



GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

5 June 2010

Inverness

Min. 1 Reading

During Meeting for Worship we heard a reading from *Quaker Faith and Practice 27.08* concerning the message of God speaking through members of other faiths.

Min. 2 Welcome

We welcome 3 attenders to this GM. We also welcome as a visitor Peter Nimmo, Minister of Inverness Old High Church (in whose Hall we meet today).

We will record the total numbers of all present and add them to these minutes.

East Scotland	6
South East Scotland	4
North Scotland	10
West Scotland	<u>5</u>
Total:	25

Min. 3 Reporter

We appoint Mary Latham and Margaret Peacock from West Scotland AM to report this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend*. We ask North Scotland AM to report on the next GM.

Min. 4 New members and deaths

There are no new members since our last meeting.

We record the following death since our last meeting:
Margaret Gladden (W).

Min. 5 Dates and venues for 2011-12

We confirm the following GM dates and venues for 2011-12:

East – 5 March 11 (Montrose)
North – 4 June 11(Aberdeen)
West – 10 Sept 11(Glasgow)
South East – 12/13 Nov 11(Edinburgh)
East – 10 Mar 12 (Perth)

Min. 6 Meeting for Sufferings Report

Margaret Peacock has given a report on the recent work of Meeting for Sufferings.

The two main topics were detention of children and strengthening the spiritual roots in our Meetings and in ourselves. Since that meeting, the new government has made the welcome decision to end the practice of detention of children of asylum seekers.

Trustees are looking for ways of saving energy and money, and they are proposing a vision of what Friends House should be, a beacon for Friends in the centre of London as well as a practical well-equipped space for working and meeting.

Margaret spoke of the difficult role of Meeting for Sufferings reps in being a channel of communication and consultation between local meetings and the central work.

One of our corporate priorities is Sustainability, which is the subject of the next meeting. It is planned that the energy consumption in Friends House be reduced by 30% by 2013.

Margaret invited reflections on our personal efforts to combat global warming.

In discussion, we have been informed of various actions by Meetings and individuals, and have been reminded of the great urgency of the challenge of climate change. We should maintain pressure on the Scottish Government to keep to its carbon targets.

Sustainability involves the way we live our lives, maintaining our rootedness in "The Ground of our Being", and in communicating this through our public witness.

We have been encouraged to monitor the government's commitment to keep the children of asylum seekers out of detention centres.

Min. 7 Britain Yearly Meeting report

Mary Latham has reported on Britain Yearly Meeting held in London on 28-31 May.

The main decision was that in principle journalists would be allowed to attend main sessions in future. The details still have to be worked out.

There were two sessions on "Engagement with the political process", sharing experiences of Friends and Meetings. There was an update on progress since last summer on the decision regarding same-sex marriage.

Sue Buxton spoke of the involvement of younger Friends in the agenda planning process. One session was planned and led entirely by Young Friends. It had been a very moving occasion. Our children and young people can be our guides, for example on sustainability.

Robin Davis told us of the launch of the new book by Geoffrey Carnall on the life of Horace Alexander, Gandhi's translator.

Min. 8 Financial Statement 2009

We have received a report from our Assistant Treasurer, Pamela Brunt. Oversight of the financial affairs of the GM is now the responsibility of GM Trustees, and the financial statement for 2009 has been approved by them.

Total receipts were £22537, expenditure was £24012. Balances have fallen from £12761 to £11287, a drop of £1474. This was a result of planned decisions.

The consolidated statement of receipts and payments is attached to these Minutes (appendix 1).

Min. 9 Companion Training for “Becoming Friends”

Further to Minute 10 of 13 March 2010, we have heard a report from our Administrator that there is little demand for Woodbrooke companion training in Scotland. We agree not to request such a course.

Min. 11 Kindrogan Summer Gathering

We have heard that the number of Friends attending the Kindrogan summer gathering has dropped over the years. It has also become increasingly difficult to find people willing to serve on the organising committee.

We agree with regret to lay down this event after the gathering next weekend. We authorise the Treasurer to close the conference account and transfer the balance to the GM central account.

Min. 12 Horniman Trust

We have heard that the Horniman Trust has become dormant. The value of the fund is less than £10 000 and the annual income is low. The Trustees have concluded that the most appropriate course of action is to lay down the Trust and transfer the funds to Britain Yearly Meeting, in accordance with the provision of the Trust Deed.

Min. 13 Statement on Domestic Abuse

We have received a proposed statement prepared by the Interfaith Group on Domestic Abuse. We are invited to publicly support this statement.

We agree to this. The statement is attached to these Minutes (appendix 2).

Min. 14 Appointments and Representatives

Nominations Function Group have brought forward the following names and we agree to these appointments:

Working Group on same sex marriage June 2010 – May 2013

Phil Lucas (Clerk)

Mark Bitel

Kevin Franz

John Phillips

Helen Steven

ACTS Trustee

Margaret Peacock (instead of being a second rep on Members' Meeting) June 2010 – Mar 2013

GM Trustee (representing West Scotland)

Robin Davis

June 2010 – May 2013

Representative to Church of Scotland Guild 28 Aug 2010

Mary Latham

Representative to Scottish Episcopal Synod 10 - 12 June 2010

Leslie Stevenson

Min. 15 Engagement with other faiths

We have welcomed Isabel Smyth as our speaker. Isabel has long been active in inter-faith relations in Scotland, studying, teaching and taking part in formal dialogue. She has reminded us of the changes in the religious map of Scotland in recent decades, and of the impact made by the presence of the many faith communities alongside the previously dominant Christian culture.

Our language has changed and Isabel has helped us explore what we mean by terms such as 'secular', 'pluralist', 'faiths' and 'beliefs'. Our political life has changed too, seen in our own parliament's expressed commitment to social inclusion and equality. Religious groups themselves have changed, and religious leaders have increasingly committed themselves to openness, to 'making a space for difference'.

There are many kinds and levels of dialogue. Dialogue begins with living together tolerantly and working for common goals. It is promoted in a great range of networks and organisations, both local and national.

Isabel has spoken of her personal faith journey, of how we can 'enter the world of the other and return with new perspectives'. Within each human person there is that of the divine, and in each religion something unique to reveal about God. We also need to confront the darkness in each of our traditions.

We have shared some of the ways in which engaging with people of other faiths has enriched our faith, and spoken of the discomfort as well as the benefits which dialogue can bring.

We thank Isabel for stimulating our thinking and sharing with us what she has learned.

Min. 16 Closing Minute

We record our thanks to North Scotland Friends for being our hosts at this GM, and look forward to meeting again in Edinburgh on 11 September when our speaker will be the new Scottish Churches Parliamentary Officer, Chloe Clemmons.

Robin Waterston
Clerk

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
GENERAL MEETING for SCOTLAND (Scottish Charity Number SC 012281)

Consolidated Receipts and Payments Account for Year Ended 31st December 2009

Totals 2008		General Fund	Conference Account	Totals 2009
£		£	£	£
	GROSS RECEIPTS			
248.43	Interest	8.19	2.66	10.85
7630.00	Grants	7565.00	500.00	8065.00
7800.01	Quotas from MMs	7800.00	0.00	7800.00
213.40	Donations and legacies	203.37	0.00	203.37
9561.27	Trading Receipts	2083.70	3375.00	5458.70
0.00	Other Receipts	0.00	1000.00	1000.00
25453.11	Total Receipts	17660.26	4877.66	22537.92
	GROSS PAYMENTS			
0.00	Bank charges	0.00	0.00	0.00
7059.23	Administration	8262.66	24.00	8286.66
	Scottish Friends Newsletter	3400.00	0.00	3400.00
7461.86	Trading	2419.85	4842.00	7261.85
3625.00	Grants and Subscriptions	3200.00	0.00	3200.00
2259.11	Other payments	1713.54	150.00	1863.54
20405.20	Total Payments	18996.05	5016.00	24012.05
5047.91	GROSS RECEIPTS LESS PAYMENTS	-1335.79	-138.34	-1474.13

Statement prepared by the Inter-Faith Group on Domestic Abuse

It is God's intention for all human beings, male, female, child and adult, to enjoy safety, freedom, dignity and fullness of life. Abuse in the home is a violation of God's wish for us and creates substantial damage in the family, in the community and in society as a whole.

It should be made clear that individuals have the right and the duty to protect themselves and the children from further abuse. It is unrealistic and dangerous to expect individuals affected by violence to live under the same roof as the abuser. The writings of all faiths reflect that women, in particular, need to know that where there is no safety in a marriage there is no sanctity and the marriage vows have been broken by the abuser.

At the centre of any intervention work the safety of those being abused is paramount. At the same time the abusers must be held accountable for their actions. They also need to be guided towards the help they require to develop into people who will not damage those they love.

As Faith Communities, it is important to deal with this complex issue by working together in a multi-agency approach, including the education of young people in the formation of healthy and respectful attitudes towards themselves and others.

The willingness of Faith Communities to deal openly with the issues helps abused people to overcome any feelings of shame and isolation.

It is essential that all those affected by abuse should have the opportunity to enjoy safety, freedom, dignity and fullness of life.