

"Labyrinth walking is the practice of journeying to and then returning from the centre. A labyrinth has a clearly marked path to follow, and is not a maze in which you can get lost. Labyrinths can be thought as symbolic forms of pilgrimage."

Please come, and do encourage others who may not be regular participants at Area Meeting. It is a good opportunity to meet

Quakers from other parts of our area, and to strengthen our community. Attenders are very welcome.

In friendship,

Robin Waterston

Clerk



The St Andrews labyrinth

Ideas for improving our ways of working

(for discussion at Area Meeting on 17th August)

General Meeting (GM) Clerks ask Local Meetings (LMs) and Area Meetings (AMs) to work between June GM and November GM on how to take forward those suggestions for action in this summary paper they find most appropriate for them. We hope that we can then discern at GM on 16 November what action needs to be taken by GM.

(The original paper has been summarised below by Robin Waterston.)

Training for role holders

- Encourage training for role holders with a budget and a simple attractive bursary system.
- Arrange training with neighbouring AMs.
- Produce guidance on policies and procedures – especially cyber security and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Clarify roles, not just job descriptions but how the job is done, while keeping this fluid.
- Ask local meeting committees to report annually so people can read reports from several years ago and see how others did the role.
- To help Friends understand trusteeship, invite them to attend trustees' meetings.

Support for role holders

- Encourage Elders and Overseers to feel supported and enabled in their roles.
- Role holders get together annually in different groupings, including across a group of AMs, to share ideas and support.
- Role holder buddies, with previous holders or across AMs.

Saving time/ being more efficient

- Use video conferencing. Provide central support to roll out use of Zoom, with training for everyone, and investment in a standard system.
- Fewer Saturdays taken up with AM and GMs.
- Have fewer treasurers, a bookkeeper, a common finance system, electronic banking, and a clear delegation of different types of decisions.
- A comprehensive property management system can be engaged.
- Clarify who can decide what, avoid back and forth.
- Merge two or several AMs.

Core purpose and key roles

- Consider what is our core purpose, why do we do what we do?
- Focus on gathering new worshippers for the long term.
- Strengthen our opportunities for community building.
- Review key roles and check we need quite so many trustees/ elders/ overseers.
- Review committees: combine, divide, lay down?

Where we meet

- Use Meeting Houses differently.
- Rent out part of the Meeting House.
- Meet where the people are.
- Have clusters of LMs and worshipping groups do things together.

East of Scotland Area Meeting (AM), 18 May 2019

Perth

On a blustery day in May, 16 Friends gathered for Area Meeting at the Subud Centre in Perth. Our opening reading was Advices and Queries 31:

“We are called to live in ‘the virtue of that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars...”

On this theme we were delighted to welcome our two speakers, Joe Jukes and Zain Hussein. Both are employed on the Quaker Peace and Social Witness Peace worker placement programme, which offers a year-long position within an organisation working for peace.

Joe is working with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), his main project being to produce a new teaching pack for CND peace education. Joe’s project has taken him into educational settings across England working with a wide age range from primary age children to trainee teachers, reaching over 5,000 pupils.

The pack focuses on ideas of discrimination and marginality in the nuclear weapons discourse, paying attention to gender and race. He has, for example, considered the role of women in activism, such as at Greenham Common and how colonial legacies still affect politics around traditional land rights and resource extraction, as with the uranium mines in northern Australia. Workshop activities include creative writing, role play and even philosophy, which has proved especially popular with primary school children. Joe reflects that peace education needn’t only focus on weapons, it can and should help students to see how to create the conditions for peace in their own lives and communities. Joe sees his work as sowing seeds, trying to engage and inspire, start conversations and engender change.

Zain's placement is with the British American Security Information Council (BASIC), assisting with their project to help establish a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Free Zone in the Middle East.

As a young Muslim, growing up in London, Zain was encouraged to participate in interfaith initiatives and has been interested in peace work since completing a degree in Arabic and Hebrew. Travelling to Israel and Jordan, Zain experienced the reality for people living with discrimination and inequality, discrimination being something that Zain has also experienced first-hand.



Zain Hussein and Joe Jukes, peaceworkers with QPSW

Zain's work has involved writing articles and organising events aimed at young people to encourage them to consider the possibility of disarmament. Zain described how he is learning the importance of remaining patient in debates and discussions with those he disagrees

with. He has found the value of networking with other peace workers and activists.

Zain continues with his interfaith work, currently teaching Hebrew in a local synagogue.

Both Joe and Zain remarked on how their placements are helping them to grow personally, in particularly learning the skill of active listening. We appreciated their informative and inspiring presentations.

Although unable to join us, there is a third peace worker and it was interesting to learn that her placement is with Child Soldiers International, working on the campaign for the UK to raise the age of recruitment to 18. Presently about a quarter of the British Army's new recruits each year are under 18.

The peaceworkers' journals can be found on the Britain Yearly Meeting website, (www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/peace/peaceworkers) and are well worth a look.

Our afternoon business included the acceptance and welcoming into membership of Martin Pippard from Dundee Meeting, a report from Matthew Bittle on his experiences at Junior Yearly Meeting in April and the news that Matthew has been appointed to be a member of JYM 2020 Arrangements Committee. We wish him well. We also heard an update from Meeting from Sufferings concerning diversity and inclusion, and the concern of some that there was a degree of complacency around this topic. The theme of privilege is one to be explored further at Yearly Meeting. The Vibrancy in Meetings evaluation proved positive and ways forward are now being considered.

Peter Cheer updated us on the work of Friends Northern Peace Board (NFPB) and highlighted two areas that the NFPB is currently active with: the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) Arms Fair to be held in London in September and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

We were reminded that although NFPB provides resources and encouragement, the peace work is up to us...

Pam Apted

Assistant clerk

Meeting for Sufferings, 6 July 2019

New ways of working

Court and Prison Register

In 1997, we decided to include the original purpose of Meeting for Sufferings in 1676, which was to consider the sufferings experienced by Quakers for their faith. We now keep a register of those before the courts or imprisoned for matters of conscience. Since our last meeting in April, thirteen Friends have been arrested and charged while protesting with Extinction Rebellion, six of them from Scotland. At each meeting I attend the list grows longer. On 3rd September we will be protesting against the Arms Fair – the list will continue to grow.

Yearly Meeting

We spent some time reflecting on Yearly Meeting. There was a feeling that considering Diversity and Sustainability in one meeting was too much, but also that it was well-planned and full of information that we need in order to take these things forward. We need to consider our privilege and find ways to use resources to further our work. We need to be aware that we use labels without thinking, that sometimes the way we conduct ourselves can affect those with less confidence who need to be empowered to speak. But we were also encouraged not to suffer from too much guilt because it limits us – we must take positive action out of love not shame. Area meetings are asked to plan to take forward the work locally.

Gender diversity

We are asked to work together to explore the issues raised by Young Friends in the General Meeting minute and to contribute to the work done by Quaker Life Central Committee. Be aware that we need to listen to those people affected by discrimination of any sort – to listen deeply, lovingly and with open hearts. We asked ourselves what specific contribution Quakers can make. Perhaps we do not need to change our structures, but just welcome a group of vulnerable and marginalised people. Quaker Life wishes to receive comments, general and personal, at gender@quaker.org.uk. They do not want anonymous comments but only a group of four people will read them, and they will be treated as confidential.

Sustainability

This item will be discussed at our October meeting, but again Friends are encouraged to stop using a stick to make us feel guilty but use our energy in a positive way to find a positive future. We were inspired by the words of a minute from a Meeting for Worship held on Easter Sunday at the Marble Arch Extinction Rebellion camp. Here is part of it.

We are called here in a spirit of Peace, Love and Truth to bear witness to the pain of our planet. We must take heed of the warning of science, which is clear. Those children being born into the world today face a world of catastrophe, social collapse and mass extinction. This is a Truth we can discern ourselves: we see floods and wildfires, we see famines and wars and the displacement of peoples, we see the loss of glaciers and ice caps. We grieve at the loss of so many species and habitats. We uphold the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, who are at the forefront of the struggle for Climate Justice. All over the world, the poorest are bearing the brunt, but all of us will suffer. The next generation may be the last.

Expansion of the ‘Vibrancy in Meetings’ project.

Trustees of Britain Yearly Meeting and Woodbrooke met together to make recommendations about employing more local development workers – Caroline Nursery the Clerk of Trustees asked – “Is it right to spend some of our reserves on ourselves?”. The aim is to create a community of staff not based in one place. At present only one in six staff are not based at Friends House so we must uphold our staff and Trustees as they grapple with difficult decisions.

There were five Friends from Scotland at the meeting – our representative from the north flew from Shetland and our General Meeting representative came from Mull by ferry and sleeper. The three from Tarbert, Edinburgh and Pitlochry had an easy journey in comparison, although yet again I was asked what time I would get home by people unaware that it is not possible to reach most of Scotland after a meeting in London that finishes at 4.00pm. This is important to the Vibrancy Project and the plan to have a local development worker WITHIN REACH of every meeting in Britain within 5 years. We must invest in computer technology to achieve this.

Young People’s Participation

This item came to us as a result of the advice sent to area meetings for completing the tabular statement, which defines an attender as “one who, not being a member, frequently attends a specific meeting for worship”. We acknowledge that people of all ages are not always connected to the Society primarily through regular attendance at a specific local meeting, but it is particularly true of young people.

They are involved in other ways and we need to find out about their worshipping path and spiritual life and think about the right relationship for us to have with young people. For example, all-age worship is rarely all age – it is usually children and grandparents. A youth worker found that young people meet in groups and are often unaware of their meeting,

and the meeting of them. If we are planning a project, we should be thinking about young people's identity not counting them.

Our current practice is to offer to give them Quaker Faith and Practice or another book of their choice when they reach 16. In fact, it's often when they go into secondary school that they stop attending their local meeting and we might consider offering them a book when they are younger. We offer bursaries to allow them to attend Quaker events, but do ask them to report back to us so that they know we value their participation. We should stop expecting them to fit in with us, but give them the opportunity to explore what it is to be Quaker and learn from them.

Alyson Buchan

Further information is available at:

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



Northern Friends Peace Board News

Northern Friends Peace Board met recently in Carlisle where we heard about the Penrith city of sanctuary campaign. This was interesting because Penrith, just south of Carlisle, is small and does not have a large immigrant population. Of course, this does and should not prevent a concern for migrants and refugees, but it does present some challenges and is not typical of the city of sanctuary movement. One early decision was to work with individuals and families who already had settled status, another was the acceptance that Penrith may not be the long-term location where migrants and refugees choose to settle. Lacking an established migrant community where newcomers could find a familiar culture Penrith has supported individuals and families for a few months while they earn some money before moving on. Over time the work has developed to include supporting a small number of Syrian refugee families and providing short stays in an attractive countryside.

A Friend from Kendal told us how about her long-term involvement with Quakers in Sierra Leone. Unlike the established Quaker communities of East Africa those in Sierra Leone are relatively recent stemming from the quest for a peaceful faith after a civil war in the country during the nineteen nineties. The challenges have been considerable, including the more recent outbreak of Ebola. The community now includes a school, college and health clinic. This was an inspiring story that included one of the central characters coming to Britain as a refugee attending the Woodbrooke Quaker study centre and Bradford University Department of Peace Studies.

There was also time for a brief introduction to 'Razor wire and olive branches', a new educational resource on the Israel / Palestine issue from QPSW (Quaker Peace and Social Witness) that was featured in Quaker News 103. Concern had been raised about the quality of existing resources and QPSW felt that they were in a position to undertake this

work as they host the Ecumenical Accompaniers in Israel / Palestine programme. We did not have a lot of time to explore the resource, but it came across as thought provoking, well designed and successful in capturing the flavour of a complex situation while reflecting multiple points of view.

During the members forum we were reminded about the Roots of Resistance mobilisation in London on September 3rd that aims to disrupt preparations for the Defence Security Expo International arms fair. It is an ambitious target, but the organisers hope for one thousand Quakers to be there.

Among the notices and leaflets available for us to browse through was one about a German Quaker Action Weekend of protest taking place from July 26th to 30th at Buechel airbase near the town of Cochem. This airbase holds the last twenty American nuclear weapons on German soil. I realise that by the time this comes out it is unlikely that any of you will be able to go but please hold German Friends in your thoughts as I have long been impressed by how Quakers in Europe strive to uphold our peace testimony. If I am wrong and you are interested in going contact Heike Huschauer (heike.huschauer@btinternet.com); you can find more information about Buechel Airbase and the peace actions there at www.buechel-atombombenfrei.de .

Closer to home, Perth Meeting will be holding another Hiroshima Peace Pole walk on August 4th and would be delighted if any visiting Friends could join us. We will meet from 2.15 pm at St Ninians Cathedral, South Methven Street, depart 2.30pm and walk about a mile to the gardens beside the Rodney Pavilion.

Peter Cheer

Experiment with Light

On Saturday June 29th, 15 Perth Friends met at the Bield Retreat Centre to attend an Experiment with Light (EwL) Workshop. The group was a wide mix of ages but also of knowledge and experience within Quakerism.

Facilitators and workshop elder

The facilitators were John Lampen and Lesley McCourt, while the Workshop Elder was Barbara Davey. John is a Quaker peace educator, prolific writer and Swarthmore Lecturer. Lesley, from Yealand Meeting, is an Area Meeting Trustee, convenes a Prayer Group for Healing and Wholeness and is involved in Quaker mystical spirituality. Barbara, from St Andrews Meeting, needs no introduction, suffice to say she supported us both from the outset of our planning stages and continues to do so.

Timetable

The day was divided into two main parts. During the morning session, after a brief introduction to EwL, we followed the actual practice. We then had time alone and later reconvened in small groups. After lunch, when we had time for conversation and walks round the garden, the afternoon was dedicated to questions and discussion on various aspects of the practice along with looking at different ways of running a Light Group.

The Bield Retreat Centre

The Bield was chosen for a number of reasons. First and foremost, it is a lovely, peaceful place to be. More than that it was important that all participants could experience the workshop without giving thought to housekeeping issues throughout the day. The aim was for all participants to engage fully with the spiritual demands of the workshop, so being hosted and well cared for mattered. The Bield proved to be the ideal context, to 'hold' us as we spent time in groups, alone and over a meal while we dealt with 'things eternal'.



*The window
in the Chapel
at the Bield*

The things that are eternal

Friends, we meet together and know one another in that which is eternal ...

George Fox 1657, Quaker Faith & Practice 2.35

The overwhelming feeling from the day was just how much participants valued time spent together – meditating, supporting, listening:

I felt closer and more connected to the whole group, and especially to the small group that we shared our thoughts with after the meditation.

The general feeling was that simply coming together to work on something that was challenging brought us very much closer to each other – this was so valuable. The founder of the Iona community, George McLeod, said that community is formed by the common task. Certainly, we were engaged in such a task as we examined aspects of EwL, asking

ourselves – does this connect with our own sense of our individual spiritual journeys and with our sense of what our life as a Meeting requires? It was a task; it was work – yet the day was also an expression of community, an affirmative experience of what, despite our geographical challenges, Perth Meeting is for us. As one participant said:

What is important for us all is that there are openings for us to get to know each other in 'that which is eternal'. Superficiality is the death knell of Quaker worship and anything, which helps to develop a shared depth in our worship, is very welcome.

Views of participants

In a nutshell, participants found the day *valuable, worthwhile, stimulating* and *interesting*. As one Friend said:

Above all the outcome of the day for me is the invitation to 'live adventurously' and with light-heartedness.

The group came to the workshop with a range of experience of Experiment with Light, although no one had a lot of experience. Of course, there were time constraints placed on us since this was just a one-day event and very often such introductory workshops range over a weekend. While it was recognised that: *the workshop invited us to think about how we are rooted in our distinctive Quaker history and identity*, some Friends would have welcomed a more detailed explanation of the Experiment, of the meaning and significance of 'Light' and of the connection with early Quakers.

There were some who felt immediately at home with the process itself because it was recognisable territory for them:

The day was fruitful for me - providing a different 'angle' on some of the spiritual practices I'm already involved in.

There were others who were: *overwhelmed and confused* and some who knew it was not for them:

My sense has always been that it is not the right thing for me, though I can appreciate that it meets the needs of others very well.

The structure of the practice was, in the main, appreciated:

I found the structure of the 40 minutes silence with a question every 5 minutes really easy to follow, so that I felt supported and was able to relax into it all.

It gave me space to feel I could look also at stuff later. When we were in the small groups we were just to listen to others and do just that. I found again this was holding a space for the other, but also for myself.

I did gain some insight into one aspect of my inner life - and I give thanks for that.

However, there was also a feeling that the actual structure: *might be becoming a little inflexible over time (though I appreciate the need for both discipline and boundaries).*

Some queried the: *the intensity an EwL group* and were: *wary of the small group becoming a therapy session.* However, overall the time spent in the small groups was much valued and was thought to have worked well.

Some of the intensity might have arisen from the type of meditation that was chosen, as it focussed very much on personal issues rather than one's place in the wider world. Such a focus took some participants by surprise as they had not expected to be guided so narrowly and would have preferred guidance allowing for a wider interpretation.

Those participants who commented on the practice itself focused on two issues; firstly, it was very wordy and secondly it appeared to concentrate unduly on one's personal issues.

There are, of course, a number of versions of the guidance on CDs that one can use. These vary in terms of the focus and the amount of

guidance offered. Indeed, there is one where there are no words simply a bell to indicate moving on from one stage of the practice to the next. One would need to be very familiar with the practice to make use of it.

The version used at the workshop was chosen because it uses much more detailed guidance at each stage and, therefore, is inevitably it was quite wordy. It was chosen because it is easier for beginners to use. There is another version, which uses far fewer words and is more sparing in its guidance through each stage. This version more readily allows the practitioner to use as wide a focus as feels right for them. The third version of the CD is again more exact in its guidance, but the focus is wider. So, you are invited to ask yourself: *What is really going on in the world?* This can be in the world of work, or commerce, or politics.

To experience the full worth of EwL is very difficult, perhaps impossible, within a one-day workshop. We managed a decent introduction but there were things that were lacking. For example, since this practice is rooted in what early Quakers did in the silence, it would have been useful to have left with a greater understanding of what the 'waiting in the Light' actually meant for them.

We were offered a gift

The workshop itself came as a gift, the outcome of the generosity of the unknown Friend who gifted a sum of money to contribute to the spiritual life of our Meeting, which made it possible. We were conscious that those who accompanied us, Lesley and John and Barbara, offered the gift of themselves, while handing over the decision about 'what next?' to us. We also need to recognise the gift Perth Friends are to one another in their openness, honesty and adventurousness. We do not want to squander that gift, so we will meet again and consider a range of possible outcomes from this very valuable workshop.

Enid Harding and Kevin Franz

Hospitality: reflections on being a Friend in Residence

“Listening is the highest form of hospitality... Hospitality is not to change people but to offer them space where change can take place...”

Henri Nouwen.

Earlier this year I spent three weeks as a Friend in Residence (FIR) at Woodbrooke, the Quaker study centre in Birmingham. Being a FIR has been on my Quaker ‘bucket list’ since I retired two years ago and I was both delighted and somewhat anxious when my application was accepted.

As luck would have it I was able to take part in a development course for FIRs held at Woodbrooke shortly before my visit. This course provided an ideal opportunity to meet with other FIRs and Woodbrooke staff and get a real feel for what lay ahead. Among other topics we explored the ‘ministry of hospitality’.

We were shown an illustration of a 15th century icon by Andrej Rublev of the Hospitality of Abraham – this picture of three angels refers to the account of Abraham’s hospitality to the visitors who come to inform him of elderly Sarah’s approaching motherhood, (Genesis 18, 1-8). Hospitality we learnt is fundamental to most faiths, considered in Islam as a right rather than a gift. It is seen as welcoming the stranger, the unexpected guest, someone who others may reject. Hospitality involves not just sharing but giving the best we have got, seeing that of God in everyone and not expecting a reward or return. I thought too of Hebrews 13, 2, ‘Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares’.

We also considered if there were differences between hospitality on a personal level and in a more commercial setting, such as at Woodbrooke.

The role of FIRs is described as providing ‘welcome and worship’, there are lots of practical tasks that FIRs get involved with, but trying to keep in mind the idea of a ministry of hospitality and of upholding all who make up the community of Woodbrooke, whether staff or visitors, is to me what makes the role special.

FIRs work in teams of four, sharing the duties between them, which includes spiritual and pastoral care, such as holding Meetings for Worship, leading epilogue, and offering meal time silences. There are administrative tasks including checking-in guests and occasionally taking payments outwith office hours; there are daily practical tasks such as opening and closing the rooms in use, and occasional overnight emergency cover. It

is demanding work, most weeks you can be on duty up to 40 hours, with a day off each week, or more, depending on the length of stay. Woodbrooke can be busy, especially at weekends, with a wide range of people working, studying and visiting. As FIRs we were advised to ‘expect the unexpected’ and flexibility and a sense of humour definitely help.

Many of the FIRs have been coming for years – some for months at a time and it is clearly a service that they value. Friends spoke of Woodbrooke as being “somewhere ordinary, where extraordinary things can happen” and



The swing in the grounds of Woodbrooke

how the Meetings for Worship are the engine that drives Woodbrooke, how faith sustains.

I very much valued my time at Woodbrooke. There were many special moments – the connections with people, the rhythm of daily worship, early morning walks in the gardens, the laughter and the stillness. It was an opportunity to reflect on my own connections with Quakers and to hold my own Quaker community back in Scotland very much in my thoughts. It was also exhausting, especially at the beginning and, early on, I learnt to rest when not on duty. I also made lots of silly mistakes, often getting lost in the maze of corridors, sometimes when showing people the way! But there was kindness and support to keep me going.

Woodbrooke, of course, faces its own challenges, I learnt that it costs £5000 a day to run and has a projected repair bill of £2 million over the next ten years. Beautiful and special to Quakers worldwide as Woodbrooke clearly is, for me what matters are the people, the community and all the good work they are doing. There are changes now afoot as Woodbrooke and Britain Yearly Meeting explore the idea of local development workers; I am excited to see where that will lead.

I would like to thank the Friends in Dundee Meeting who supported my application, Sally Sadler, the Volunteer Coordinator and all those at Woodbrooke who took me under their wing and supported me. I hope to return.

Pam Apted

Refugee tales: on the move with Cyclists against Torture

We wrote previously for Tayside Quaker about Cycle against Torture 2019, a 19-stage ride to raise funds and awareness for Freedom from Torture (FfT). Now, in mid-July, we're on the road and have met with inspiring Friends and supporters in Hastings, Brighton, London, Oxford and Birmingham.

We are following the ride in our campervan, carrying bags for the 2 riders who are going the whole 865 miles, helping with events at 10 venues (8 local Meetings are involved!) and with bikes in readiness for the 4 stages we are cycling.

Here at the Birmingham campsite, is an outsize chess set – a reminder of



the FfT main London Centre. One of the therapies that FfT offers, Write to Life encourages torture survivors to write creatively as a means of expressing feelings and memories that are hard to speak about. They often write about family memories or more symbolically about their past, present and future. We heard four writers read pieces inspired by a visit to the V&A (London, not Dundee). Each

had chosen an object with special meaning for him/her. One chose an ancient chess set. He'd learned to play chess in a group at FfT, initially as a social activity, but he had come to value it at many levels. A quiet but shared activity, with agreed rules of behaviour and a level playing field. A skill which helped to renew his powers of concentration and planning, after his mind and confidence had been thrown awry by the trauma of his experience. An arena where 'characters' are in a hierarchy but all need to play their part well and patiently for overall success. A setting where you need a variety of moves – straight, sideways, indirect - to progress. He had written about this so clearly and movingly and when we saw the chess pieces here it felt like a lovely connection.

Connections have been important on the ride. Also in London we heard readings from 'Refugee Tales' – part of the work done by Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group – and in Hastings and Brighton Meetings we had met friends about to participate in the 2019 Refugee Tales pilgrimage from Brighton to Hastings. Quakers are working with this group and others to campaign against indefinite immigration detention and with FFT to protect torture survivors from the ordeal of detention.



*Cycle against Torture at Oxford Meeting House
with Friends and supporters and MP Anneliese Dodds*

All along the route we're seeing that connections are being strengthened within and between groups who are working to improve the welfare and prospects of torture survivors and asylum seekers. This was a key aim of Cycle against Torture. And it looks as though fundraising might get close to £20,000. On both of these aims Friends have been an absolute mainstay – thank you!

Carolyn Burch and Richard Raggett

For full information on the ride please see <https://edinburghfft.org/cycle2019/>
or contact us on cyclefft2019@gmail.com

Remembering Hiroshima Day in Perth

All are welcome! Contact Peter Cheer for further information.

HIROSHIMA DAY PEACE POLE WALK SUNDAY AUGUST 4th



**St Ninian's Episcopal Cathedral
North Methven Street to
Rodney Gardens
Meet 2.15 pm for 2.30 start**



Book of Discipline Revision Committee – the work begins!

Yearly Meeting (YM) 2018 was devoted to discerning whether the time was right to start the process of revising our Book of Discipline (also known as Quaker Faith and Practice or The Big Red Book). YM discerned that the time was right and set in motion the search for a committee to carry this out.

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

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

I was fortunate in knowing, to some degree or other, a number of the other committee members, largely through meeting them at Woodbrooke either when working there as a Friend in Residence or while doing Equipping for Ministry [EfM]. I was friends with Nuala before we were

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

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

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

We also spent time considering ways of keeping Friends informed about the progress of our work – e.g. workshops, visiting Meetings, and on-line communications. I've been invited to give reports to General Meeting for

Scotland and South East Scotland Area Meeting this month, and will report regularly in future. I am also very happy to travel elsewhere if Friends would like to hear first-hand how we are getting on! There will be a weekend at Woodbrooke in November (8-10) entitled Why have a Book of Discipline?, open to anyone over the age of 13. Area Meetings will be invited to send representatives, and other interested Friends are also most welcome. Many of the committee will be there, so do come and get to know us!

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

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

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

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

Mary Woodward

(First published in SESAME, the newsletter for south-east Scotland Area Meeting.)

What am I?

What am I?
A tiny speck
In the sea of humanity.

What am I?
A unique Atom
Endowed with dynamic powers.

What am I?
A creature of
Constant hope and new beginnings.

What am I?
The Architect of
Progress, of Wars or Peace.

What am I?
The Guardian of
A Great Creator's Universe.

What am I?
An illusionist
Magnifying my finite powers.

A. Mary Lindsay

News from Local Meetings

Dundee

There is now a mid-week meeting at the Meeting House every Thursday from 12pm to 2pm until further notice. The Meeting for Worship is at 12.30pm followed by a social time with tea/coffee provided. A notice outside invites members of the public to join us. We have a small Quaker exhibition and our restoration plans of the building are on display.

Pamala McDougall



The Local Fundraising Team at Dundee meeting outside the Pop-Up shop which opened for 10 days in May. The total sum raised was £3,250.

Left to Right: Jean Stewart, Marion Sharkey, Norman Alm and Pamala McDougall

DUNDEE QUAKERS

(RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS)



WE PRACTICE SIMPLICITY IN OUR
FORM OF WORSHIP

WE HAVE ALWAYS WORKED
ACTIVELY IN OUR COMMUNITIES
FOR EQUALITY JUSTICE AND PEACE

AT OUR WEEKLY MEETINGS FOR
WORSHIP WE SIT IN RESPECTFUL
SILENCE AND IF ANY OF US FEELS
POWERFULLY MOVED TO SPEAK
THEY DO



OUR MEETINGS TAKE PLACE EVERY SUNDAY
11AM - 12 NOON AT 9 WHITEHALL CRESCENT

TEA, COFFEE, BISCUITS AND FELLOWSHIP FOLLOW

ALL ARE WELCOME - EVEN IF YOU ARE JUST
CURIOUS TO EXPERIENCE A QUAKER MEETING!

clerkdundeequakermeeting@gmail.com

The new Dundee Quaker pop-up poster. This was ordered for use at all the fund-raising events to be held this year - but it will be useful for any outreach activities also.

Perth

A fresh look at Perth Meeting

My name is Stella and I've been attending Perth Meeting for just over a year now. Alyson (currently very involved with her 2 recently born grandchildren) was looking for a volunteer to write for this issue and I blithely agreed, thinking it would be simple. Of course, it both is and isn't and I can see that I probably need to spend another year (if not longer), just soaking in the ways of the Friends to begin to achieve the kind of ease that long term members seem to have. Although non-hierarchical there is still a great deal of discipline and complexity to the structure of the Quaker 'way' and along with the regular movement of people from one role to another I find myself sometimes wondering if I'll ever make sense of it all. Balancing that, the welcoming inclusivity shown by the Members and other Attenders and the simple joy of the actual Meeting for Worship has made me enthusiastic about continuing to attend and explore.

I'll end with some information from the Local Business Meeting held in May: it was agreed to hold an All Age Meeting on the last Sunday in November 2019 and to continue to explore other new ways of involving children in Meetings for Worship (we have already had one Meeting where the children joined it for the last 10 minutes instead of the first 10 minutes). It was also agreed to once again have a Peace Pole walk on 4th August to commemorate Hiroshima Day.

Stella Cranwell

The bike ride continues

Over the last years, Tayside Quaker readers have been following the adventures of Johanna Babbs and Jerry Evans as they left Perth to explore the world on their bikes. Here is their latest news:

We'd hoped for a warm spring in Kent when Jerry booked onto a week-long cycle maintenance course and decided to camp. Unfortunately, the wind turned easterly and he had a rather chilly time with ice on the tent in the mornings. Luckily, we had just bought him a new sleeping bag, so he was cosy enough overnight, but his coffee water took a little longer to boil in the mornings. It was all worthwhile though as he now knows how to take a bike completely apart down to its constituent parts and, more importantly, put it back together.

Dancing ever changing Brexit deadlines, we headed off to France - by train this time - to catch up with friends and improve our French and to find some warmer weather. The latter proved elusive as France experienced a very cold May and we had to wait until we returned to Britain to put on our shorts. What was the big challenge this trip? Staying and working with a French couple speaking only French. On the way there, we were waiting for a bus and I was pondering the words for asking for a ticket, when a woman walked up to me and asked something very quickly in French. Rather stupefied, I replied "Lentement, lentement" (slowly, slowly). Then in perfect English, she said "Do you not speak any French?". A rather flattening experience - we have a long way to go to fluency. That said, our comprehension and speaking improved enormously that week with help from our very patient hosts who put up with our blunderings and 'franglais'. Our next language challenge is to have some degree of fluency at my Parisian friend's fortieth birthday party next year where we will be the only non-native French speakers for a whole weekend.

Back in Scotland, our next challenge was learning to run the Crask Inn in twenty-four hours and then managing it for ten days whilst the usual managers took a much-needed holiday. The Crask is probably the most isolated inn in mainland Scotland, lying in the middle of the Sutherland fives, and, strangely, is owned by the Scottish Episcopalian church. How did we come to be doing this with absolutely no experience? Last May, on our cycle tour of Scotland we camped there to do the most northerly

Munros. They were very busy at the Inn, so we offered to help out with serving meals and washing up. As we were leaving after a couple of days, the manager came out and asked if we would run the place while they took their daughter to New York for her twenty first birthday. One year later, we were cooking meals for up to twelve guests, baking cakes for passing tourists and LEJOGgers (Land's End to John o'Groats travellers), and learning how to pull pints without five inches of froth on the top. The week was exhausting, very enjoyable and, other than the fire alarm going off, (a guest vaping in their room), passed without incident.

Are we getting back on our bikes again? Yes, we leave in in late July for a tour of Ireland, the Isle of Man and then on again to France for more French practice - we are determined to learn the language. I think we will be Brexit date dodging again.

Johanna Babbs

'I say again,' said my aunt, 'nobody knows what that man's mind is except myself; and he's the most amenable and friendly creature in existence. If he likes to fly a kite sometimes, what of that! Franklin used to fly a kite. He was a Quaker, or something of that sort, if I am not mistaken. And a Quaker flying a kite is a much more ridiculous object than anybody else.'

David Copperfield, Charles Dickens

St Andrews

Discoveries Evenings... and more

At the end of April, we met at Pam and Robin's home in conversation with Alasdair Howarth, who comes from Kenya. Alasdair is a student at St Andrews and shared his story "How I came to Quakers and studying Anthropology".

Alasdair comes from an Evangelical Christian background and has been attending our Meeting for Worship regularly for some time and was particularly interested in Quaker silence and what it means to Quakers. He had spent time interviewing a number of Friends hearing at first-hand what silence means to a Meeting for Worship and to the individual.

It was interesting for us to hear how we were seen by someone looking at our community from a different perspective, looking from the outside and looking in.

In May some Friends met at the Meeting House to help tidy up the garden.... the weather held, and it proved an enjoyable time spent chatting and working together which always brings its own peace.

In June QASTA (Quaker Action St Andrews), after giving the matter some thought, decided to have a table in Church Square, St Andrews, once a month to raise awareness of issues pertaining to peace, justice and sustainability. The first identified issue was the "Sales of arms by the UK to Saudi Arabia" which will continue for three months. It is early days yet but there have been interesting and supportive conversations with the public. Our August table will also include information from CAAT (Campaign Against the Arms Trade) to coincide with the Annual Arms Sale Fair in September.



Quaker Action St Andrews

Finally, on 30 June Friends held an Away Day at the Bield. Seventeen of us enjoyed the peaceful and calming atmosphere of the garden, grounds and facilities. We were given the opportunity to share experiences and conversations....

Daniel Orr and Kate Douglas have written about this and Alice Curteis has sent a photo, so I will say no more.

Buša Cochrane-Muir

Away Day at the Bield

At the end of June, we went to the Bield for an All Age Worship Away Day. The children's meeting organised an activity for the main meeting. They collected things with beauty from nature (such as petals, leaves and interesting things) and brought them into the meeting and put them on paper plates and gave them out to the members of the Meeting for them to think about. Some people decided to give ministry about something on their plate and others just sat and thought. We then had a nice lunch and we had a small walk into the nearby wood and fields and played on some swings. The adults in the main meeting did art led by Ellen and some included poetry. Overall it was a very enjoyable day. This is a photo of the children chalking on some slates.

Daniel Orr



St Andrews Friends at The Bield

Time in a summer garden at the Bield

I wandered, not lonely but alone,
unencumbered, free
to pause, to watch, to listen,
to be still.
Looking above,
clouds, wind driven, scudded across the sky,
then to dissolve in wisps,
like dreams half recalled on waking.
Birds twittered and trilled.
You could call it singing without melody,
but joyful to the ear.
Pigeons cooed soothingly
deep within the rustling of the trees.
Scents almost assailed the senses;
chives tempered by chamomile
and the sensual depth of roses.
Lichen on trees,
their branches intertwining
and rising high, reaching into space.
No two greens the same.
Peonies, heavy with raindrops droop their heads.
Bees cluster, nectar drawn, buzzing their find
and butterflies sporadically swoop
on the tapestry of flowers,
their own colours mingling.
All this and more;
Sounds, scents and sights
were there to hear, to smell, to see.
All this and then, an infinity of more.

Kate Douglas

Meetings for Worship

**Dundee: Wederburn Room, The Steeple Church, Nethergate, Dundee
DD1 4DG (adjacent to the Overgate Centre).**

Sundays 11.00 am

St Andrews Meeting House, 2 Howard Place, St Andrews KY16 9HL

Sundays 10.30 am

Children's Meeting - each Sunday during school terms

Enquiries: Genevieve Orr (01333 360396)

Midweek Meeting, Thursdays 1.15 – 1.45pm

Perth: The Subud Centre, 7 St Leonard's Bank, Perth PH2 8EB

Second and last Sundays of each month 11.00 am

Children's Meeting usually last Sunday of each month

Children's contact: Anneke Kraakman (07746 117 762)

East of Scotland Area Meeting

Saturday 17 August 2019, *St Andrews*

Saturday 30 November 2019, *Dundee*

Saturday 15 February 2020, *Perth*

Saturday 9 May 2020, *Dundee*

Saturday 22 August 2020, *St Andrews*

Saturday 21 November 2020, *Perth*

General Meeting for Scotland

14 September 2019, *North Scotland (Aberdeen)*

16 November 2019, *East Scotland (Perth)*

7 March 2020, *South East Scotland*

13 June 2020, *North Scotland*

12 September 2020, *East Scotland (Dundee)*

14 November 2020, *West Scotland (Glasgow)*