

TAYSIDE QUAKER

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I would give

hope



to those who require it

Maddie Alex Orr

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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.

Giving Gifts

Our cover picture was drawn by Maddie Alex Orr from St. Andrews Meeting during all age worship in Dundee in December 2016. The theme was 'Giving Gifts'. The Meeting started with an introduction, silence and some readings. Paper and pens were placed under each chair. Everyone present was asked the question:

If you could give any present to a person you know, what would it be?

Some people shared their gifts ideas, and Maddie Alex drew the picture shown on the cover.

Cathy Kinnear

Miscellany

Only through the bravery of the root, its determination to suffer rather than die, does the flower dance in the light.

Mary Webb

Endless haiku

What is the question?

The question cannot be answered
without another question – peace

George Bruce

When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world will know
peace.

Jimi Hendrix

Contributed by Margaret Berwick, Jill Marshall and Felicity Bryers

East Scotland Area Meeting, February 2017

Dear Friends,

The next Area Meeting will take place in St. Andrews on Saturday 18 February, 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 KY16 9HL. It is quite close to the bus station. Car parking (charged) is available in the Argyll Street car park a few minutes' walk away or (uncharged) at the Petheram Bridge car park a little further away.

We will have reports of recent conferences and gatherings, including the February Meeting for Sufferings and the Northern Friends Peace Board, and we will receive the draft financial report and accounts for 2016 and the estimates for 2017. This is when we try to plan for the year ahead within our expected resources. We need to decide what contribution to request per member from our local meetings to sustain our work.

In the afternoon session we will have a different kind of activity. Instead of a speaker, we will play a game, in groups. Quaker Life has produced "The Boundaries Game" to help us reflect on some of the unwritten and often unspoken "rules" which underlie much of our method of worshipping and conducting business. These are often quite different from the practices of other organisations and faith groups, and we shouldn't assume that they are all obvious. There is room for discussion of some of the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, and this game encourages us to explore these together.

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. Attenders are very welcome, but it would be helpful if they could let me know in advance on 01334 474129 or robin.waterston128@gmail.com. There will be some membership items for members only, when attenders will be asked to withdraw.

In friendship,

Robin Waterston
Clerk

East Scotland Area Meeting (AM), 5 November, Dundee

Dundee Meeting hosted Area Meeting at which 23 Friends were present. During our opening worship we heard a piece from Diana Lampen on what Friends can offer the dying and bereaved, encountering each other in the depths of silence (*QFP 17.06*).

Membership: we received a report following an application for membership from Rebecca Howard of St Andrews Meeting. Rebecca's application was accepted.

We received a report in writing from Robin Baker on the **Quaker Prison Chaplains conference** which Robin attended at Woodbrooke in October. Robin was the only participant from Scotland; he found it a valuable experience both because of the content of the sessions and for the networking opportunities.

Area Meeting received a **financial report** from our treasurer Philip Bryers; the projected out-turn at 31st December 2016 is almost exactly as estimated, with one exception: there was no residential retreat this year so the money set aside for this has not been spent.

A **Children and Young People's event** for those working with children has been arranged by Quaker Life in Newcastle on 12th November 2016. We supported a request from Meri Goad and Genevieve Orr to attend this event.

We discussed the **frequency of Area Meetings**, with suggestions both to increase and to decrease the number of meetings each year. We agreed, however, to continue with the present pattern of four meetings a year, but noted that events organised by local meetings, with invitations to all to join them, can provide a valuable opportunity to maintain our connections.

We considered possible **topics for our afternoon sessions in 2017**; a wide range of suggestions was received including: increasing disability awareness, interfaith issues; Quaker work and other forms of community building, e.g. films, music and worship sharing.

Meri Goad, Barbara Davey and Alice Curteis led our afternoon session on **End of Life issues**. In spite of the potentially upsetting nature of the topic there were some light moments as Meri (with hat) and Alice took part in some role playing to demonstrate how helpful starting a conversation about end of life issues can be. The focus was on encouraging us to open up and share our end of life stories. We learnt of useful resources, including new publications such as the Quaker Life leaflet 'Love and Loss'.

Through working in small groups and shared worship we explored our own emotions and discovered that addressing this topic sensitively together can enhance our experience of life.

We contemplated George Fox's words, written shortly before his death, "I am glad I was here..." (QFP 21.49) and we were asked to finish the sentence with "because... despite... when..." The exercise was still in our minds as we left the meeting.

Our next Area Meeting is on Saturday 18th February 2017 in St. Andrews.

Pam Apted

Assistant Clerk



January sun, Loch Leven

Photograph Felicity Bryers

Meeting for Sufferings, December 2016

The main item at the meeting in December was to consider responses to the concern from Cornwall Area Meeting (AM) regarding decriminalisation of possession for personal use of all drugs. This issue has long exercised Friends in Cornwall, and in April the matter came to Sufferings, supported by a substantial briefing document. It was agreed then to refer the matter to Area Meetings before returning to the topic in December. We ourselves considered the matter in August, and 30 other AMs also sent Minutes (out of 70 altogether). Both in our case and at Sufferings, the difficulty we experienced was that while this is an important social issue and many Friends feel passionately about it, it is complex and multi-stranded. Is it a religious Concern in the Quaker sense? There was a mixed response from the AMs, and we were told that a number of Meetings that had not returned Minutes had considered the matter but could not reach any unity.

The other aspect was that Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs, a Quaker Recognised Body, had themselves produced a very thorough report on the same issue back in 2012 but had reached different conclusions from Cornwall. In our deliberation last month, there was substantial recognition that the present UK policy regarding drugs and the penal system is failing badly, and impacts most seriously on those with least resources. But there was not agreement that simply decriminalising the personal possession of drugs was the right answer. The final Minute encouraged Cornwall AM to work with QAAD and other interested AMs to take the issue forward, taking account of the many detailed comments in the responses.

There was less difficulty with the responses to the paper from Quaker Peace and Social Witness "Towards a vision of a criminal justice system". This had also been sent out to AMs for comment. The purpose was to check whether the vision encapsulated in the paper represented the views of British Quakers. It was clear from the responses, including from us, that the answer was a clear yes. There were many detailed comments, but we were told that QPSW are not proposing to refine the document or to issue it publicly. However the comments have all been fed back to QPSW and will help them in developing future work around the strand of criminal justice.

We heard a very interesting report from Elaine Green, one of our representatives to Quaker Council for European Affairs, who maintain an office in Brussels and receive financial support from BYM. They have decided to focus their work more closely on

two main strands. One is on peace – how to strengthen the EU’s will to promote peaceful dispute resolution, to resist the moves towards an EU “defence” force, and on responses to violent extremism. The other is on refugees – detention conditions for refugees and asylum seekers, and the need for restorative justice. QCEA believe that “continued, dedicated action can change thinking and activity.”

An interesting item that was rather hurried over was receiving written reports from our representatives to other European Yearly Meetings. We were represented at 8 of these and their reports give a real insight into the concerns and activities of Friends across Europe. The one from Netherlands included their Epistle to all Friends, part of which was a colourful mind map with many branches reflecting the themes of their time together.

We received a Minute from Leighton & Luton AM encouraging us to work with other churches and interfaith bodies to influence WW1 remembrance activities next year towards reconciliation and peace-building.

And we noted in the Court and Prison Register the names of a number of Friends who are facing charges and possible imprisonment for participating in a blockade of the nuclear weapons research base at Burghfield last June. It is this thread of our work, going back to the earliest days, that gave Meeting for Sufferings its name.

Robin Waterston

Becoming the change we want to see

Quaker Life Representative Council, 14 – 16 October, 2016

Woodbrooke Study Centre

The aims of the most recent Quaker Life Representative Council (QLRC) were reaching high. To take the title seriously is quite a tall order. If one considers what one learns through the media about the state of the world and compares that with how one would wish to be engaging with life, there seems to be a substantial gap to overcome. Is despair the only response one can make?

Over the weekend, participants delved deep into an exploration of our relationships to the natural world and to each other with the overarching encouragement to reflect on these matters in their spiritual contexts, looking at our relationship with God and exploring what is specifically Quaker in the motivations behind how we act.

After an initial plenary meeting on the Friday evening to welcome everyone, Friends from across Britain gathered in small Home Groups to share their wisdom and discoveries on the theme, witnessed personally as part of their Local or Area Meetings. Gathering in such a way on different occasions throughout the weekend enabled us to listen and to share at a deeper level with each other. I am not alone in having found this a valuable experience in listening and learning. We shared our fear and sense of hopelessness as well as our successes. In these Home Groups, we heard about 'greening our Meeting Houses' and connecting with nature in various ways, such as the labyrinth in St Andrews. But we also felt the pain of being frozen in the enormity of the challenge. What is our distinctive Quaker vision? What can we bring that will make a difference?

Such questions, waiting to be explored, were addressed on the Saturday morning through three speakers: Alex Wildwood, Bryony Rowntree and Rachael Harrison. Their presentations were very different but each shared their personal journeys on the theme.

Alex Wildwood began with 'A Vision to Sustain Us', a talk based on his and Jo Farrow's book: 'Universe As Revelation'. Powerful and challenging, the talk began by acknowledging the situation that not only us but the whole world is facing: 'Humanity is about to move into a stage of initiation, a time of stress and testing in which we will be challenged to discover ourselves as a single family with responsibilities to one another, the Earth, and future generations', (Duane Elgin, 'Promise Ahead: A Vision of Hope and Action for Humanity's Future, 2000). From here, Alex moved on to emphasise what he sees as a collective spiritual awakening, reminding us of early Friends not operating 'in our own strength' but also awakening to the realisation that this Power is not something entirely other than us. When we talk of 'that of God within', it can seem glib; we forget that Margaret Fell said, 'The Light will rip you open.' In a similar vein, there is a Hasidic saying, 'God is not your favourite uncle; God is a volcano!' Lastly, Alex asked us to 're-member' who we are, being led to a new sense of spirituality, one that resonates with the dynamics of the cosmic process itself. According to Alex, we can now imagine moving from seeing ourselves – not as separate beings placed on Earth – but as a conscious expression of Earth.

The importance of this to me is that it gives us hope in the face of the despair that could so easily overwhelm us, should we choose to contemplate the state of our planet today. Alex pointed out the tremendous resilience in the human race as

survivors – we just have to wake up to who we really are! And to end his talk, Alex left us with two questions to ponder:

What might be the Quaker contribution to the evolutionary shift of consciousness that many prophetic voices believe we are called to in this time?

And:

What gifts, skills and talents do I personally bring to this shift, to a just and sustainable future for all beings?

(This last question was addressed in a workshop that Alex presented later that day.)

Bryony Rowntree noticed how much of our lives are spent indoors in the UK and she suggested that we need to make an effort to connect with Nature. Becoming a mother gave her a connection with her ancestors in her imagination and this, together with an allotment, helped her to see her life in terms of her place on the earth and spreading healing to the best of her ability. She suggests living one's life in service to the planet as far as one can in life, having integrity in all your choices. Bryony brought us to 'Quaker Faith and Practice', 26:35, where Rose Ketterer (in 1987) struggles to define the divine. She says, 'Sometimes the web feels like G-d/ess' body, her vast cosmos, of which we are an inextricable part. The web is also the love that flows through creation, from G-d/ess, from us, from everywhere. The web is an affirmation and comfort, support and clear-naming. The web is harmony, proving to me by its fleeting, fragile appearances that peace can happen. Most of all, for me, the web is friendship... But we are all connected. Strength seeps in from everywhere and amazing things happen...'

What Racheal Harrison said was very moving, coming straight from the depth of her being. She began by challenging us with another question:

What is it that brings you to your joy?

And she suggested that we think about our senses in response to this; to feel, to see, to hear... In relating examples of her own experience, we were encouraged to participate in deep listening in order to discover our deepest joy: according to Rachael, 'listening stretches the muscle of presence', which presented a vivid and worthwhile image to me. Interconnectedness was a strand running through the entirety of Rachael's talk, ending with a suggestion that we could be 'deep listening' to Nature and to the earth. There is a deeper connection to everything around us all the time, into the everyday, if we can only connect to it.

With so much to consider, from a global to an individual scale, Friends dispersed, holding the challenge to make a shift-change in our vision of the world and our place in it – placing our responsibility to Nature, our fellow beings and the planet at the heart of our Quaker spirituality.

We left the QLRC weekend uplifted and encouraged, understanding both our brokenness and our strengths. The seedling burst through the tarmac. 'Strength seeps in from everywhere and amazing things happen.' As Elizabeth Colwell reflected, 'There is a sense of this being part of a longer and deeper process of discernment and dialogue within the Society.'

'Between stimulus and response there is a space.

In that space is our power to choose our response.

In our response lies our growth and our freedom.'

(Viktor Frankl)

Meri Goad

Celebrating Babies, Toddlers and Families in Quaker Meetings A workshop, 12 November 2016, Newcastle Meeting House

This workshop is obviously very pertinent for St. Andrews Local Meeting (LM) at the present time as they currently have toddlers, families and a baby regularly attending Meeting. However, the content of the day had ramifications that will benefit children and young people of all ages throughout the Area Meeting (AM). The children throughout the AM regularly meet together at Dundee Meeting and are building strong ties with each other. Similarly, the adults who work with the children see each other and work closely together throughout the AM.

Genevieve Orr and Meri Goad, both from St Andrews LM, attended the workshop and this enabled them to have time together to concern themselves with the particular needs of both their local and area meeting.

The day began with worship and a quote from 'Quaker Faith and Practice', 10:10, by Peggy McGeoghegan in 1976. This section goes to the heart of what it means to nurture young people in the worshipping group:

'...How is the child and the stranger received amongst us? Do we see our young people as individuals we want to know and care for and do we want to provide opportunities when they can get to know and care for us? Are they encouraged to feel that they have much to give us, that we value them and are the poorer without the insights and questioning they provide? Are we across all the ages a community of learning together? Do we consciously look for experiences which can be shared by the whole community?... Part of that sharing is learning to know our past as Quakers and of our Christian roots but even more necessary is the sharing of what we as Quakers believe today and how this should be shaping our lives both individually and corporately. Together we have a task in exploring our faith today with all its implications for action.'

We were then led through a little theory by Madeleine Harding, the leader of the workshop, about the attachments that are formed from birth through neural pathways being built up in a baby's brain that provide security for the child from a young age. From here, we considered how a baby may feel secure in Meeting and pondered the question, 'How do you recognise the spirituality of a baby?'

As well as working altogether, we also split into groups to consider objectives for our individual Meetings. Over the course of the day, we explored resources, such as songbooks, considered the needs of parents or those in care of the children and thought about practicalities such as the value of having a session routine to ease young children in with confidence and enjoyment. Issues such as safety, safeguarding and providing for or even finding families who would like to attend were also covered.

Objectives from the training day include:

- To finish off cataloguing 'Journeys in the Spirit' back copies, and find a way of 'advertising' the resource to potential children's leaders;
- Create 'ready-to-go' packs aka Zelda teddy/book/guidance note;
- Reintroduce the idea of seasonal/quarterly all age worship back into St Andrews Local Meeting calendar;
- Create treasure boxes – collections of goodies; a bag of fabrics, a jar of buttons/gems, a box of natural gifts, e.g. pinecones/leaves/shells;
- Build collection of 'Quakerly' picture books esp. baby board books;
- Meet with mums to share the day's discussions.

Genevieve Orr and Meri Goad

News from Local Meetings

Dundee

Our dear Friend **Elsie Luke** of Dundee Meeting died on 9th January 2017.

A Memorial Meeting to celebrate her life was held in Dundee Meeting House on the 20th January. This was a wonderful occasion and many friends and family members were able to attend. Elsie had asked for a private non Quaker family burial.

A tribute to Elsie will appear in a later edition of Tayside Quaker.

St. Andrews



The labyrinth in Kinburn Park, St. Andrews, was opened on 27th October 2016. Here are extracts from Barbara Davey's introduction at the opening. Photographs were taken by Huw Lloyd-Richards.

In the autumn of 2013, Friends in St Andrews celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of their meeting in the town, and a small group of us began thinking about a gift we could offer the local community. We were looking for something that might be useful and an imaginative expression of our faith.

This initial discernment process was slow, and it felt for a while that we were getting nowhere. We invited a couple of Friends over from Glasgow, who had already been



Barbara speaking at the opening of the labyrinth.

involved in artistic projects - Gisela and John Creed. They spent the day with us, and that was really the opening. From there the idea of a Labyrinth emerged and has grown.

We see it as a simple and open hearted way of offering anyone and everyone a space for reflection and the opportunity to *Attend to what love requires of us, which may not be great busyness.*

We like the way there is no prescription about how it might be used - from young children enjoying its twists and turns, to students in earnest midnight wanderings, and everything in between.

Of course there have been many twists and turns in the making of it too. It has not always been easy. We have had to learn patience, also something about trusting in following our leadings, about keeping faith.

Right from the start we have been met with enthusiasm, and throughout the process we have received encouragement from so many and expressed in numerous different forms - the friend taking photographs as the work has evolved, others listening and talking through difficulties as they have arisen.

Such support has kept the project going, and for that we give thanks.

Clearly it would not have been possible without the input also from Fife Council who have funded the labour and much of the material costs. We greatly appreciate their generosity and vision.

The way you walk the Labyrinth is rather like the journey we have been on. Sometimes you feel close to the centre, then you find yourself moving away again. But you DO get to the centre in the end, and the Labyrinth HAS NOW been completed and it stands here for us all.

There is much to celebrate and be thankful for.

Postscript

On the Sunday following the formal opening, Friends in St Andrews continued the theme of celebration and thanksgiving by gathering at 9.15am to walk the Labyrinth in each other's company. This inspired rich ministry in the meeting for worship that followed, and over coffee Friends enjoyed a specially baked seed cake decorated with the pattern of the labyrinth!



Jon Warnes from Cupar carved the two benches from locally sourced oak and Richard Douglas from Menstrie engraved George Fox's words on them.

House group south of the river

'Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal' ('Advices and queries' 18)

In previous editions of Tayside Quaker I have written of the various house groups that operate within Perth Meeting. In this edition we travel south of the River Tay to a discussion group that began about 5 years ago and meets in Abernethy from spring through to autumn.

It began as a small group of four, sometimes five, Friends but has grown to seven. There are two features which members highlighted as being of particular importance. The first was a *"consistent membership"*, in other words the membership of the group was stable, it did not vary. The second was the quality of the atmosphere created within the group being variously described as *"intimate"* and a *"small, homely group"* where *"the warm welcome surrounds me as soon as I arrive"*. These two features together (both, incidentally, valued by other house groups) have enabled a level of trust to develop between members. They provide the atmosphere that: *"encourages openness and honesty"*, so members can feel sufficiently comfortable to share their thoughts. As a member indicated: *"The informal and relaxed atmosphere makes it easy to contribute – or not."* Those final two words are significant, demonstrating what this group has achieved, that a member can feel sufficiently at one with the group to be able to contribute by listening but not feel obliged to speak.

Originally, the group met quarterly and covered a range of topics. One early topic mentioned as being of particular significance was: *"the use of 'God language' ... it clarified communication between us as Quakers and removed a good deal of misunderstanding."* More recently the group has met monthly and has considered chapters of Quaker Faith and Practice: *"The succession of evenings spent looking at particular chapters ... were very much appreciated as it is all too difficult to find time to delve deeply into this valuable book"*. Although the topic for discussion might have begun as a chapter from this book, several members commented on how wide ranging subsequent discussions have been:

- *"We start by discussing parts of Quaker Faith and Practice, which gives us focus, but the discussion has often gone off at a tangent; this has been particularly valuable."*

- *“We have shared our thinking on a range of important issues – which may or may not have had bearing on what we said we would discuss!”*

This group has proved to be an important aspect of its members’ spiritual lives:

- *“We have an opportunity to explore ideas with others and so get to know them ‘in the things that are eternal’”*
- *“to learn something of ...[other people’s] ideas/ opinions and compare them with my own”*
- *“to express some of my own thoughts, which I never normally have an opportunity to discuss”*
- *“I found it intellectually stimulating and spiritually encouraging”.*

This house group, alongside the others, has added to the spiritual wellbeing of Perth Meeting as a whole.

Creative listening session

Last November Perth Meeting held another Creative Listening Session followed by a shared lunch. This was a smaller group than on the previous occasion, but that was probably a benefit. Reporting on a meeting of this kind is a little tricky as one of the ground rules is that whatever is said is confidential. I trust what follows breaks no confidence, but at the same time gives the reader an idea of a most significant meeting.

We considered what Perth Meeting meant to each of us and, of course, the contributions varied enormously with a number of people speaking with fervour and sometimes a level of anguish that was very moving. The nature of a gathered meeting was considered and there were specific suggestions as to how that might be achieved.

Being in the thick of such a meeting, trying to listen and uphold each speaker can make it difficult to gain an immediate sense of the meeting. On this occasion, we had the benefit of fresh eyes, as one member had not attended our previous session. This person felt we managed to speak openly with both concern and love. This was very reassuring.

Sharing a lunch afterwards where we sat down together in a relaxed way was so important. It really helped to cement a common bond amongst those present. Our enjoyment was greatly enhanced by Jill's fabulous cake!

Thank you to Adwoa Bittle and Jill Tutton for arranging and facilitating this meeting.

Social event – and everyone sang

In the middle of January about 16 Friends gathered for a social event at the home of Felicity and Philip Bryers. After a short meeting for Worship, Meri Goad (from St Andrew's Meeting) led most of those present through breathing exercises before the real singing began. There were songs in unison, in rounds and in parts. They were from Africa, Australia, some were Leaveners' songs, some Kindlers and some from the Iona community. After a shared lunch there was more singing – it was a most enjoyable occasion. Thank you to Meri!

News of individuals

Marion McGivern – a welcome

We are delighted to welcome Marion McGivern, who has started to attend Meeting for Worship after a break of more than 30 years. Originally, her contact with Quakers dated from her student days in Newcastle upon Tyne and, although she drifted away from direct contact, she felt that the values and much of what she had learned stayed with her over the intervening years. Feeling both disheartened at the state of the world and a little adrift spiritually, she happened upon a Quaker advertisement and responded to it – and we're very glad she did!

Johanna Babbs – further adventures

The last time I wrote about Johanna and Jerry's odyssey was last summer, since then they have travelled extensively through Portugal in searing heat, then back into Spain. Tight budget constraints have been causing them some concern but this eased when their flat back in Scotland was once again let.

Visiting the most southerly point in mainland Europe, the headland of Tarifa, they could see across the Estreche de Gibraltar to the mountains of Morocco. So it was time to visit a new continent and a brief foray into Tangiers, just enough to whet their appetite to return at some future date. They visited Gibraltar and having shopped in the souk of Tangiers did the next best thing and went into M&S to buy

underwear! Then on through Spain and an interesting description of a totally different aspect to Malaga than one might expect with a visit to a walkway built into the walls of a deep gorge. The photographs take your breath away! Moving from Valencia they spent Christmas in Sardinia and are currently in Sicily. Catch up with their travels at <https://twobikesandatent.wordpress.com>

Peter Cheer – home soon

Marking the passing of another year working in Papua New Guinea, Peter sent his Christmas greetings with, no doubt, mixed feelings as he prepares to return to Scotland in mid-February. His Christmas plan this time was to join the festivities in Vanimo. He was expecting it to be very noisy as celebratory fire crackers are always let off.

It will be lovely to welcome Peter back to Meeting, even though he is apprehensive about returning to Scotland in winter after two years in a tropical climate!

Feeling the cold - a touch of colour

Speaking of feeling the cold, a number of Friends were feeling a little chilly in our meeting room so a touch of colour has been added to Meeting in the form of knee blankets made by one of our members.

Enid Harding



Book Review: Lessons from the past

This is the title of a review in the Friend (23 & 30 December 2016) of a new e-book by John Lampen, entitled ***A Letter from James: Essays in Quaker History***. It can be downloaded from <http://bit.ly/ALetterFromJames>. Readers are invited to make a donation to the Hope Project (www.hopeproject.co.uk) through which Diana and John Lampen of Stourbridge Meeting offer consultancy and training in peace building skills and the creative handling of conflict. Their work in Uganda will be supported by donations for the e-book.

This is no ordinary account of Quaker history. Each essay starts from the story of particular Quakers but goes on to explore themes prompted by their lives. The essay on George Fox pinpoints the healing aspect of his ministry. That on John Woolman explores the part dreams played in his life. Another essay introduces Job Scott of Providence, Rhode Island (1751-1793). He lived through the turbulence of American independence, but his preoccupation was the life of the spirit – otherwise described as “inward experience”.

Next, John introduces two American Quaker sisters from the early 19th Century, Sarah and Angelina Grimke, about whom I knew nothing. They worked to sensitise Quakers to the evils of slavery, and faced strong opposition. Quakers have not always been ‘on the side of the angels’.

In an essay on speaking truth to power John cites a range of Quakers including Mary Fisher, who met the Grand Sultan of the Ottoman Empire; Thomas Shillitoe, a poor shoemaker, who spoke with royalty in Britain, Prussia, Denmark and Russia as well as with an American President; and Sarah Grubb, Stephen Grellet, William Allen and Daniel Wheeler whose travels led to audiences with Pope Pius VII, Tsar Alexander I and many more.

I found John’s account of how Friends reacted to Tolstoy’s last novel *Resurrection* fascinating. John’s essay on *Quaker Education in the 20th Century* brings together initiatives many of us will remember. In a final essay John explores the writings of James Nayler, for whom he has considerable respect despite the strong feelings he aroused in his lifetime, including his estrangement from George Fox. The essay has the text of Nayler’s *Epistle XI* with a parallel text paraphrasing it in more accessible language.

In his conclusion, John reflects on how we pass our heritage to future generations and questions whether we pay enough attention to the legacy we should be leaving for Quakers of the future – particularly in the sphere of “spiritual maintenance”. We need to pass on ‘our Quaker DNA’ and this book does that admirably. Download it now - then read it!

Philip Bryers

Travel in South Africa

Travelling is one of my main passions for I can never get enough of this incredible planet. My latest trip was to South Africa. I wanted this to be a time of balance – to experience adventure, beauty and fun but to also learn as much as I could about Apartheid and the lives of those affected. I wanted connection with people. My trip started in Cape Town and ended in Johannesburg. I went on long hauls with the Baz Bus, a very well thought out bus that takes passengers from one end of the country to the other, stopping at back packer hostels along the way. Some other time I may write about the extraordinary beauty that I saw – stunning landscapes that varied from beach and desert to plains and gorges and mountains. This time I will try to convey a bit of what I learned. It is difficult to compress some of what I observed, learned and experienced without sounding trite.

When I was very young my family used to visit my father’s parents in a small southern town in Virginia. This was during the time of segregation and there were separate toilets, schools, opportunities and laws for blacks and whites. Even as a little girl I knew that this was wrong. Through a community organization called Phaphama I was able to stay with a family in Soweto and meet young and old people to listen to their stories. Though life is ever so much better now that Apartheid has ended, the difference between life for blacks and whites is more than I could possibly express. I stayed in what I was told was a “posh house” meaning that there was indoor plumbing. One night the small living room was filled with 12 people and the TV was on while family and neighbours talked and I could hear the youngest child sitting with them while she recited her school lessons. There is no concept of privacy. I visited the stunning Apartheid Museum, Oscar Pieterson Memorial Museum dedicated to the young boy and hundreds of other students and adults who were massacred during what started as a peaceful protest against the ruling

that henceforth all classes would be taught in Afrikaans only (rather than in English). Then I visited the park commemorating the absolutely gorgeous South African constitution. The people I met were warm and friendly and welcomed me to share their home, meals and friendship. At the Oscar Pieterse museum I saw a video clip of little school girls learning how to wash a shirt. Watching these little girls being prepared to work as maids really touched my heart. I saw photos and videos of horrific violence during Apartheid but they are too shocking to describe here. Today there is a chance for higher education though the fees and price of books is out of the reach of most blacks and for those who are able to attend university there is a 40% unemployment rate for young black graduates. The organization I stayed with is trying to educate young people about cultural differences that affect employment including learning how to establish eye contact rather than avoiding it to show respect.

During Apartheid people could only leave Soweto by showing a work pass and there was a strictly enforced curfew of 18:00. Anyone caught out past then or travelling without a pass was subject to arrest and beatings. Soweto was then separated into zones to keep ethnic groups apart. The people were not only forced to live in Soweto but forced to only live within an ethnic zone or neighborhood. Limited space makes me only give a brief outline here but I would be happy to share photos and stories. I already know that I want to return to South Africa to stay for at least a month or longer.

Connie Wright

If there is light in the soul, there will be beauty in the person.
If there is beauty in the person, there will be harmony in the house.
If there is harmony in the house, there will be order in the nation.
If there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.

Chinese proverb

Meetings for Worship

Dundee Meeting House, 30 Whitehall Street, Dundee DD1 4AF

Sundays 11.00 am

Children's Meeting, first Sunday of each month

Children's Contact: Donna Morgan

Tel 01382 775545

Midweek Meeting for Worship, Wednesdays, 1.15 – 1.45pm

February 15, March 15, April 19, May 17, June 14

Dundee University chaplaincy, lower common room, coffee and chat afterwards.

Contact: Sheila Phillips

Tel 01382 641043

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

Tel 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 11.00 am

Children's Meeting by arrangement.

East of Scotland Area Meeting

Saturday 18 February 2017, *St. Andrews*

Saturday 6 May 2017, *Dundee*

Saturday 19 August 2017, *Perth*

Saturday 4 November 2017, *St. Andrews*

General Meeting for Scotland

11 March 2017, *Edinburgh*

10 June 2017, *West Scotland*

9 September 2017, *East Scotland*

18 November 2017, *North Scotland*