

wsqn

- connecting local meetings



January 2022

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Pause for Thought

Editors can be naughty but . . . I know how much (some) Quakers love their cats so here is a little indulgence but . . . at this time of year when we are all (?) making New Year's resolutions and pondering a better future, how do these live up to our self-image?

Cat: Yep, nailed it



West Scotland Area Meeting 6.12.21 - Personal Report Jan Lethbridge

Those of you who were present at the Zoom Area Meeting on 6 December, may recall that the Clerk's request for someone to write a report for the AM Newsletter fell on distinctly stony ground. And an awkward silence on Zoom is somehow even more deafening than an in-person one! So, conscience pricking, I later contacted Alastair, and here I am It was an interesting Area Meeting, and sandwiched between the routine matters was some real

meat (or plant-based alternative, if you prefer). The passing of Elspeth Smith and of Myra McGregor were marked, with personal recollections from some who had known and loved these two ladies. One of them had spent some years away from Quakers, a point which was referenced during a later discussion. A transfer out, was balanced by a transfer in, and, unusually I think, this latter was responded to by a member of the welcoming meeting, with the newcomer described as “..a breath of fresh air” - there's something to live up to! There followed a matter of resignation, thankfully rare, but I think, always met with some discomfort, as perhaps it should be?

It was not absolutely clear what should be done about this, or indeed any resignation. In one sense, it is a personal and private matter, and I found myself wondering what are the exit strategies in other faith groups? Unfortunately perhaps, the first comparison that came to mind was the MP's resignation procedure. But there are similarities. The resignation speech, or letter, can provide a platform for grievances to be aired—who, of a certain age, can forget the resignation of Geoffrey Howe? Issues can be raised, which may concern us all. So what should actually be done? Visits from elders or others are, I think, less acceptable these days and are sometimes refused before even being offered. The present Quaker demographic means that most of us have a lot of life experience behind us, trust our own judgements, so that a 'visit' might seem patronising or paternalistic. At the same time though, most of us want to feel that we matter, that we'd be missed, that we might even be welcomed back at some point. How is this to be conveyed, if not by listening to the reasons for resignation, and reflecting deeply upon them and their wider significance? And I gather, though the minute does not say this explicitly, such reflection and discussion will happen.

The bread, which followed this resignation-flavoured filling, contained details of nominations and future dates, which are clearly set out in the minutes, and the Treasurer's report. Despite starting my working life in a bank, and spending a large proportion of my adult life as treasurer of one or other small organisation, I nevertheless find financial matters, on this scale, difficult to get my head around. But a few clear highlights: Reserves are well above what they need to be, so £10K is to go to replace the skylight at Glasgow Meeting House; a further £4K to BYM, in addition to the £6K

already given; some support has been given to the Gender Violence Project from the Organ/Giles legacy funds; and the wording used to describe legacy spending on "Local Meeting projects and concerns" has been expanded to read "Local Meeting Projects and recognised Local and Area Meeting concerns". The budget for next year notes that spending may increase to support activities of Young Friends.

On then to something more tasty, though perhaps leaving a slightly bitter aftertaste— a brief report of, and reflections on, COP26 in Glasgow.

Martin Mansell reported that Yes, on the whole, outcomes were disappointing, but there was some progress. People now speak of the Glasgow Agreement, superseding the Paris. The Implementation Rulebook was finalised. The 1.5 degree target is still in place, though 1.8+ may be more realistic. The

£100 billion support promised for countries already bearing the brunt of climate change must be closely examined to see what form it takes, recompense or loan? If the latter, the problems will only be exacerbated, and the disparities widened. The environmental footprint of the military is now to be included in countries' measurements. The main task for the future is to hold our governments to account. On the practical side, Glasgow Meeting House was well used over the fortnight, and the facilities it

provided were much appreciated, with 12 events and 10 other groups. Meeting House funds benefitted by some £2K-3K. Friends worked very hard to prepare the building for visitors, and the experience demonstrated clearly the value of the Meeting House as a resource. But sadly, Martin felt that Glaswegians, and maybe Scots in general, had not embraced COP and taken pride in it, in the way that they had done with events like the Commonwealth Games. Apart from the day of the major march, the streets

were empty. The final report of the COP26 Hub Group will be presented at the January Area Meeting.

Wendy Reynolds next reported briefly on the 'Women's Perspective on Climate Change Conference', organised by the Gender-based Violence Group. This had been organised in order to expand the horizons of the group, limited as it had been by its economically/sociologically western, and geographically northern positions. The conference was judged to have been worthwhile, but some important lessons had had to be learned, particularly re funding, publicity and technology. The Gender-based Violence Project will also present a final report at the January AM.

Finally, Michael Hutchinson, one of our three representatives on Meeting for Sufferings, reported on their October and December meetings. After a break of ten years from Sufferings, Michael feels grumpy, overwhelmed by the sheer volume of STUFF! But from this volume he teased out the good stuff. The current work is focussing on two areas: how we support each other and our Meetings; and how we witness in the world at large. There are concrete plans afoot: we already have some Local Development Workers; staffing is being reorganised; sustainability criteria are now in place for all departments, in line with the Canterbury Commitment; and giving to central work rose during the pandemic. But tensions between Sufferings and Trustees cannot be denied, and must be worked through on a basis of trust. Michael also mentioned something for Scottish Friends particularly to look forward to—our Friend Helen Minnis will be delivering the 2022 Swarthmore Lecture.

I personally feel that Zoom really comes into its own for this sort of business meeting. And we also showed that sensitive discussion can take place online, even when all the nuances and subtleties of face-to-face contact are missing.

To be a Quaker

Following the resignation brought up at Area Meeting of a Friend whose letter indicated that they were likely to continue to live as a Quaker but was unable to do so within the Society of Friends our local meeting held a discussion as to what it means to be a Quaker. Views were wide ranging and frank.

Observations concerning the busy-ness of Quakers were made and included that there are too many committees which feels as if the basic voice of our community is lost. Inevitably financial constraint has an impact on the work of

the Society but that constraint has led to big issues or projects dominating and being prioritised over smaller concerns. A broad concern was expressed about being a political body. While collective action can bind a meeting together and being active is to be political, the core tenet is silent worship. It is the worship group that provides the bedrock for outward matters. Being busy with the challenges and issues that concern us, do we miss an opportunity to celebrate what has been done? Possibly having charity status is an inhibitor to being active.

Resignations present a challenge and perhaps the Overseeing of the process can be interpreted as paternalistic. Do we really learn why someone has resigned or even just drifted away and stopped attending? There is a need to know each other more deeply and to understand more fully those we worship with. One impact of Zoom is a loss of personal nuance and interaction that comes from face-to-face meetings. Zoom is not conducive to 'being present'. Are we perhaps not as open and inclusive as we like to think we are? Especially when Friends are experiencing doubts and the lack of spiritual direction is potentially deeper than we care to acknowledge. Our spiritual selves have a need to be expressed and the practical and spiritual life should not be separated.

It was suggested that perhaps Quakers have completed their task in terms of being a representative body and there is a need to re-invent ourselves? The world is changing, and identity is a complex issue particularly in identifying with Quakerism. Such labels are constructions of our own making and it was asked do we have a unique identity, something we are? A common sentiment of being overwhelmed with an overload of news and concerns was mentioned. A Friend asked against this scale of issues, 'what can I do?', 'what voice do I have?' It was concluded with the observation that by finding or re-establishing our core we can remind ourselves how to be Quakers. **Dumfries Meeting**

Area Meeting is . . .

The body of which we are members. It is Area Meeting that collects our funds, sending part off to BYM and to LMs for their needs. Any business to be considered is sent by Local Meetings to AM for discernment so Area Meeting is our decision-making body that may send matters to Meetings for Sufferings for further discernment. Elders and Overseers are appointed by Area Meeting.

QF&P 402 The area meeting is the primary meeting for church affairs in Britain Yearly Meeting. Its role is to develop and maintain a community of Friends, a family of local meetings who gather for worship and spiritual enrichment. It should provide that balance between worship, mutual support, administration, learning, deliberation and social life which can make its meetings enjoyable occasions and build up the spiritual life of its members.

Meeting for Sufferings

Reports for meetings on 2nd October and 4th December 2021– Michael Hutchinson

I've started attending Meeting for Sufferings again, our Quaker representative body for all of Britain, after a ten year gap. This is as the West Scotland representative. Elaine Millar is our alternate. It is a demanding role, owing to the range of papers and reports and the amount of detail required, and easy to get overwhelmed. I found myself getting a bit grumpy at it all until I remembered that the trick is to remember this is a way of engaging with and understanding how Quakers in Britain as a whole can engage with the two fundamentals for us as a faith body – how we support our meetings and how we witness in the world. Both in ways that can't just be done locally or in the separate regions and nations. So it was interesting at the first two meetings to see how we, Quakers in Britain, are adapting to where we find ourselves and seeking opportunities to maintain our testimony.

There are several published reports of these meetings and the minutes and papers are easily accessible online, so I'm not giving all the detail. You can find the minutes and papers at <https://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings>

What I particularly picked up was how

- our staff organisation is spreading out from London, as we've already seen with Zoe Prosser coming to Scotland as our Local Development Worker;
- we are reviewing our structures for more simplification, and linking the reviews of the various parts together. The issues about the way we work with our trustees fits in here;
- we are continuing with our Book of Discipline revision, a way of linking in to all of us so we think about our faith. It is clear that this process will be taking many years, but is a reflective process that will still help us during the interim. See <https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/quaker-faith-and-practice/revising-quaker-faith-practice>

We also have to adapt to what is happening outwith our small Society – a good example being the results of the (English) Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse where it has become clear that we are not coordinating safeguarding between the separate Area Meeting charities and need to do so we can spot any trends or patterns. This pertains to Scotland just as much.

On witness, there is great concern on the potential effects of the UK Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill and work is focused on that. On sustainability, there was also great unease that we as a body aren't making

progress from the Canterbury Commitment and we heard this time about how criteria have been developed for all the committees and departments so we give proper priority to this work. We also heard about COP26 and it was moving to hear how our Recording Clerk, Paul Parker, found it such an emotional experience being with us in Glasgow. He paid tribute to the work of Friends in Scotland, especially Glasgow, in doing so much to enable effective work at COP. Oliver Robertson, Head of Worship & Witness, summarised the result of COP, and stressed that we should look at it as both failure and success – as is common to so much. There has been much movement, to some degree helped by the quiet background work of our Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO), and a significant change of attitude is occurring, but the world has not yet grasped the nettle sufficiently and it is our concern to keep on the public pressure.

Finally, in October we also heard from the Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture, which is a separate charity delegated by BYM to work on this concern, about the difficulty of finding trustees to undertake the work independently of the central staffing and committees. If we want new ways of working, we need to be sure we can do it.

The closing worship for the December meeting included a quote from part of a Rainer Maria Rilke poem:

I live my life in widening circles
that reach out across the world.
I may not complete this last one
but I will give myself to it.

This reminded our clerk of *Quaker faith & practice* 24.56 by Rufus Jones, familiar to us with his “quiet processes and small circles”. A good place to end here.

Spiritual work involves maintaining some balance between the demands of outer life and a conscious presence. We wish to enter freely into the life of the world and still know presence, the dimension of consciousness and freedom. We can live through the essence, which is the light behind the personality, rather than the limited, superficial personality, which is identified with each passing thought and feeling.

Book of Discipline Revision Committee – update

December 2021 Mary Woodward

It's been some seven months since I've written an update about our work, largely due to my health problems: blood clots in my lungs landed me in hospital in August and then 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 on the committee were running our sessions at Yearly Meeting Gathering. I had to miss most of our most recent committee meeting [in October] but thanks to our 'buddy system' and frequent conversations with several of my committee friends, I don't feel out of 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.

Looking back at my notes from the July weekend, I realise how much I rely on my aural memory to add detail to what I've written: at this distance, it's much harder to make a good report on all that went on. We discussed what our future work might be – still in small groups, but on which topics, and in which order? Some people have finished their task work, and are itching to do more, while other groups are still working on their topics and yet others are feeling the need for a rest while they juggle the rest of their lives... We were asked to let the clerks know where we sat on this spectrum, and what new topics we are interested in, 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 we need to consider. Some of the concepts within this topic might need separate explanatory sections: but the same concepts arise within other topics – how do we ensure that topic entries are intelligible while at the same time avoiding excessive repetition/ explanation? We can't assume that everyone will read the Book from start to finish: but if they 'dip in', how do we ensure that they understand the concepts behind what they are reading? An electronic 'book' will be able to contain hyperlinks to explanations, quotations, illustrations, but a hard copy one won'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 producing 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 supremely 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.

Finola O'Sullivan, one of our 2021 'intake', had accepted the nomination of co-convenor of the Communicating with Friends group, replacing Nuala Watt who had asked to be released although she will still be part of CwF.

See website *Open to New Light* www.padlet/bdrc/opentonewlight to see the many new contributions.

It also became clear from the feedback from Friends 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, but 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* and 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.

We continue to work on creative approaches to the challenges involved in producing an inclusive expression of Quaker tradition and experience. 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. 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.

The clerks' report to MfS was well received [and 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 and Cambridgeshire AM in February and March respectively.

Finola O'Sullivan, one of our 2021 'intake', had accepted the nomination of co-convenor of the Communicating with Friends group, replacing Nuala Watt who had asked to be released. Looking forward to the January committee meeting: one of the topics we will be considering 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 2021 ends and 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!

This is an edited report. You can apply to the editor for the full report.

From the introduction to the 5th Edition

Words must not become barriers between us, for no one of us can ever adequately understand or express the truth about God. Yet words are our tools and we must not be afraid to express the truth we know in the best words we can. It is this conviction which has prompted the selection of a wide variety of extracts for inclusion in this book, confirming our testimony that truth cannot be confined within a creed. We must trust that faith is robust, compassionate and 'not quick to take offence', and that the Spirit which gives the words is communicated through them. . . .

There is no yardstick by which the experience of one generation can be judged against that of another, but we do know that, whatever the circumstances, we are called to rediscover the Quaker way and to find appropriate words to express it. We are not without consolation. Signals come to us from all over the world that there is in the human spirit a prompting towards a better way that is persistent and will not be put down. This enduring hope confirms the truth asserted in John's gospel that the light shines in darkness.

Quaker Concerns

Quaker Community Justice Network and Prison Chaplaincy

by Ren Clark

On the 7th December, the Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network met with guest Sheena Orr, the chaplaincy advisor for the reform tradition to the Scottish prison service.

It is one of the human rights of prisoners that they have regular access to worship, and Sheena is one of the people who ensures that happens, working alongside two other chaplaincy advisors for the Catholic and Muslim traditions. Sheena is also involved in recruiting chaplains for the Reform tradition, and supporting them in their faith and work.

She said that she doesn't believe you have to believe in punishment to work in prisons, which are often 'rule-bound, harsh and demeaning', an atmosphere which can lead to hopelessness and despair in those imprisoned. Her belief is that the chaplaincy can work to counteract that tendency and 'guard the good' within the prison service.

However, in practice, it can be difficult for the chaplaincy to provide the amount of support that is needed. Sheena told the group that the hours for paid chaplains is calculated across the whole prison estate by allocating 12 hours for every 100 prisoners, raising questions among the network members about whether such a bureaucratic approach is adequate to meet the spiritual and pastoral needs of prisoners.

Additionally, unlike in England and Wales, where volunteers are often an integral part of the chaplaincy service, the Scottish service restricted the involvement of volunteers with a ruling in 2015 that only employees of the prison service could be key-holders. This has caused frustration among members of the network who are keen to volunteer in Scottish prisons, but have found it impossible to get inside, or have felt very restricted in the roles they can take on. As network member Mike Nellis said, if the chaplaincy service is there to 'guard the good', it is important that they have allies in that task beyond those employed by the prison service.

This led to discussion about the need for a more 'permeable' approach to prisons, that sees them not as outside the community but as part of the community. This could counteract the tendency that a member of the network, Pete Clarke, who has been active in prisons as an educator has noticed of 'security and separation'. Although there are obvious reasons for a focus on security, he said that the prison service tends towards excessive

separation from outside society, which further isolates prisoners and makes it harder for them to heal any harm they have done to the community.

Sheena, however, did highlight the work that outside groups currently do in Scottish prisons, including the Sycamore Tree programme that teaches the principles of restorative justice. She also raised the topic of faith groups being able to play a role in supporting those who have been recently released from prison. One of the questions this raises for the network, then, is how to establish Quaker connections to Scottish prisons, given that the system is often opaque from the outside.

The network were grateful to Sheena for sharing her perspective as chaplaincy advisor with the group, and are keen to continue this conversation. We believe that there are many Friends who might be interested in volunteering within prisons, if there was a structure established to do so and we will continue to investigate the avenues available to us, whether that is in volunteer Quaker chaplaincy, or in delivering activities within prisons.

This is very much work in progress, but to me feels like an important opportunity to put Quaker values into practice, and make connections in places that are often forgotten by society.

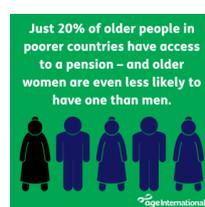
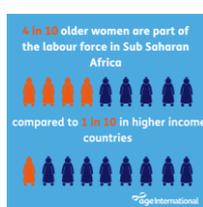
Gender-based Violence

Older Women, the hidden workforce

Age International's new report "Older Women: the hidden workforce" states: Current strategies do not adequately recognise the roles of older women across the globe, who carry out relentless work with little or no choice, and often without support. Although these older women make substantial contributions when it comes to paid work and unpaid care and domestic work for their families, communities and economies, the low status they hold in their communities means many do not get the support they need to live in better health and with dignity.

In particular, the Report listens and gives voice to older women's experience of work in Ethiopia and Malawi and sets it within a wider context of the economic challenges facing older women in low and middle-income countries. It sets out recommendations for how the UK Government and its partners can help to address this inequality. *The full report is at www.ageinternational.org.uk*

Three booklets. Why is older women's work hidden?



Maaza* is 60 years old and lives in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Maaza's son was killed when still young and she raised her sister's child. She is also caring for a brother who has HIV/AIDs and for two nieces. Maaza spins cotton and sells it, and does catering work in other people's houses, as well as cooking wot for ceremonies like christenings and weddings. She is also part of a savings scheme with other lowincome older women who have organised to clean public toilets.

Each day, she makes breakfast for the children and packs their lunch. She does not have access to a widow's pension because she was not living with her husband when he died. She eats breakfast only if there is any food remaining, cleans her house and then goes out to work cleaning public toilets. She has community obligations such as visiting the mourning house when someone dies. She also visits the house of people in her community when they are in need of support. She uses firewood for most cooking, which is challenging, and she has begun to use an electric mitad (griddle) for making injera bread – she bought this using her income from catering for ceremonies. The mitad has made her work easier. She used her income from the cleaning work to buy soap, teff and meet other household expenses.

She feels supported by neighbours, who she supports mutually when they are sick or need practical help, and the children help her with housework. But she insists on washing her own clothes. Previously she was brewing tella (local drink) and preparing spices in bulk but she no longer has the energy to do this often, so prepares it for a few months at a time.

She says if she was unable to do the housework it would fall to her brother's daughters. In her work cleaning public toilets, she mentions having been exposed to violence from customers. She says that she likes to work in order to make decisions about her income, to enable her children to save their own money, and to work with others in the community.

"After I finish my work and get back to my home at 8 pm, I take shower and eat my dinner with my family and wash utensils. When they sleep I spin cotton for traditional dress and sometime when it is holyday I am doing basket. I am the one who decides on my income. I have worked hard to earn the money so nobody orders me what to do." **not her real name*

United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals include commitments to achieve gender equality and "leave no one behind", but these cannot be met without a greater focus on the rights and contributions of older women. Campaigns such as Generation Equality and efforts to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals must consider older women in all their diversity, challenge damaging assumptions about older women and men, and adopt a life course approach in all public policy and development programmes relating to economic justice. The report sets out a ten-point action plan for the UK Government and its partners to help achieve this.

Afghanistan

The BBC 100 women of the year, this year, includes 50 women from Afghanistan. Here is one of them:

Rohila is a student who has been affected by the exclusion of girls from secondary schools in Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover.

Dear Malala,

Every morning when I wake up, I think I am late for school, but then I have the sad realisation that my school is shut. My school is only a few kilometres away from my home and I used to take a rickshaw to get there with my brothers and sisters. Now I look on as the rickshaw arrives every morning to take the boys to school, while I am left behind.

I watch the news every day, hoping to hear that schools will be opening in my area and I can once again chat with my friends and teachers. But the truth is, no-one knows when schools will be opening for girls my age. I feel such sorrow that we are being deprived of this very basic right to an education just because we are women.

I worry about my former women teachers. They are the sole breadwinners of their families and they haven't received a salary for months. I miss my friends so much. In my friendship group, very few of us have access to the internet. I try my best to read English online and teach myself things, but it's so difficult without a teacher.

I long to do experiments in our science laboratory again and take part in the public speaking competitions I once enjoyed. I remember feeling so proud when I represented my school and won a competition against another school. I always felt that I should strive for excellence in the subjects I am most passionate about. When I was a child, my dad would bring me cartoon strips in English to read or encourage me to watch science shows on TV. That's why these are my favourite subjects now.

In the future, I want to study science and English and have a successful career. I dream of getting a scholarship to study abroad and then return to my country with expertise and experience.

But Afghanistan is cut off from the rest of the world, and my dreams of pursuing my education now feel futile.

I hope the world and the international community will not forget about us, and not let our years of hard work go to waste. I hope the world will speak up for us too. All best, *Rohila*

“

I feel such sorrow that we are deprived of this very basic right to an education just because we are women.

Rohila

Peace and Justice

Report of NORTHERN FRIENDS PEACE BOARD meeting on SATURDAY 27th November by video conference

27 of us began with a period of worship. This was followed by a sharing of responses to Friends' involvement in **Cop26** activities. Some Friends were in Glasgow and others took part in activities local to their home area. Some expressed disappointment at the lack of concrete commitment by world leaders while others were encouraged by the good will and hard work of so many people. Some spoke of how moved they were by the stories of indigenous people who are among the most vulnerable to climate change disaster.

A draft of a **new governing document** for NFPB was received. This had been prepared by the Trustees and Co ordinator.

The **Finance Report** was received with a budget for 2023. Trustees recommend that guidelines for contributions from Area Meetings should continue at £9 per Member.

Deryck Hillas is to replace Phoebe Spence as Treasurer. Phoebe has served in this role since 2012 and she was thanked for her commitment and service.

Jo Frew, Outreach Coordinator of **Rethinking Security**, led us in a consideration of security and gave us information about the Rethinking Security network in general. There was time spent in small groups responding to the issues raised.

An update was received about the work of the **NFPB Nuclear Weapons Abolition working group** including an outline of their plans for the coming months. The group was asked to continue its work for another three years.

The Nominations group brought forward names for service which were approved.

Then came the opportunity for Friends to share information about peace related concerns and to share news of what they've been doing since we last met. Howard Long shared news of a planned Military Festival with a literature theme in Carlisle at the Castle in June 2022. Carlisle Meeting is considering a response, possibly a peace event. <https://caat.org.uk/take-action/take-part-near-you/local-groups-and-contacts/>

Lyn Pardo shared about a vigil in Chesterfield for the drowned refugees with about 40 people gathered.

<https://www.derbyshiretimes.co.uk/news/people/vigil-held-in-chesterfield-to-remember-27-people-who-drowned-in-english-channel-3476840>

South East Scotland Area Meeting has agreed to become a community sponsor for a refugee family. Friends from their AM plan to meet with SNPs Angus Robertson to discuss climate change, economic justice & land reform, and peace building and militarism. They will also press him on the Scottish government plans to establish a Scottish Peace Institute and also the way Scottish firms are involved in arms manufacture and arms trade. This was reported by Alan Frith.

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/why-scottish-government-is-committed-to-creating-a-peace-institute-angus-robertson-msp-3364587>

Donald (Saunders) gave us news from Wales. The Welsh Quakers Peace and Peace Education group is going well and has good relations with Aberystwyth and Cardiff Universities. He also mentioned weekly meetings of Interfaith for Palestine which has heard of action relating to Israeli Arms Company Elbit.

<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/protesters-return-oldham-factory-vow-20677867>

Janet Fenton reported that General Meeting for Scotland is supporting CND in different ways, mostly financially. Claire Phillips (former NFPB) has been elected to the Executive of Scottish CND.

Janet pointed out that it's important that Quakers can make clear the interconnectedness of issues, and the political climate in Scotland creates an opportunity to do that. She informed us that the Secure Scotland network is seeking to promote such conversations and principles that could be applied further afield.

<https://www.securescotland.scot>

Janet reminded us that there will be a meeting of ICAN Scottish Roundtable and of ICAN UK on TPNW on 7th Dec. (Details from Phillip Austin, NFPB)

Barbara Penny from Harrogate shared about the application for new radomes at Menwith Hill RAF base. They have a vigil every Tuesday night and a bi monthly Meeting for Worship.

<https://thestrayerferret.co.uk/menwith-hill-submits-new-plans-to-expand/>

Harrogate Friends in Pateley Bridge have raised money to sponsor a refugee family.

Thanks were expressed to Douglas Shaw and Robert Keeble who have served as clerks to the Board and the Trustees. NFPB next meeting will be in March 2022.

We finished our meeting with a period of worship.

Climate Change

Glasgow Local Meeting – Martin Mansell

The Glasgow Meeting House was fully utilised for the two weeks of COP, offering daily time for quiet reflections, refreshments, and the weekly Meetings for Worship. We provided a base for staff from Friends House, for the Centre for Good Relations (a voluntary mediation group), XR Interfaith Bridge and the Loving Earth Project.

There were 12 events organised by Quakers, including BYM, QUNO and FWCC, as well as local Friends. Alastair Mackintosh and Verene Nicolas's 4 workshops and talks were much appreciated. 10 further groups used the Meeting House for events and meetings over the period. Many of the building users made extensive use of all facilities – refreshments, library, quiet reflection, storage.

Glasgow Local Meeting thinks that in person events attracted a total of around 350 people in person, and nearly 300 people joined events online. Janey Andrews did sterling work in managing all the bookings. The Meeting House was well used and appreciated. Refreshments provided daily by the Glasgow Local Meeting Hospitality Committee were excellent. A large number of Friends assisted as volunteer wardens. Elders held a time for quiet reflection every morning and evening. Some events were streamed to much larger numbers, such as Balkan TV's evening special broadcast.

Friends put in an enormous effort to prepare the building for COP26, with cleaning, painting, tidying up. The experience has shown what a welcoming and valuable resource we have in the Meeting House, and in ourselves as a community. The building was well used by Quakers and other groups and the welcome appears to have been much appreciated.

Glasgow Local Meeting received a letter of thanks from Lindsey Fielder Cook of QUNO, which has been circulated to all Meetings. The Loving Earth project was on display during COP26 and we have received a letter of thanks from Linda Murgatroyd and a donation from the Quaker Arts Network. We have also received thanks from Sarah Freeman of XR Faith Vigil.

Glasgow Local Meeting treasurer, Doreen Osborne, reported that financially there was a positive outcome. There was income from room hire, donations, collections and B&B. There was some expenditure on staff costs, utilities and extra supplies. A surplus of £2000-£3000 is expected.

Martin Mansell gave his reflections on the outcome of COP26:

“Glasgow is now on the map; people are already referring to the Glasgow Agreement in the same way as the Paris Agreement and it is significant that this COP was the only one to be held in a city where there was a significant Quaker presence. Glasgow Quakers certainly felt that they had helped in many

small ways. A lot of friendships were made with the 40 or so delegates and visitors who stayed with Quaker families. He was not sure how far the COP permeated into the consciousness of the majority of Scots, reflected in the almost complete emptiness of the city during COP, apart from the mass march on Saturday and the hundreds of police.

The outcome of the COP was disappointing in many ways, yet there were achievements which can be owned. This COP finalised the Paris Agreement Implementation Rulebook after some 4 years of arguing, and the 1.5C target is still there, although even if all the commitments are honoured, it is said we could be heading for 1.8C or perhaps more. The principle of Loss and Damage and the responsibility of industrialised countries to recompense other countries for the damage caused by our historic emissions has now been established.

Our main job now is to ensure that the commitments made, specifically by the UK and Scotland governments are fulfilled. Scotland is the first country to set up a fund specifically to address Loss and Damage and our Parliamentary Engagement Officer is already working with sympathetic MSPs in parliament to find out what this will mean in practice. We also need to press for transparency about whether, or how much of, the £100bn promised to poorer countries will be direct payments (i.e. recompense) rather than loans which will cripple the poorer countries even more as they pay exorbitant interest rates to foreign banks. For the first time the issue of military emissions, which up to now have not been included in any countries' data, was mentioned and this needs to be highlighted."

We thank all those Friends in Glasgow Meeting, particularly Martin Mansell and Janey Andrews, and Friends from elsewhere who worked hard to make the events and the Meeting House so welcoming and helped provide such a useful contribution to COP26. We look forward to receiving the final report of the COP26 Hub group at our January 2022 Area Meeting.

Subject: Ubuntu

An anthropologist showed a game to the children of an African tribe ...

He placed a basket of delicious fruits near a tree trunk and told them: "The first child to reach the tree will get the basket."

When he gave them the start signal, he was surprised that they walked together, holding hands until they reached the tree and shared the fruit! He asked them why, when any one of them could have had the basket all to themselves!

They answered with astonishment: "Ubuntu"...that is, how can one of us be happy while the rest are miserable?

"Ubuntu" in their language means: "I am because we are".

That tribe knows the secret of happiness that has been lost in societies that consider themselves "civilized societies" . . .

Some personal testimony.

COP26 = bedraggled, wet and cold. Incredibly slow walk through central Glasgow. Strange way to spend a Saturday in November. Friends from all over the country and beyond praying (in the face of experience) for justice in a world of injustice. Has the message reached the ordinary punter? Memories of the Jubilee 2000 march in Edinburgh, also striving to help, that time through debt relief, the Global south. Oh for vision and true leadership. **Robin Davis**

During COP26 I had the privilege of holding down several of the morning Quiet Reflections in the Meeting House. My cycle ride along the Clyde was filled with expectancy. Sat quietly in our meeting room I thought, what a lovely thing to be doing, what a lovely thing to be offering. Sometimes I was there by myself, other times a few would join me, each taking what they needed. And quickly the wish settled in my heart that after COP, Glasgow Quakers would continue to hold morning Quiet Reflections. It would be our gift to ourselves and to the workers and commuters who throng around. A regular, welcoming quiet space for all in busy, confusing and exciting times. **Zem Moffat**

It was great to see the Meeting House looking smarter and buzzing with activity offering a welcome space for our visitors from all over the UK and beyond to attend special meetings and meet together socially. Much appreciated the efforts to provide tea and cake giving opportunity for Friends to meet. Quite a few reunions when friends met up with folk they may not have seen for a long time.

It was a great outreach opportunity for Quakers in Glasgow and for the wider society of Friends showing our concern for the future of our planet and making our facility available.

I attach the info from eco congregations Scotland which give an outline of the churches concern for climate change and the activities planned for the future.

I hope we can include Advices and Queries 41 and 42 **Liz Anderton**



Photo:Murdo MacLeod/The Guardian

This ark has appeared on a hilltop next to the road just before you descend to Tighnabruaich. To get an idea of its scale, see the man at the stern. (Arran is in the background, in the distance on the right.) It was put up by the local chapter of Extinction Rebellion to provide food for thought about climate change.



One of my friends Mina helping with the painting of the mural outside the Scottish Opera production studios on Edington Street.

The artist overseeing this project was Gustavo Chavez Pavon. He is internationally known for creating visionary murals with communities around the world.

Local people were able to exchange their thoughts on Climate Change and express these thoughts through art. **Mary Kennedy**

When I was young there were 3 Billion people on the Earth, now there are 11 Billion, says a 70 years old. True or false?

From Tayside Quaker Climate Change is CoP26 enough?

Putting justice and community resilience at the heart of our climate response.

An interactive event hosted by QCEA with the Northern Friends Peace Board. At this event we hope to offer approaches to bridge the gap between policy and actions in communities and share some newly-gathered global stories of climate action and resilience in communities affected by the climate crisis. Additionally, we will draw out the outcomes from COP26 in relation to climate and peace and reflect together, create, support, and promote actions that can make a difference.

Saturday 29 January 2022 by Zoom video conferencing, 10 am - 11:30 BST.

Please register using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/4f7h6te8>

In the case of any questions, please email Saskia at saskia.basa@qcea.org.

The Loving Earth Project

Zem Moffat

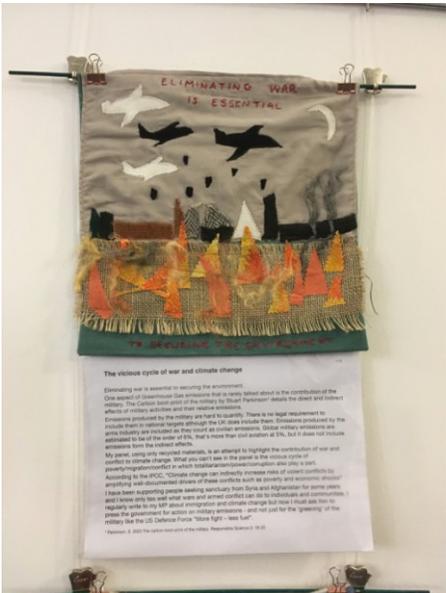
During COP26 I had the pleasure of attending several of the Quiet Reflections at Glasgow Meeting House. One morning I was by myself and took the time to look at several dozen hand sewn panels from the Loving Earth project displayed along our walls.

The Loving Earth project has brought together crafters, creating hundreds of unique panels on climate change. Using found threads and materials, it is clear that everyone involved was reflecting deeply on what they can do. their fears and hopes.

But it is not only the concerns, efforts and individual voices that are powerful and poignant to see, it is the exhibition’s collective nature.

I visited another collection of the panels hosted by the Gorbals Parish Church and had a wonderful conversation with the co-ordinator there. She said that the most remarkable thing for her was the seemingly random visitors who came. Every interaction sparking off little conversations and new threads; and each of these threads bolstering and illuminating the panels, joining them together in new, unexpected and beautiful ways. I left her sewing her own panel with another church member.

The Loving Earth Project is a real community builder. You can find out more about the project here: <https://lovingearth-project.uk>



The Boy on the Beach

Boy on the beach,
So far out of reach.
The wars in the land laid the boy on the sand.
“Ref-you-gee !” say the Powers that Be,
“We’ll stop them from coming and crossing the sea.
The land is the land, and the sand is the sand.”
“We’ll decorate flat,
And that will be that”.
No funeral grand, for the boy on the sand.
“We’ve paid for your care!”
Said those who don’t care.
The seagulls no longer play on the sand.
“Give them bread and some games,
That’ll silence their pains.”
Said Nero while playing his games on the land.
“What’s all the fuss?”
Said the lying Red Bus.
When the Greek lifted boy from that cursed
wet sand.
Rock of Ages created that sand.
The Light has revealed truth in the land.
“How are you my friend? let me give you my
hand.”
Boy on the beach,
So far out of reach,
The wars in the land laid the boy on the sand

W.J.Bingham



Ralph Waldo Emerson

He said, “ Write it on your hearts that every day is the best day in the year. He is rich who owns the day, and no one owns the day who allows it to be invaded with fret and anxiety. Finish every day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities, no doubt crept in. Forget them as soon as you can; tomorrow is a new day, begin it well and serenely, with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense. This new day is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the yesterdays.”

Glasgow Meeting Children and Young People's Appeal Christmas 2021: Money for Madagascar

This Christmas, children and young people from Glasgow Meeting have nominated Money for Madagascar's Education for Life programme to receive the funds raised from the Christmas and New Year collections. Money for Madagascar (MfM) was established by 2 members of Swansea Meeting, Theresa Haine and Barbara Prys-Williams, in the 1980's - when they heard about the famine and increasing poverty affecting the island's communities. They had both spent time in Madagascar as Quaker volunteers in the 1960s – and wanted to take action to assist the Malagasy people to take charge of their own destiny.

Theresa has shared with us some of her experiences as a Quaker Overseas Volunteer (QOVS):

Barbara and I both went to Madagascar as Quaker volunteers, both of us as teachers of English though I found myself teaching almost every subject on the curriculum before I left! Barbara spent a year there three years before me. She worked in a Friends School in Arivonimamo (about 20 miles west of the capital) where I also taught part-time for a couple of years. I went in 1967, originally for one year but loved it and persuaded Friends to sponsor me for a further three years. I taught in a village called Imerintsiatosika (pronounce it if you can!) which was also a Friends school but very poor. The teachers were putting on plays to raise funds for their own salaries when I first arrived. The wonderful woman Pastor had wanted to extend the school to secondary level and had raised enough money from the locals, by having a third collection in church every Sunday for years, to erect a new building to house the secondary classes. You should have seen the state of the building when I arrived – it was little more than a shell, with no proper access to the upper floor, just a very rickety and positively dangerous wooden staircase inside. There were plans to build some solid steps up to the balcony which ran along one side of the building but no money to do it. I went begging to a group of Ambassadors wives who did charitable work in the capital and managed to persuade them to fund the steps for us but had to exercise a lot of diplomacy myself in explaining why the builder "wouldn't" submit a proper estimate – he was a perfectly competent builder but turned out to be illiterate!

The building was more or less in the state that the original builders had left it so I organised a cleaning day when the pupils turned up armed with coconut shells and candle grease and scoured and polished the floors and other woodwork. We had a go at cleaning the windows but the glass was so thin that we broke one in

the process. The pupils were amazed to see me and the other teachers also cleaning – teachers in Madagascar just weren't expected to do things like that! We transformed the place and what really delighted me was that the pupils in one class each contributed a few pence, enough to buy some material from which they made curtains for their classroom windows!

I decided, before I went to Madagascar that I wouldn't write home to beg for funds because I thought (correctly) that there were plenty of wealthy people in Madagascar who should contribute to the running costs of their own mission schools. Unfortunately they didn't so I got my pupils, as part of their English lessons, to write and illustrate some of their Malagasy folk tales. I made these up into a booklet which I copied and sold when I was home on leave in the UK. I made enough money to buy art materials and some French/English dictionaries – there were none at the school even though the language of instruction at that time was French. Donations from friends and family enabled me to buy chairs for the teachers and to put a much-needed door between two classrooms.

We had a headteacher who was very negligent of his duties and one fateful day he disappeared with all the school fees. The law said that a headteacher had to live in the area, had to be over 25 and had to have passed the baccalaureate. Unfortunately I was the only person who they thought fulfilled all those criteria so, very unwillingly, I agreed to be the titular head of the school for two years. In fact I hadn't passed the baccalaureate. I hadn't even passed A-level but fortunately I had an O-level certificate with "Oxford Delegacy of Examinations" at the head of it and below it an impressive list of subjects. I presented this to the Ministry of Education and they accepted it!

Money was incredibly tight and the fees did not even cover the salaries so I arranged that the teachers would look after my classes for one day a week while I taught at Arivonimamo and I put my earnings from that into the salary pot. We decided to raise further funds by having an open day with dancing displays and lots of crafts made by the children and their parents on sale. However, it wasn't as easy as I had imagined. Madagascar had been a French colony for 60 years and had inherited all the French bureaucracy and had added a bit of their own. To get permission to hold a fête in a little village school we had to have the written permission of the Mayor, the Chef de Canton, the Sous-Préfet, the Préfet (who lived about 30 miles away) and the Chef de Province who was the Malagasy equivalent of the Minister for Wales and was based in the capital!! It started with the local Mayor, who was only semi-literate, signing in the wrong place so we had to go back to the beginning and prepare another permission sheet. We eventually

got all the necessary signatures but that was the last time that I suggested having a fête!

There was no sport of any sort on the curriculum and they couldn't afford to buy any equipment so the pupils suggested that we should make a volley-ball net ourselves. The process was as follows: buy a large amount of sisal rope very cheaply in the market; unravel the rope and re-spin it to an appropriate thickness; tie the top and bottom ropes to nails on the opposite end walls of the "hall" on the ground floor and then weave the net in between these ropes, knotting it as we progressed. It took several weeks to complete. The posts were the trunks of young trees. My grandmother sent money to buy a ball and the inaugural match was watched by a large number of parents and friends.

One evening there was a hammering on my door, "Mademoiselle, come quickly!" I went, with the teacher and the Pastor who had called me, to a house across the road where they said there was a girl pupil with a boy in her room. The girl put on a show of innocence but the teacher went in and drew back a curtain and there was the boy. They wanted to expel the girl immediately but I insisted that, if they expelled one they must also expel the other. As far as I remember neither was expelled.

On another occasion the teacher of the top class fell in love with one of his pupils (who was 19 years old) and wanted to marry her but her parents wouldn't hear of it because he was from a coastal tribe and she was high-class Merina from the central highlands. They eloped, got married and eventually had a baby, whereupon all was forgiven and they returned happily to the village, though he was not allowed to teach again in the school.

I could tell many more stories of those four years teaching in Madagascar but won't. I was, and still am, very grateful to Friends who set up such a good system of volunteers. In contrast to the UNA volunteers who were very well paid and had very little contact with the Malagasy outside school, we were paid at the same rate as the Malagasy teachers so we were welcomed into Malagasy society with open arms. I made friends then that in some cases I still have today. Of course some have died but I am in touch with their children and am considered as a member of the family of at least two of those with whom I used to teach. It is a very precious thing to have international connections such as these. Until COVID happened I visited Madagascar every two years. I have very provisional plans to visit again in September 2022 but will wait to see what the virus is doing before I book anything....

Money for Madagascar – Education for Life

The Education for Life programme is founded on the knowledge that access to a decent education is vital if Madagascar is to make the journey from poverty to prosperity. [<https://moneyformadagascar.org/our-partners/education-for-life/>] How does Education for Life work? Where needed, participating schools receive support to strengthen their basic amenities such as classrooms, latrines and access to clean water. Then, the following integrated programme of activities is delivered to strengthen health and learning of all at the school:

- Teachers are trained in basic pedagogic methods;
- A school resource library is established in each school –including text books and teaching aids;
- A kitchen garden is established in each school to provide nutritious food for new school canteens;
- A canteen is established in each school offering nutritious food to all pupils;
- Students, parents & teachers are trained in improved organic food production as a long-term investment in nutrition and a potential source of increased income;
- Worm composting units are established in each school to enhance soil quality and provide a means of generating school income;
- Parents are provided with training opportunities to help them face the challenge of meeting school costs;
- Improved sanitation facilities and training in good hygiene practices are provided to avoid absence due to gastrointestinal illness.
- Where appropriate, solar kits provide lighting and audio-visual learning facilities.

The programme is run by MfM in partnership with school staff, parents and students, with the full support of local and regional education authorities and other agencies. Currently there are plans to extend the parental literacy part of the programme, which will include advice and help in small business start-ups. For example, the pilot project has shown that if parents plant a mini-orchard of fruit trees when their child is in primary school, the sale of fruit will fund the school fees for their child in secondary school. Currently, only a third of Malagasy children go on to secondary education. More information can be found on Money for Madagascar's website: <https://moneyformadagascar.org>

Recently, three Malagasy delegates attending COP26 were hosted by Neil and Margery McKechnie from Glasgow Meeting. During their stay in Glasgow Tse, Evah and Anja moved many of us with descriptions of life in a country badly affected by climate change, but also with their stories of grass roots action improving and even saving lives. These stories inspired the children to support this work.

We now hope to sustain and develop our links with the Malagasy community, and to learn more about Money for Madagascar's innovative work as we continue to explore climate action and climate justice in our children and young people's groups. Focussing on the impact of climate change and the lack of rainfall in Madagascar for four years led us to realise that, had this been our experience in Scotland, our youngest children would have no concept of rain. Working together as a community and strengthening our connections with our Malagasy friends will help us to increase our knowledge and to shape our own actions for climate justice. Until February 2022, all donations to the Education for Life Programme will be trebled. As WSQN prepares to go to press, we have already raised £270 plus £62.50 in Gift Aid. When trebled this is nearly £1000. If you would like to help our children and young people to support this wonderful work by contributing to our Children and Young People's Appeal, here is the link:

https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Mary-Troup-Glasgow-Quaker-Meeting-Children-s-Appeal?utm_source=sms&utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=Mary-Troup-Glasgow-Quaker-Meeting-Children-s-Appeal&utm_campaign=pfp-sms&utm_term=e46275c2b0894239843ab89216a3a0cc

“Years ago, anthropologist Margaret Mead was asked by a student what she thought to be the first sign of civilization in a culture.

The student expected Mead to talk about fishhooks, clay pots or millstones. But no. Mead said that the first sign of civilization in an ancient culture was a thighbone that had been broken and then healed. In the animal kingdom Mead explained, if you break your leg, you die. You cannot run from danger, get to the river to drink or hunt for food. You are meat for prowling beasts. No animal survives a broken leg long enough for the bone to heal.

A broken femur that has healed is evidence that someone has taken time to stay with the one who fell, has bound the wound, has carried the person to safety and has tended the person through recovery. Helping someone else through difficulty is where civilization starts, Mead said.

We are at our best when we serve others.”

BOOK REVIEW: Living presence, A Sufi Way to Mindfulness & the Essential Self, Kabir Helminski, 1992 Tarcher/Perigee

This book was first reviewed in The Friend by Angela Greenwood. Here is an extract some may find of use.

‘When a conscious presence has been awakened, giving us the ability to direct a refined attention, we are more able to open to the knowledge of the heart. The heart, as Sufis and others call it, is the totality of the mind's faculties, both sub- and supra-conscious.

‘These faculties work beyond the curtain of our conscious awareness. They function erratically, partially, and unconsciously in most of us, because the human heart is fragmented and in conflict.

‘If, however, the subconscious mind functions in harmony with the Divine Unknown, the Creative Power, life becomes filled with new meaning that flows into conscious awareness. Whereas awareness was occupied with more superficial layers of mind activity, particularly our ego's thoughts and desires, now it is possible to listen within more constantly. Through this listening, mind and heart, ego and subconscious can be integrated. Cosmic energy is being reflected by the subconscious faculties of the mind, which are able to reflect the new, the creative, the unexpected, and the unique.

‘To purify and harmonise our conscious, and subconscious faculties, to make the heart pure around a single centre, or master desire, and to patiently awaken those faculties that have gone to sleep or atrophied – this is the work of the presence.

‘One day the heart may reach such contact with its own source through merging directly with the Creative Power and knowing the One behind multiplicity that it may make a home in unity. Human beings are destined to this possibility more and more. The result is the complete human being, the drop that becomes the sea. It is not difficult to achieve this end, because we are made for it.’

**You cast us like sunshine upon the earth.
And our light, passing through the body
As if it were an open window to our Source,
Returns, purified to you. – Rumi**

‘In the united stillness of a truly ‘gathered’ meeting there is a power known only by experience, and mysterious even when most familiar. QF&P 2.39

Westerly Friends Gathering

Crianlarich Youth Hostel 11 – 13 March

With a certain amount of optimism and faith, Friends in the west are planning the now-traditional gathering at Crianlarich Youth Hostel in March. The event is principally for Friends and attenders from the smaller and more remote Meetings, but there may well be space for others to join us too (and see below about the online option) .

The theme this year is:

Prophecy and Agency in an Era of Change:

*Exploring our actions to mitigate the effects of climate change.
How we as Quakers are responding to humanity's worsening assaults
on the natural world.*

We will share our thoughts and experience in the introductory session on the Friday evening. On Saturday morning Alastair MacIntosh, Glasgow Meeting, will guide us through his Pilgrimage for Life and then be part of the afternoon's discussion. Any Friends unable to join us in person can join as Saturday participants online, via Zoom, for the pilgrimage and discussion if they wish.

If you are interested, either in attending in person or by Zoom, please email bron.currie@gmail.com for more information and a booking form.

The Children's session will be with Dr Zeus with Gus Smith.

2pm Choice of activities: walk, creative, further discussion exploring prophecy and agency with Alastair McIntosh.

For the evening ceilidh bring along anything you want to share; a story, a song, a poem, a sketch, a dance



News from Local Meetings

Dundee

Friends in Dundee have been pleased to hold a small exhibition of fabric panels as part of the Loving Earth Project. In the run up to CoP26 the Project posed the question, "who or what do you love that is in danger from environmental breakdown". Friends were invited to explore this and other questions around climate change creatively and make small fabric panels (30cms by 30cms) illustrating their answers and to add a few words about their response. Work has been underway since the spring, sometimes in groups (with or without Zoom) and sometimes as individuals, with the intention that the completed panels would be exhibited in Glasgow in time for CoP26. The idea clearly caught the imagination as more than 2000 panels were produced, many of which are in Glasgow , and others are going round Scotland as travelling exhibitions.



Argyll Meeting Beware!

Mull & Iona Learning together

Mull and Iona Meeting felt it would be good for us to do more than worship together. Many of us found that with the onset of zoom our worshipping community was much more together and our energies weren't being taken up by getting to and arranging our meetings. Our new found regular meeting for worship was enriching us as a community and we were keen to do more.

We had heard that Michael Hutchinson had written a study guide relating to the advices and queries and we felt that this fitted in nicely with the yearly meeting agenda of revising our book of discipline.

Mull and Iona Meeting is much broader in many ways than it has been in the past and our community extends to Islay, Argyll and Arran (and Friends further afield) Friends and we were excited that friends from these areas joined us on our approximately fortnightly study sessions.

We began as very good students, we had two facilitators, they prepared themselves and us well, and we set out to follow Michael's plan, however we soon became less good students, and started doing it our own way. We found focusing on the BYM A&Qs more helpful and relevant, we were fascinated by some other YMs A&Qs (or equivalents) but found them too much of a distraction. We moved on from worship sharing to sharing in a more circular fashion, because some of us have loads to say and we wanted to make sure that all had the opportunity to share.

We ended up focusing on one or two paragraphs from the wee red book each session, and it has been great, at times challenging, frustrating, deeply gathered and deeply diverse. Sometimes we have critiqued our A&Qs, at times felt that it needed review as it was outdated, and at times had universal agreement and accord.

Each session began with reading the epistle to 'the brethren in the north' issued by a meeting of elders at Balby 1656, which served as a valuable foundation and spoke directly to many of us from a different time.

We are now approaching the end of 42 sections after nearly 18 months of gathering together (we took the summer months off as so many of us were distracted by the daylight!). We are on the lookout for our next topic.

WE come towards the end of this process, not necessarily more learned but more gathered, more listening and more spiritually connected, and more understanding of one another.

I'm really excited for the next one, whatever the topic! **Rob Claxton-Ingham,**

Young Friends Wednesday Night Epilogue - Wednesday 29th December 2021

A regular, fortnightly, epilogue (shorter evening/end of day worship) for anyone aged teen to 35ish.

Visitors and newcomers of this age group are very welcome!

19:30 - 20:15 - Worship and Notices

20:15 until late - Space for community and chat

For more info: leilanirabemananjara@gmail.com

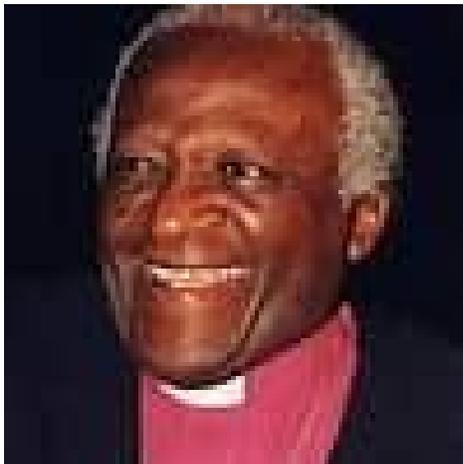
There has been a request for a Quaker Bible Study on the Gospel of John. If you are interested contact margaret.roy@btinternet.com

SUE RAMAGE

We were sad to note the death of Sue Ramage on 30 November. Sue was formerly a member of Glasgow Meeting but in later years was not able to attend and joined Westerton Parish Church in Bearsden.

The funeral was held on Wednesday 15 December at Westerton Parish Church. Two Friends attended in person and others followed the streamed service.

Sue's son Magnus gave a moving tribute to his mother, including her extensive involvement in peace and justice work.



Desmond Tutu 7/10/1931 - 26/12/2021

Winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace 1983, Bishop of Johannesburg 1985-86, Archbishop of Cape Town 1986 – 96, chair of Truth and Reconciliation Commission, known locally as 'the Arch'.

Books include *The Book of Forgiving* and *The Rainbow People of God*. He was the one who coined the term 'rainbow people' for South Africans.

"Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness."

John Dick

I should make it known to any Friends of Glasgow meeting who remember me, that my beloved husband died suddenly on 18th October after a fall.

John and I were married on 15th July 1966 at Friends Meeting House Newton Terrace. We met when Unitarians and Quakers joined in friendship to talk, and the first meeting was held at the Unitarian manse when Alan Kirby was minister. We have three children, Alan, Caroline and Andrew, two grandchildren, Sofia and Luca and an Italian son-in-law Francesco.

John had a full diary for many years. He was working on a paper about The Scots Flute which he hoped to present to Edinburgh University School of Music, where he has a collection of historical instruments.

A love of growing salads, herbs and green vegetables in our garden is what took up a lot of enjoyable time for John, who believed in growing organically and with a passion for recycling and reusing!

We both derived a lot of pleasure driving each Thursday from Bute to our rehearsals with the Glasgow Senior Citizens Orchestra, where we played in the viola section and at concerts throughout Glasgow. Over many years and among the best group of musicians, we have made many friends. Two days before John fell, it was his birthday on October 14th and the orchestra played Happy Birthday! When Bob Nelson the conductor, spoke a lovely message John gave a bow!

I miss my beautiful husband every minute of every day and we are all supporting each other. My loving family are caring for me and friends in Rothesay are wonderful.

Judith L Dick (formally by deed poll Boggis) by birth Riley.

Myra MacGregor

Our Friend Myra died early in October. I am sorry I didn't know her better when she was here. I have learned that she was a native of mid-Argyll and that her career was as a very well-respected social worker. When she came to our meeting she was already retired. I do remember her abundant strikingly red hair.

She joined the Society early in 2011 and served for a few years on the Northern Friends Peace Board. Illness prevented her from leaving her home in the last several years.

She had requested a Quaker funeral, which took place on 26 October. Three Quakers were present. There her son was ably supported by several of his friends and there were also some cousins and other old friends of Myra's. The mourners "got" the idea of coming forward to minister, and it was a moving ceremony. It was excellent Quaker outreach, I think.

Jane Mitchell, Argyll

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

15th January 2022	Area Meeting	11:30 am – 4 pm BY ZOOM note change
7 th March	Area Meeting	by video/telephone (7-9 pm).
9 th April	Area Meeting	11:30 am – 4 pm
6 th June	Area Meeting	by video/telephone (7-9 pm).
20 th August	Area Meeting	11:30 am – 4 pm
8 th October	Area Meeting	11:30 am – 4 pm
5 th December	Area Meeting	by video/telephone (7-9 pm).

We confirm the dates for the holding of Area Meeting in 2022 and January 2023, subject to the necessity of holding the meetings by Zoom rather than at these venues. Further to minute 66/10, an incorrect date was given for the August meeting, which is corrected here. Some venues will be announced later.

12 th March	GENERAL MEETING	10.30 am	<i>You need to register beforehand</i>
11 th June	GENERAL MEETING	10.30 am	
10 th September	GENERAL MEETING	10.30 am	
12 th November	GENERAL MEETING	10.30 am	



Hold in the Light

Helen Sutherland out of hospital and currently in a care home waiting to move into her permanent new home in Bannockburn.

Paul Burton with health issues.

All Friends feeling the stress and loneliness of these times.

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The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of individuals, They do not necessarily present the views of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). The deadline for contributions or the next issue of WSQN is 28th February 2022. And, good to see the enthusiasm, but please do not sent in articles over 1000 words

Copy should be send in Word format only to the editor **Margaret Roy.**