

SESAME

Number 185: February 2014

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Quaker House Brussels – Home of QCEA (see p. 7)

Published by South East Scotland Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Material for the next issue should be sent to the editor Alan Davies at 49a Lockharton Avenue, Edinburgh EH14 1BB, (email: a.davies@ed.ac.uk) at the latest by Tuesday 25 March, for distribution week commencing 6 April. The Editors reserve the right to condense articles. If possible please submit articles by email, sending as an attachment as well as in the body of the email, or on CD-ROM typed in Word TM accompanied with hard copy. Email versions of Sesame are available in PDF and Word TM format. Contact the Editor

South East Scotland Area Meeting

Area Meeting next takes place at 2 pm on Sunday 23 February 2014, at the Open Door in Morningside. All Friends and Attenders are welcome. The meeting room at the Open Door is fully accessible.

The agenda includes the proposed adoption of a **new guidance leaflet on the process of bringing attenders into membership**. Its text, the result of a long process of preparation by Elders and Overseers, is available on the Area Meeting website. If you need a hard copy sent to you in advance of the meeting, please telephone me.

There will also be some **interesting reports**:

- on membership matters (including an update on numbers in our meetings);
- on a conference on theism/nontheism in London;
- on our recent meeting about producing a new *Quaker Faith & Practice*; and
- on Meeting for Sufferings, which agreed to recommend to Yearly Meeting that we should start upon that process.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the Open Door.

Phil Lucas, AM Clerk

An Appeal

Could you help us identify a charity to support next summer?

Edinburgh Central Quaker meeting house serves as a Festival Fringe venue each August. Since we began welcoming audiences to our venue, it has been our practice to support good causes with the proceeds from this enterprise. In 2014, we are asking Friends for suggestions to help us discern which cause we should support this year. Please include a short statement

outlining why your chosen cause should be adopted. We will consider these in making a recommendation to Area Meeting early in 2014. Send your suggestions to John Fitzgerald, convenor of Festival Committee, 36 Danube Street, Edinburgh EH4 1NT; or email john@johnfitzgerald.me.uk.

Visiting Other Local Meetings within our Area Meeting

We are all encouraged, from time to time, to visit other Local Meetings within our Area Meeting, to help build a shared sense of community. As a nudge in this direction, we are suggesting particular Sundays in 2014 when Friends might like to visit each other. The table below details these plans. Even if you cannot go to the Meetings listed, please hold them in the Light and give them your prayerful support.

The first visit is to South Edinburgh on 23 February. Meeting starts at 10:30 am. On the same day that Area Meeting is to be held there, starting at 2 pm.

Local Meeting	Date	Time	Place
South Edinburgh	23 February (AM in pm)	10:30	Open Door, 420 Morningside Rd., Edinburgh
Central Edinburgh	16 March	11:00	7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh
East Lothian	13 April	11:00	East Linton Community Hall, 73 High Street
Kelso	18 May	10:30	Abbey Row, Kelso
Tweeddale	8 June	10:30	Tweedbridge Court, Margaret Blackwood House, Dukehaugh, Peebles
Barony Street	22 June	7 pm	33 Barony Street, Edinburgh
Portobello/Musselburgh	13 July	10:30	CHANGES, 108 Market Street, Musselburgh
Polmont	31 August	10:45	Greenpark Community Centre
Central Fife	28 September	10:30	Hunter Halls, Kirk Wynd, Kirkcaldy (opposite old Kirk)
Penicuik	5 October	11:00	Valleyfield House, 17 High Street (bring & share lunch)

All are warmly welcome!

Marilyn Higgins & Mary Woodward
Co-clerks of Area Meeting Elders

What future do Quakers want for Scotland?

At Area Meeting on 11 January 2013, we considered in five groups our answers to this question:

In the light of Quaker values and testimony, what are the most significant changes we would like to see during the next twenty years in our national life and affairs (whether or not Scotland continues to be part of the UK)?

Here is a synthesis of the responses made by the groups.

❖ A more truthful and open society

In which difficult truths are not hidden, any misuse of power is exposed, policy is openly based on evidence, all questions can be raised, responsibility is accepted, the media are held to account, there is more acceptance of the human condition and less blame, a society open to the world (asylum, immigrants, Europe).

❖ A more equal society

Where the gap between the haves and the have-nots is greatly reduced, there is a just system of ownership and control of land and property, a return to public ownership, everyone is helped to achieve their full potential through a just employment and social policy, where health and social care are based on quality of life, there is tolerance of difference and respect for all, recognition that 'we're all the bairns o' Eve'.

❖ A society committed to peace and peace-building

Participating in international mediation, leaving military alliances (e.g. NATO) and any dependence for 'defence' on weapons of mass destruction, committed to more co-operation and less competition, a reformed and fairer justice and prison system, a society at peace with itself.

❖ A society treading more lightly on the Earth

Producing more energy from marine resources, encouraging and supporting pedestrians and cycling, being content to live less ex-

travagantly and more simply and sustainably, much reduced dependence on fossil fuels and plastics.

[It struck me, as I compiled it from the groups' flip chart responses, that this summary of the sort of society we want to live in may be useful to us as we discuss Scotland's future with others, including politicians, during the coming months. P.L.]

Later, during the lunch break, participants were invited to write on graffiti boards their responses to this second question: *What questions do we Quakers need to have answered before we vote in September's referendum?*

The questions recorded (with some added comments) were as follows:

1. Would Scotland be financially viable on its own?
Why not? Denmark manages!
Financial viability I see in the context of a greater European setting that includes many new states - Baltic etc
2. In practical terms will it be possible to get rid of Trident?
Why not? It's useless
3. Future relationship with Europe? NATO?
4. How to counter the fear of change? (living adventurously)
5. How can we encourage people to trust their own feelings and leadings in Scotland for greater equality, social justice etc?
6. Can we really look after everyone in an independent Scotland?
7. Are we going to desert our Friends in the north of England?
8. We need a better exploration of a federal solution ...
9. Is a nationalistic approach a compassionate approach?
I want to stay in Europe and respect the European convention

Science and the Arms Trade

"We totally oppose all wars, all preparations for war, all use of weapons and coercion by force ..." Yearly Meeting of Aotearoa/New Zealand, 1987, *Quaker Faith & Practice*, 24.10

"The arms trade is the modern slave trade" Desmond Tutu

Following a long Quaker tradition, a significant number of today's Friends worldwide have a deep interest in the sciences of one kind or another. The Edinburgh International Science Festival has attracted a goodly number over its 25-year history. However, until recently, only a few will have been close to what is involved in resourcing the events or in querying the nature and extent of sponsorship.

A number of globally operating corporations are listed, including Exxon and Total (the latter now investing strongly in "fracking" exploration in England and Wales); also extractives giant Rio Tinto, and EDF Energy. Perhaps of greatest concern to Friends, and to the peace movement generally, is the extent of sponsorship by – and influence on the exhibits of – SELES ES, an arms company that manufactures drones, surveillance and weapons-targeting systems, and has a base in Edinburgh.

Having become aware of this, Edinburgh Campaign Against Arms Trade Group (CAAT), which includes many Friends as active members, has begun a special campaign to raise public awareness that an arms company, linked to a larger firm, Finmeccanica, that has been found guilty of corruption, and whose sole purpose is to produce deadly weapons, is deeply in-volved in a festival that is primarily about advancing knowledge for human well-being. During this campaign, which will continue until the aim of ending arms-trade sponsorship is achieved, Edinburgh CAAT has support from Scientists for Global Responsibility, Amnesty, the Scottish Green Party, Friends of the Earth, People and Planet, and very many individuals. Already there have been significant gains, including a commitment by a member of the Festival Board to promote a rigorous review of the sponsorship criteria, based on an ethical code being introduced for the first time.

However it is important to keep up the momentum. CAAT has produced action cards that highlight the main issues to be brought to the Board's attention. These are highly effective, and anyone who wishes to support the campaign can obtain copies from 7 Victoria Terrace or the Open Door, or by emailing mariannefr@phonecoop.coop.

David Turner

Europe and Economic Justice – Guaranteeing a fair share

Over three days, 15-17 November 2013, QCEA (Quaker Council for European Affairs) and QPSW (Quaker Peace and Social Witness) held a conference on economic justice in Brussels. It was attended by British Friends, largely; Christopher Hall (Kelso Meeting) and David Hume (Tweeddale Meeting) represented South East Scotland Area Meeting.

The conference focused on three themes:

- What are the causes and consequences of the European economic crisis?
- What alternatives are there to austerity?
- How can we, as Quakers, contribute to the building of a just and sustainable economy which meets human needs without destroying the planet?

Business was conducted through plenary and workshop sessions: in the first plenary session, Trevor Evans, Professor of Economics at the Berlin School of Economics, and a member of the coordinating committee of the European Economists for an Alternative Economic Policy in Europe, looked at the first of these themes.

In the second plenary, Judith Kirton-Darling, Confederal Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation and a member of Brussels Quaker Meeting, posed and considered the question 'How can we (Quakers) contribute to the building of a just and sustainable economy which meets human needs without destroying the planet?'

Ten workshop sessions covered a wide range of issues and perspectives, including 'The problem of European governance and accountability', 'European basic income', 'faith and finance', 'economics and sustainability', and 'cultural activism'.

There was also time for worship and reflection.

The content of the sessions in the conference was wide-ranging, well informed and authoritative. The presentations and our discussions took us through current economic policy and thinking, the economics of the cur-

rent crisis, the impacts of the unrestricted growth of the financial sector and its downfall, the myths which have been spun around these events, and options and action for the future.

The business of the conference and the contributions of Friends were all recorded, and can be found on the QCEA website (<http://www.qcea.org>)

Comments, Conclusions and Other Thoughts

Strong themes were evident in Friends' thinking in Brussels that economics and the management of our economic system are too important to left to politicians and economists. It was felt strongly that we need to place people at the heart of these issues.

There is a need for common cause to be made with other groups and organisations.

Friends at the Brussels conference heard with dismay about negotiations between the United States and European Union for a free trade agreement, which represents one of the biggest threats we have seen in our lifetimes to progress towards our vision of an environmentally sustainable and socially just world across the continents. The deal – known as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) – is being touted as a means to boost trade and create jobs, but is said to have little to do with free trade and everything to do with corporate power. TTIP risks being a partnership of those who seek to prevent and roll back democratically agreed safeguards in areas such as food and chemical safety, agriculture and energy.

It is widely feared that the negotiations will result in a massive weakening of standards and regulations which are for the protection of people and our environment. It was reported that these rules are seen as restrictions on the freedom to trade by the corporations which have to adhere to them. It was concluded that the TTIP will make the achievement of a more equitable and sustainable future even more difficult.

There would be value in Friends being more vocal in articulating their thinking and concerns about this issue and the economic crisis.

There may be victims of the economic crisis who could find support and hope in what Friends think and say on these issues.

Friends should be speaking out more about our core values –

- simplicity
- fairness
- faith in the value of people
- honesty

There is a need to demonstrate alternative actions and solutions in practice – at a human scale.

The recommendations made in the presentations and discussions on ‘Economics as if people and the planet mattered’, promoted by Tweeddale Meeting, and which took place in Peebles, Kelso and Area Meeting in Edinburgh, are consistent with the views and conclusions of the Brussels conference.

David Hume

Chris Hall adds:

Travelling to the QCEA in Brussels with David Hume by Eurostar was an altogether stimulating and highly informative experience. The passage of time has thrown into relief many vivid impressions of my first encounter with a Quaker Conference. Throughout I was aware of the sharp focus and intelligence of the speakers and delegates alike. Most impressive was the dedication and expertise of a pretty small band of representatives in Brussels and the need to raise the profile at home of those at the cutting edge of European affairs.

There was general agreement about the adverse effects of our Government’s austerity measures, and their effect on the most vulnerable in our society. Also of great concern was the serious rise of youth unemployment throughout Europe. This was described as a time bomb affecting a whole generation.

Equally disturbing was the covert nature of discussions involving PPI in which the multi-nationals seek to sue any Government legislation that might reduce their profits (see George Monbiot on this).

Another Appeal, and another . . .

Alison Burnley, of South Edinburgh, accepts the inevitable, and asks for help:

For the past twenty or so years, I have happily driven round Scotland giving talks to guilds and other groups, telling the story of Quakers and Quakerism, using the slides of the Quaker Tapestry to illustrate and lighten the talks. It has given me great pleasure: I have met some lovely people, been well received and enjoyed myself hugely.

However, as I get older, I am finding these forays (especially in the evenings) a lot less pleasurable. I would love to continue, but could do so only if there were a pool of people, possibly with cars, who would be willing to come with me. **Can you assist?** Expenses are paid; and those keen on learning about early Friends would find the experience informative.

There is also a need for more car owners to take part in the Faslane Witness for Peace. At present, only two cars are available for the journey. This means that sometimes there is no transport for those wishing to go from Edinburgh. Our day starts at the Open Door at 8.30 a.m. – with a stop at Helensburgh we arrive at the North Gate of the naval base for 11.00 – and it is well worth the effort.

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH if you are able to help with either of these. The planned dates for meeting for worship at Faslane in 2014 (all Sundays) are:

9 March

12 April (*together with Scottish Churches Against Nuclear Armaments*)

11 May

28 September

9 November

Participants must take waterproof clothing, something to sit on, and something to eat afterwards.

For further details - or to volunteer, of course - contact **Alison Burnley, 13 Palmerston Road, Edinburgh EH9 1TCL, tel. 0131 229 4481.**

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

This year's World Day of Prayer is 7 March, and will be marked at a church near you. The theme, *Streams in the Desert*, has been prepared by Egyptian Christian women.

Alison Burnley

MEMORIAL MEETING FOR AVIS SWARBRICK

A meeting to celebrate Avis's life will be held in Edinburgh Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, EH1 2JL on Friday 14 March at 11.30 a.m., followed by light refreshments.

Contributions for inclusion in a testimony to the grace of God as shown in Avis's life would also be welcomed. Please contact Laurie Naumann (email: the.naumanns@phonecoop.coop), or tel. 0131 225 4825.

Equal Marriage celebration, 12 April 2014, 4:30-6:30 pm

Quakers from across South-East Scotland are invited to a celebration to mark the passing of the historic equality legislation that enables same-sex couples to get married on equal terms to different sex couples, enabling Friends to register and record all marriages in the same way. The celebration reception will be held after Area Meeting on 12 April from 4:30 to 6:30. Guest speakers include Tim Hopkins from The Equality Network. Come and join us for this step forward in our testimony for equality ! Buffet refreshments will be provided. If you are planning to come, please email Mark Bitel at mark@evaluation.u-net.com so that we can cater for the right numbers. This event is held jointly by South East Scotland Area Meeting and the Edinburgh Quaker Gay & Lesbian Fellowship.

Mark Bitel

Margaret Wright gets married

This is our third and final selection of excerpts from a nineteenth century journal found among the papers of our late Friend Victor Webb.

9th of 1st month 1817

Was there such a thing heard of as a Quaker Ball! Reports say that the Clerk's assistant to our preparative meeting danced and that they had a Fidler from Huntingdon.

10th of First Month

Reports had been too flippant with respect to the Fidler from Huntingdon and one of the company says L. certainly danced. Next Preparative Meeting our Queries are to go on the Monthly meeting and to the Yearly. Will the Clerks say Friends avoid vain sports and places of diversion? M.T. and B. Anderson took a friendly cup of tea here and very pleasantly we spent our time. After they had gone I returned, and was favored therein.

4th of 4th mo.

I have been much indisposed. The Physician says it is inflammation on the windpipe and the vessels about the windpipe are tender, but mine is a Catarrh which goes off with the warm weather. I shall be better in warm weather. Oh, I pray unto Providence on behalf of my dear Mother and myself.

29th of 4th mo.

Poor E. Laundry fell into the water since dinner and is deceased.

4th of 5th mo.

Poor Elizabeth Laundry was buried at Huntingdon. The Corpse was brought into the crowded Meeting which was very still. T. Searle appeared in supplication and testimony.

12th of 7th mo.

I have had many sweet favors yet I remain as the dead Bones. Oh that I had power to rise and go forth to meet my dear Savior, yet it was said in our Meeting I change ye O ye daughters of Jerusalem by the Hinds of the field. Then may I wait for him in the way of his coming for he answereth best what is mindful. I am such a poor transgressor that if he should take my venerable Mother it will but be my just punishment.

24th of 8th mo.

J.B. and I have been at variance. Tonight he came and flew at me. In the meeting this evening I resolved that I would not shun him, and if his spirit was so far come down, he should at least have opportunity. Of course I went to see his mother as usual, who seemed very glad to see me, but he did not speak.

Judge Thou between me and J.B.

Eight of 10th mo.

We had an evening Meeting appointed by two American Friends. The meeting sat in solid silence long. At last Hannah Fields arose and spoke of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five were careful and industrious, had oil in their lamps and were ready to go forth to meet the Bridegrooms and sit with them in the wedding chambers.

1st of 11th mo.

I believe that my dear Father died six and twenty years ago this day. What a marvellous change was then wrought in our large family. I was then at Ackworth School which I consider was an improper allotment for me, but as Joseph was sold into Egypt so I have been in Egypt all my life.

25th of 12th mo.

A very favored meeting it was. May the dear remembrance therefore remain with me. J.H. referred most awfully to the verse where Saul committed to slay Agag – Dear Saviour, it is a very serious consideration that notwithstanding my many vows, I am no more obedient to the light made manifest in my own bosom.

1st of 1st mo., 1818

From my early Life I have ben followed by that which is better than myself yet am I revolting against it.

2nd of 1st mo.

To my utter astonishment W[alter] H[arlach] came in the evening and supped with us, taking an affectionate leave [when] he returned to the Inn.

3rd [of First Month]

W.H. breakfasted and dined here, my poor Mother cannot yet feel kindness towards him, but shows great opposition. He desired Providence to bless me, and I know that if the Lord help me not, vain is the help of man.

5th

I am indeed tried to the uttermost. I have no one but Providence that I can confide in. My mother is full of vehemence against W.H. together with the certainty I have no desire to have him, yet I am bound by every tie of gratitude to hear him respectfully while my heart revolts against the bitter anticipation of changing my state.

20th [of Fifth month]

W.H. called in his way to Yearly Meeting. Although Mother had consented to go with me she seems to retreat. W.H. having opposed it. We must leave it to the disposal of Providence - [?He] may appoint, but he can disappoint.

4th of 7th mo

I have given my consent together with Mother's for W.H. to appear at his monthly meeting on the 6th of this month.

5th of 8th mo

I was married at Huntingdon to William Harlach, having previously suffered exceedingly from various causes. Indeed, my faith was weak and my will has been as a mountain in the way, always dreading the suffering consequent in marriage.

What am I? and what is my Father's house? that I am thus kindly dealt with, sweetly affectionate is the dear Partner of my Life.

...

30th of Seventh month, 1827

My dear Martha is five years old at 3 o'clock this afternoon.

18th of 9th month, 1827

My dear Susanna was eight years old just before six o'clock this morning.

31st of Third month, 1828 [*The final entry of the Journal*]

Quarterly Meeting. After Barnard had said 'why halt ye between two opinions if the Lord be God? Serve Him.' I arose and said: 'If I have found favor in thy sight, O King, and if it please the King, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request.'

Prevented and Present

11 o'clock on a misty first-day morning. Listen. A silence seething with small sounds: a heavy breath, a throat cleared, the scrape of a chair. A distant door closing. A sudden thud as a red book slides from a lap. Quiet settles again around the disturbance. The book, not needed after all, lies on the floor.

Where are they? They are in the high-ceilinged room where light enters and leaves through tall windows. They are in the sticky-floored rented space where the plastic seats creak. They sit on benches of solid assurance where Penn once spoke his certainties. In kitchens and annexes there are children. They cut and stick, and make, and listen to stories of then and now. Teenagers, protected from judgement, share their certainties and fears, explore together.

Look, here someone is standing for the first time, quaking. She speaks hesitantly of her god, sits down abruptly, Here, he worries at length about the world. There is a collective sigh. Another says again what is still on her mind, and asks for help. The voices tell of hope and doubt; of love and impotence; of faith and grace and loss; of comfort in pain, and of pain itself. They speak of the earth and life and mystery, of the possibility of peace. I can't hear the words, but that is not important. Most are not spoken aloud. I hear the listening.

And I? Where am I? I am not in the room with the lofty ceiling, or where stains make maps on institutional carpet. I am not in the living-room where a few meet each week to keep the faith, nor in the circle of camp-chairs at harsh barbed gates. I am not with familiar people in the familiar place, its scuffed wood floor, its rough stone walls where one may see faces, or signs.

I am here; solitary and un-alone, in a room in the stone fastness of a small Scottish town, the better to be there, and there, and there, to be present in all their meetings, to hear the voices, to hear the silence, to hear the listening.

Jane Pearn

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 11 January 2014 in Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House

2014/01/01 Worship

During opening worship, extracts from the following passages from *Quaker Faith & Practice*, illustrative of Quaker testimony, were read:

20.18 (John Punshon, 1987); **20.29** (William Penn, 1669); **20.35** (L. Hugh Doncaster, 1976); **29.11** (West Midlands MM conference on the secret state, 1989); **25.11** (Ruth Tod, 1990); **23.08** (Roger Wilson, 1976) and **23.11** (Edward Burrough, 1659).

2014/01/02 Introductions

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

2014/01/03 The future of Scotland (Minutes 2013/10/13 & -/12/04d refer)

Divided into five discussion groups, we have been challenged to answer this question: *In the light of Quaker values and testimony, what are the most significant changes we would like to see during the next 20 years in our national life and affairs (whether or not Scotland continues to be part of the UK)?*

The findings of the five groups will be made available throughout the Area Meeting during the next week or two.

During lunch we have been asked to share with each other the questions we most need to have answered before we vote in September's independence referendum. Those written on the flipcharts will also be circulated.

2014/01/04 Signing of minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of our last meeting, held on 14 December 2013 in this meeting house, have been signed by the clerk and entered in the minute book.

2014/01/05 Matter arising

- a) **Letter to the Roman Catholic Church** (Minutes 2013/09/07, -/10/04 and -/12/04 refer).

We have been offered the following suggested new wording for our letter to the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland:

Dear Philip Tartaglia

You may be aware that Quakers have a commitment to peace dating back to the seventeenth century. Today we are committed to the abolition of Trident and to developing conflict resolution methods which avoid resorting to armed force. In Scotland, we have much appreciated working in the past with Roman Catholic leaders, such as Thomas Winning and Keith O'Brien, who have been inspiring in their outspoken commitment to nuclear disarmament.

We write to express the hope that we can sustain and develop our links with your Justice and Peace Commission and with all Catholics who wish to work for peace in our troubled world.

We agree that this letter be sent on our behalf.

2014/01/06 Economic Justice – report on Brussels conference

Chris Hall (Kelso Meeting) and David Hume (Tweeddale Meeting), who represented us at a conference organised by QCEA and QPSW held in Brussels in November under the heading 'Europe and Economic Justice: Guaranteeing a Fair Share', have reported to us.

The conference addressed three themes:

1. What are the causes and consequences of the European economic crisis?
2. What alternatives are there to austerity? and
3. How can we, as Quakers, contribute to the building of a just and sustainable economy which meets human needs without destroying the planet?

The plenary sessions were addressed by Trevor Evans, Professor of Economics at the Berlin School of Economics and Judith Kirton-Darling, a member of Brussels Quaker Meeting and Confederal Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation. There were ten workshops in a packed agenda.

David concluded that:

1. There are strong themes evident in Friends' thinking that economics and the management of our economic system are too

important to be left to politicians and economists. We need to place people at the heart of these issues.

2. There is common cause to be made with other groups and organisations.
3. It would be valuable if Friends were to articulate their thinking and concerns about the economic crisis more vocally.
4. There may be victims of the economic crisis who could find support and hope in what Friends think and say on these issues.
5. Friends should be speaking out more about our core values –
 - simplicity
 - fairness
 - faith in the value of people
 - honesty
6. There is a need to demonstrate alternative actions and solutions in practice – at a human scale.
7. The recommendations made in the presentations and discussions on 'Economics as if people and the planet mattered', promoted by Tweeddale Meeting, and which took place in Peebles, Kelso and Area Meeting in Edinburgh, are consistent with the views and conclusions of the Brussels conference

Chris was particularly struck by the serious situation young people across Europe are facing as the result of the current economic climate and by the increase in corporate power being secretly given through the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP - a bi-lateral free trade agreement which is being negotiated by the US and the European Union) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement (TPP, which will rewrite global rules on intellectual property enforcement.) We have been reminded that 'the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil' (1 Timothy 6:10).

Further details of the conference inputs and outcomes are available on the QCEA website. The conference gives fresh impetus to the working group on economic justice we established last year (AM Minute 2 of 12 January, 2013).

David and Chris found the conference both stimulating and enjoyable and are grateful they had the opportunity to represent our Area Meeting. We ask them to provide a written report for the next issue of *Sesame*. [See pages 7-9]

2014/01/07 General Meeting parliamentary advocacy proposal

Elizabeth Allen, who convenes our General Meeting's Parliamentary Liaison Function Group, has shared with us the suggestion from that Group and General Meeting Trustees that General Meeting for Scotland should appoint a Parliamentary Advocacy officer.

Elizabeth told us that Quaker advocacy is a spiritual imperative; it is part of our faith in action. Friends House in London has an advocacy team which does excellent work, but its parliamentary advocacy work does not cover advocacy to the Scottish Parliament. To start covering this gap, General Meeting set up its Parliamentary Liaison Function Group, which has already worked on issues of particular interest to Scottish Friends. But to make this work more sustainable and effective we need to appoint an advocacy officer.

The officer's remit would include keeping tabs on Quaker concerns, which arise both locally, nationally and in Europe, and similarly on present and forthcoming issues before the Scottish Parliament. The role would need to be both proactive and reactive. It may be appropriate to do some parts of this work through the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office, but we are aware that the priorities of Quakers and Scottish Churches do not always or necessarily coincide. Where appropriate, the appointed officer would need to work closely with the Yearly Meeting advocacy team but would address specifically Scottish aspects and issues. We recognise that this would be a very demanding role and that the officer will need appropriate nurture and support.

Financially, a part-time appointment might involve at least doubling the annual quota that Area Meetings give to General Meeting. (Our current quota is £3,731.) It is envisaged that the job might be managed as part of the Yearly Meeting advocacy team.

This Area Meeting strongly supports the proposal and is willing to contribute financially, hoping that support from the other Area Meetings in Scotland and satisfactory negotiations with Yearly Meeting Trustees will make our contribution attainable.

2014/01/08 Financial matters

Mark Hutcheson, our treasurer, has updated us on a number of financial matters.

a) Treasurer's team

In addition to Mark, this now includes Henry Thompson, who continues as Assistant Treasurer, Ann Forsyth, who takes care of routine payments and paperwork and Heather Hartman, a chartered accountant, who is paid a total of £4,800 p.a. to handle book-keeping, legal compliance and preparation of annual accounts. Mark is also very grateful for the continuing advice of our previous Treasurers, Caroline Evens and John Phillips.

b) Assets and recent and expected capital expenditure

Our total financial assets are currently about £83,000.

2013 saw major expenditure of about £118,000 (excluding professional fees) on windows and toilets at Edinburgh Meeting House. A generous grant from Edinburgh World Heritage Trust towards the windows work has been received. No further major work is planned on either of our Meeting Houses in the immediate future, but work will be needed at some time on the kitchen, meeting room and managers' flat in Edinburgh (total estimate up to £15,000) and on the windows in Kelso (estimate £10,000).

c) Review of current funding to other organisations

- After a period when we decided to make no donation to **Britain Yearly Meeting funds** because of our capital expenditure on Edinburgh Meeting House, we were able to donate £10,000 at the end of 2013. All earmarked individual donations to BYM are always passed on. We shall need at some point to decide how much to pass on to BYM in 2014.

- The donation requested for **General Meeting for Scotland** in 2014 will be £3,731, the same as the previous year.
- In 2012, we gave **Northern Friends Peace Board** £1,200. In 2013, NFPB requested £8 per member, which would have totalled £2,120. We have not yet made the 2013 donation. Mark seeks our guidance on the level and frequency of our giving to NFPB before proceeding. We agree to give £7.50 per member for 2013 and £8 per member for 2014.
- We have had a request for our Area Meeting's contribution to **Northern Friends Youth Events Trust** (NFYET), who organize the annual Summer Shindig. Last year this was £3.10 per Area Meeting member, totalling £821.50, which Mark paid at the end of the year. NFYET has requested that in future our annual payment be made in June each year. Mark asks whether we wish to give him discretion to pay NFYET annually the sum they request, assuming that any annual increase is reasonably in step with inflation. We agree he should use his discretion in this way.
- The money given to charities from the profits of this year's **Venue 40** activities have been distributed as we agreed in our minute 2013/10/09.
- Mark normally pays **staff salaries** on the 28th of each month, but in December, after some consultation and in the light of standard business practice, he paid staff before Christmas, drawing some comment on Friends' testimony on times and seasons. Mark draws our attention to QFP 27.42 and seeks our guidance for the future. We ask Mark to concur with the spirit of the passage quoted when making future payments.

The suggestion that it is standard good practice to change auditors every few years was raised. Area Meeting Trustees have this in mind and will

be taking appropriate action once our new treasurer has been in post for a year or so.

We thank Mark and all the treasurer's team for their assiduous work on our behalf.

2014/01/09 Funding request for bringing Ramallah students to Summer Shindig

We have received an email from Rosalind Normandale of Hexham Meeting asking if we would be able to assist Tim Crump, also of that Meeting, in his annual project of bringing two students from Ramallah to attend the Summer Shindig, the most costly element of which is the air fares. We ask our Treasurer to make a suitable donation when the costs involved have been clarified.

2014/01/10 University chaplaincy

Sarah Martin and Marilyn Higgins have met to clarify how best we may organise and support our contact with the four universities in our area. They have identified the main roles as

- providing information for student or staff enquirers about Quakers
- providing a first Friendly contact for Friends arriving to study or work at university.

They suggest that as a minimum we should provide one Friend as Universities contact, with the oversight role of ensuring that contact details, times and locations of Meetings in Edinburgh are posted on noticeboards and websites at the four universities plus the Heriot-Watt Campus in Galashiels, and offering support to any Quaker societies or activities. In addition to this appointed Friend (who does not need to be a University staff member), any interested university staff or non-staff Friends may wish to volunteer as contacts for a specific university and offer a wider range of support.

Sarah has told us about the existing Quaker Society in the University of Edinburgh and of the other pastoral and support work she has been doing with Quaker students there. The meetings for learning also involve students from two other universities.

We accept Sarah and Marilyn's suggestion and note Sarah's willingness to continue in the role of Universities Contact and that this role should in principle include appointment as an Area Meeting overseer, as students have requested.

We thank Sarah and Marilyn for the work they have done and for this report, noting in particular the valuable work Sarah has done and is doing.

2014/01/11 Correspondence

Sue Sierra – sojourning status

We have received a letter from Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting asking that we accept Sue Sierra as a sojourner among us. This we have already done (Minute 7c of 30 June 2012) and we ask our clerk to inform the clerk of Central Philadelphia MM accordingly.

2013/12/12 Concluding minute

55 people in total, including seven attenders and one visitor, and representing all nine of our Local Meetings have attended all or part of this Area Meeting, as indicated below:

Central Edinburgh 23	Central Fife 1	East Lothian 7	Kelso 6	Penicuik 1
Polmont 3	Portobello & Musselburgh 2	South Edinburgh 11	Tweeddale 1	

We next meet for a special meeting concerning *Quaker Faith & Practice*, in Edinburgh Meeting House at 2 pm on Saturday 1 February 2014; and then in the Open Door, South Edinburgh on Sunday, 23 February 2014 at 2 pm.

(Signed)
Phil Lucas, clerk

Quaker Meetings for Worship in South East Scotland

Every Sunday

Central Edinburgh: 7 Victoria Terrace 9.30am& 11.00am
South Edinburgh: Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, 10.30am
Polmont: Greenpark Community Centre 1 0.45am
Kelso: Quaker Meeting House, Kelso 10.30am

Every Wednesday

Mid Week Meeting: 7 Victoria Terrace 12.30pm- 1pm

First Sunday in the Month

Penicuik & Peebles Valleyfield House, 17 High St., Penicuik 11.00am

Children welcome, bring and share lunch.

Portobello & Musselburgh: Old Parish Church Hall, Bellfield Street 7.30pm

First Tuesday in the Month

Edinburgh University Common Room, Muslim Prayer Rooms 1pm- 1.30pm

(opposite the Weir Buildings) at Kings Buildings: contact

Sarah Martin 07818050853 or sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk for more details

Second Sunday in the Month

Tweeddale Tweedbridge Court, Margaret Blackwood House,

Dukehaugh, Peebles All welcome but please phone to confirm.

01721 721 050 or 01896 850 389. 10.30am

Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy 10.30am

(in Kirk Wynd opposite the Old Kirk)

East Lothian: East Linton Community Hall 11.00am

Third Tuesday in the Month

Edinburgh University Common Room, Muslim Prayer Rooms 1pm- 1.30pm

Fourth Sunday in the Month

Tweeddale: Tweedbridge Court, Margaret Blackwood House,

Details as Second Sunday above 10.30am

Central Fife Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy as above 10.30am

Portobello & Musselburgh CHANGES Community Health Project

108 Market St, Musselburgh, East Lothian EH21 6QA 10.30am

Barony St Meeting 33 Barony Street, Edinburgh 7.00 pm

Last Sunday in the Month

East Lothian: East Linton Community Hall 11.00am

Distribution of Sesame & Scottish Friends Newsletter

The current practice is to distribute one copy of *Sesame* and the *Scottish Friends Newsletter* to every Member and Attender household. Contributions to the costs of *Sesame* are always warmly welcomed by the Area Meeting Treasurer, Mark Hutcheson. An email version of *Sesame* is more ecological and is free! A large print version is available on request. Published by Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain: South East Scotland Area Meeting, Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL. Scottish Charity No. SC019165