



February 2018

Scottish Friend



Hugh Miller Monument, Cromarty

© Brian Walden



Welcome Friends and a belated Happy New Year. I'm your new editor and am pleased to have been nominated to serve you. With technical help from Brian I managed to complete the first issue. Comments and suggestions would be welcomed.

In Friendship
Sila

Scottish Friend is edited by Sila Collins-Walden of Inverness Meeting. Please send articles as an editable attachment to silartist100@gmail.com or typed or hand-written to 27 Creag Dhubh Terrace, Inverness IV3 8QG to arrive five weeks before GM, i.e. by **12 May 2018**. If you submit images, please ensure that they are about 1Mb in size. Any captions provided with your images should be short!

Scottish Friend will be posted on the GM website and can be emailed to you at the same time as it goes to the printer. If you would like an email copy instead of a paper one, please email scotfriends@gmail.com to let Marion Sharkey know. You are strongly encouraged to do this, in view of escalating postage costs – and you get the photographs in colour as an incentive!

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CONTENTS

GM for Scotland report, Elgin	
Pam Apted.....	4
Just Giving appeal for Bernardo Alhucema.....	7
Conflict and Growth	
Robin Waterston.....	9
Holocaust Memorial Day, Inverness	
Sila Collins-Walden and Jean Thompson.....	12
Christmas Meeting for All-Age Worship	
Jean Thompson and Sila Collins-Walden.....	13
The Highlands Supports Refugees	
Clunie Conochie.....	15
Loneliness and Isolation	
Alison Burnley.....	17
Dates for Meeting for Worship, Faslane Gates.....	18
George Lakey's visit to Glasgow, Part 2	
Alastair McIntosh.....	19
A Highland Quaker Meeting	
Roger H. Quinn.....	22
Dunblane Meeting's Jubilee	
Robin Davis.....	25
Quaker Housing Trust in Scotland	
Barbara Potter.....	27
Calling for GM for Scotland, Edinburgh	
Adwoa Bittle.....	31
A Bunch of Keys	
Alastair Simmons.....	32

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writers and not necessarily the opinions of the Society of Friends in Scotland, Britain or elsewhere.

Report of General Meeting for Scotland, Elgin, 18/11/2017 Pam Apted, Dundee Local Meeting

My own journey to Elgin started early, leaving in the dark from Brechin and boarding the train in Montrose to the clamour of the geese rising from Montrose Basin. Travelling on the train, the early sun shone in a blue sky showing the countryside at its best with views to Bennachie, a familiar sign of 'home' for many locals. My journey was of course short compared to that of many Friends who had travelled long and sometimes complicated journeys from across Scotland, from the Highlands and Islands and even from Wales and London. Taking journeys was perhaps a theme that ran through our meeting, some taken with joy and anticipation and others with fear and uncertainty.



Tim Gee, left, with Clive Potter

Do our meetings bring us joy? We heard of the challenges for Friends in remote and rural areas of Scotland to maintain and sustain their meetings for worship. The logistics of meeting when journeys can be long, involving weather-dependent ferry crossings and single-track roads. We heard of their resourcefulness, creativity, fun and faithfulness, but also of the

real difficulties of sustaining a widely-dispersed community and the burden that can be put on Friends when there are few hands to share the load. Encouraged by a Listening Project, facilitated by Woodbrooke on the Road, Friends had an opportunity to reflect on how they can move forward and look for ways of simplifying the administrative tasks, releasing energy and creating more joy in their meetings. North of Scotland Area Meeting have asked General Meeting Trustees for support with taking this forward.

Tim Gee spoke to us about Sanctuary Meetings. Tim had been reminded of the quotation from George Fox “I saw that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness”. Tim said that he had felt the darkness, when visiting the camps in Calais, but the light, when on his travels across the UK learning of all the positive work that is going on for refugees. Fleeing from homes has been part of Quakers’ own history and Tim has valued the opportunity to look at historical records of Meetings for Sufferings, including those relating to the *Kindertransport*. There are presently a wide range of projects in Scotland and across the UK supporting refugees, but Tim encouraged Meetings to consider becoming Sanctuary Meetings. Sanctuary Meetings often begin with ‘a leap of faith’ but their value is that they



Mairi Campbell-Jack

enable Meetings to work together and give a clear statement to the world of our commitment and vision. Tim considers the main challenges are to change society’s attitude towards refugees and to influence politics, as Britain is becoming an increasingly hostile environment for refugees and migrants. Meetings considering becoming Sanctuary Meetings can access training and on-going support to assist them on their journey.

Mairi Campbell-Jack is our Parliamentary Engagement Officer and we were pleased to hear a report from the Parliamentary Engagement Working Group. The two main focuses for Mairi and the group are addressing militarism in schools and Economic Justice, particularly the idea of a Universal Basic Income. Mairi’s appointment has been

greatly welcomed and good progress continues to be made – exciting times ahead!

My journey home was slightly longer, having missed the train connection, but thinking of the refugees I could not help but be aware of just how fortunate I was to be travelling comfortably to a safe home. The journey allowed time for reflection, it was for me a day of joy, sharing that sense of community, but also a day of challenges; our opening reading on stewardship (Qf&p 15.01) had stayed in my mind, *‘Stewardship involves prayer, and it involves thought and it involves applying what emerges from the two. As individuals our particular talents may lead us to greater emphasis on one of those elements, but they can never be wholly divided within any of us, and as a community we need to be faithful to three: prayer, thought and application’*. □



© Claire Winchester

Just Giving appeal for Bernardo Alhucema

Bernardo came to Glasgow as a refugee and appeared in Glasgow Meeting where he became a well-known and much loved friend, and a member of West Scotland Area Meeting in due course. He organised art workshops for fellow Chilean refugees in Glasgow Meeting House in Newton Terrace. He was never able to get a job in Scotland and when it became possible, he chose to return to Chile. He could not resume his old academic life and settled in a remote rural community where he experienced lengthy droughts, occasional flash floods and regular earthquakes. Over many years he has taken initiatives to help the poverty-stricken communities around him. Most notably, he started a “Friends Badminton Group” to provide a positive experience for young people who would otherwise be liable to fall under the influence of the local drug culture. Over the years this has flourished and has enabled many young people (including more recently some wheelchair users) to build successful lives. A group of Friends in Glasgow Meeting has provided financial support for Bernardo’s work over many years. Some years ago he was able to attend Britain Yearly Meeting and his commitment to Quakers has never lapsed. He is now in his 70s and has been diagnosed with lung cancer. He also has a brain tumour and needs treatment in Santiago. John Phillips, a Friend living in Skye, has set up a Just Giving site to raise money to help Bernardo at this time of need. Whether you knew Bernardo or not, please consider making a donation. The site can be found at https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/bernardo?utm_id=2&utm_term=Xqra6Nbyz. Thank you.

Philip Bryers, Perth.

Update on Bernardo Alhucema

A letter from Philip Bryers, 31 January 2018.

John Phillips has raised £1,570.00 for Bernardo and the larger part of this is being sent to Chile now, as Bernardo's health is declining quite fast. He is keeping the appeal open until 14 March. The link is <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/bernardo> . There's a picture of Bernardo on this site.

I'm not sure when *Scottish Friend* will reach people but as General Meeting is on 10 March there should be time for Friends to see the piece and contribute if they wish to do so.

With thanks for your help.

Best wishes

Philip



Bernardo Alhucema

Conflict and growth

Robin Waterston



Over 40 years ago, Pam and I travelled with our two small children half way round the world. We were going to join a newly-started school in Botswana where I would be the maths teacher. As soon as we arrived, it became clear that the project was in trouble. There was a deep disagreement between the two key people, one Scottish, one Canadian, whose vision and energy had brought the school into being in this newly independent country.

The staff had split into factions. Because I was new, I wasn't aligned with either faction, so I was asked to be a mediator. I had meetings with all the parties involved, some private, some public, some going on late into the night. It was very frustrating, very stressful. Emotions were running very high. Neither side was willing to compromise. The two leaders accused each other of betraying the principles on which the project had been based. At times I felt I was making some progress, but then it would slip back again.

In the end, the attempts to find an agreement failed. The Ministry of Education became involved, and they suspended the operation of the school. Almost all non-local staff had to leave the project. I managed to find other work in Swaziland, we lived there for 3 years, and our family later returned to a different project in Botswana.

That was my first major experience of destructive conflict. I have thought about it a lot in retrospect. What could have been done differently? I now work for Relationships Scotland as a family

mediator, which means that I meet with parents who are separated and finding it difficult to make arrangements for their children. I help them to talk to each other and think about possibilities. The conflicts involved often have elements in common with the problems back in Botswana. The main one is inability or unwillingness by one or both the parties to communicate in a way that can be heard by the other. Positions become rigid, past hurt becomes magnified, and there can arise a fatalistic view that nothing can change, the other person is utterly impervious to reason, and there is no hope. One of my tasks is to try to change this negative dynamic, to encourage respectful listening, and to engender the belief that things can get better, at least as parents working together for their children. And in practice it often does get better. The work is very rewarding.

We all experience disagreements in our personal and working lives. The problems arise when this is coupled with a lack of respect, or anger, or unwillingness to listen. These can tip disagreements into conflict and stress. This is true for our Meetings also. Our local Meeting is a place where we should be able to feel safe, and be a valued member of a functioning and supportive community. But at times, and this is true everywhere, there will be disagreements and difficult issues to be resolved. Most of the time these can be successfully resolved through the use of our disciplines, of careful discernment in meetings for business and by thoughtful problem solving between individuals and groups.

Isaac Penington's wonderful advice (Qfp 10.01) is as valuable now as it was in 1667 *"Our life is love and peace and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand."*

But there are times when division can painfully fracture a meeting, when it seems to be just too difficult to tackle unaided. Some years ago, Quaker Life recognised this and it was decided to create a “Conflict in Meetings” cluster. This consists of a group of Friends from across BYM who meet from time to time to have training, supported by a staff member, and to share experiences of working with conflicts of various kinds. (Confidentiality of individual details is respected.) I have attended several gatherings of this fluid group, and have found the training very worthwhile. Much of it overlaps with the training I received for my family mediation work, but within a Quaker context. Even acknowledging openly that there is a problem can be quite a hard first step. Members of the cluster are available to respond to requests from local or area meetings both to assist with a conflict and to facilitate special meetings, threshing meetings or meetings for clearness. There is some feeling that a “Meeting for Listening” might fill a gap in some situations and Quaker Life are thinking about further suggestions they might offer for this.

I have found the guidance from Mary Lou Leavitt (Qfp 20.71) very valuable regarding how we approach conflict. She asserts that “through conflict handled creatively we can change and grow.” And she outlines three skills which she feels are essential to this. It’s not fair to try to summarise what she says – it’s well worth reading in full. Mary Lou was the organiser of the Quaker Peace Caravan that toured the country in the 1980’s working with local groups and school groups on peace awareness and the principles of non-violence.

Further information about the work of the cluster can be obtained from Oliver Waterhouse oliverw@quaker.org.uk. □

**Holocaust Memorial Day, Town House, Inverness.
Sila Collins-Walden and Jean Thompson Inverness LM**

Each year HMD chooses a different theme. This year the national theme is The Power of Words – learning lessons from the past to create a safer, better future.

The 27th of January is the day for everyone to remember the millions of people murdered in the Holocaust. It also marks the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau which was the largest Nazi death camp. The Inverness event was held on the Thursday evening and was organized by Inverness Interfaith Group. The main speaker was to be Kathleen Hagler, a Holocaust survivor. The Provost of Inverness did an introduction and welcomed everyone. Various faith groups were present including two Friends from Inverness Local Meeting. Children from Cradlehall Primary School came along to listen to the talk.

Kathleen, who is a native of Hungary, was a very small child at the time and lost most of her family in the camps. The horrors of the conditions in the camps were relayed to her by her surviving family. She never knew her father and thought her aunt was her mother. She eventually went to Israel at age 16 and then eventually to Scotland when she was 35. It was very painful for her to read her story out to the audience, Recently, feeling the need to tell her story, she gave an interview to the local newspaper, The Inverness Courier. After she spoke, Kathleen took questions from the audience, including the children. One young boy asked Kathleen if she had any photographs from her past, which she didn't. She has not been back to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

A poem by Robert Burns (it was Burns night) “A Man’s A Man For A’That”, was read by a member of Inverness Interfaith Group. Then a Mourning prayer, Kaddish, traditionally recited in memory of the dead, although it makes no mention of death,

was read out in English and then in Hebrew by two people from the Jewish community. Six candles were arranged on a table, each representing one million of the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust. One of the school-children lit them one by one.

Words can have an impact for good or evil. Propaganda is often used to incite and whip up negative stereotypes through the media, speech, films and newspaper images. Genocide just doesn't happen, it's planned to take advantage of prevailing circumstances. Unfortunately in recent years we have seen genocide take place in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Darfur and we now have the situation in Myanmar.

The Holocaust shook the foundations of society, but it must hold a place in our memory. Hitler used the word "Lügenpresse", lying press, to condemn critics – today we often hear world leaders condemning "Fake News". Have we not learned anything from history? □

**Christmas Meeting for All Age Worship.
Jean Thompson and Sila Collins-Walden Inverness LM**

On Sunday 17th December our local meeting held our second All Age Gathering for a day of worship and entertainment. Friends brought along a variety of musical instruments with which to entertain us, keyboard, clarinet, violin, tin whistle, bohran and accordion. With story telling, poetry and music interspersed with carols and a recording of a popular song from 1978 by Brian and Michael "Match-Stalk Men and Match-Stalk Cats and Dogs" based on the paintings of LS Lowry, along with a very old time favourite "Teddy Bears Picnic". The children present, very talented too, Angus on his accordion and Rona on tin whistle and mother Jacque on clarinet. Julia gave a wonderful rendition of a train journey on her accordion:

Let me take you on a musical journey across the continent...

1. It's all aboard the night train to King's Cross, where we'll change for the Eurostar to Paris arriving at the Gare du Nord. Outside we can listen to the distinctive sounds of the Parisian street musician...Brédif Musette]

2. Now we'll take the overnight train from Paris, the 'Artesia', through to Milan where we'll change at the Milano Centrale Railway Station, for a journey to Naples and the next song... [Santa Lucia]

3. The next leg of our journey takes us back up to Rome to catch the train to Strasbourg where we make our connection to the Transeuropean Express to Moscow... [Katyusha]

4. From Moscow we'll board the Tolstoy Night Train for Helsinki where we'll take a local trail up north to Lapland to finish our journey, appropriately enough, with a Finnish Polka... [Hevosen Polkka]

It was discovered that we have poets, musicians, and storytellers within our midst. These events do help to bring us together in many ways. Who says Quakers are dull?

Of course we mustn't forget the food! As usual we always have a feast, a Quaker feast with delicious food, biscuits, cake and fruit made and provided by Friends. We all had a lovely and enjoyable time that day and will continue to have All Age Worship every year as Friends really did feel it brought us all together. □

The Highlands Supports Refugees Clunie Conochie

The washing machine is birling round, tumble drier relentlessly rolling. My kitchen is in chaos, with piles of clothes on the table and large cardboard boxes on the floor. More items are in the boiler cupboard, drying off and I am counting aloud. I have just this weekend to get everything finished. After Meeting for Worship tomorrow it will be ...back home, pack boxes into the car and head off to Dingwall, 7 miles away

The task? Actually, it's a wonderful task. Six families are about to arrive in Dingwall as part of the Government's Resettled Refugee Scheme, and as a volunteer with The Highlands Supports Refugees (THSR), I have the job of creating a box of clothes for all those over sixteen years of



age. Sizes? No idea, so I put in a mix and hope something works. In a couple of weeks they will all be invited to our "boutique" day when they get to choose from a selection of our best donations so it's not a disaster if I get it wrong.

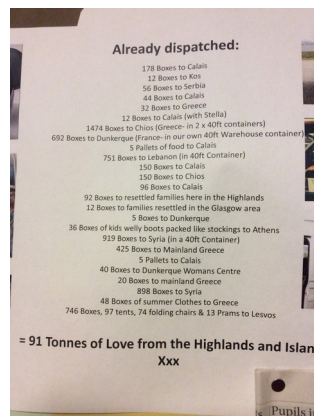
Usually, we create the box of clothes from the donations at the depot, then pass them to a local church to be washed and ironed. Unfortunately, I find out last minute that this is not happening

– plus I have several new boxes to pack! Panic...then I hit on a genius solution! (1) Washing machine only when it is essential. (2) Everything else into the tumble drier for a few minutes on the cool tumble, with tumble drier sheets!

Not something I have ever used before – or will ever use again! – but it works brilliantly! No one is going to be welcomed to Scotland with a damp-smelling box of clothes! Only the best of donations, preferably the new ones, are used. One thing we never have enough of is men's underwear. I have the answer. An Inverness artist and Friend had raised £40 at General Meeting by selling her beautiful cards. I used that money to buy boxers - so a huge thank you to those who bought cards as you actually bought a piece of clothing for a Syrian refugee who arrived in the Highlands in January 2018. It's wonderful how each small action builds the big picture.

There is significant Quaker involvement in THSR. Out of about ten people who are regular shift leaders (we need two to have a shift which is when clothes are sorted and packed and donations are handed in), two of us are Quakers, myself and Clare Mackay from Nairn Meeting. Others from meeting support by raising money or by giving donations of clothes. What may seem a tiny action, truly isn't. In the last two years we have sent out 92 tonnes of thoroughly sorted aid, specifically tailored to the needs of the organisation requesting it.

I feel very grateful to THSR. It allows me to play my tiny part, the bit I can do, in supporting refugees both here and many other countries. I can't stop my country creating refugees through it's military actions. I can help to get a warm winter jacket to someone in a freezing camp in Greece. We are all called to show love in different ways. □



Loneliness and Isolation

Alison Burnley

Some meetings we are asked to attend on behalf of GM can be heavy going and above my head – however the one that I attended at the beginning of October on Loneliness and Isolation was interesting, informative and very clear. It was arranged by Faith in Older People and the Church of Scotland Guild, in collaboration with Action of Churches Together in Scotland. (ACTS)

There was first a presentation from Andrew Macgowan from Inspiring Scotland. He talked about being confident in relationships, in trusting that people can learn new skills, volunteer, and gain abilities which can then lead to training and eventually to jobs which had not been thought possible before. The point was that there were local people developing sustainable community links in their own community - cafes, shops, food banks. The important thing was to believe in the power of the people, not as victims to be saved from outside. The whole purpose was to nurture people to help them to get what they want, and not what people from outside think they need. It was inspiring.

There were then five much shorter talks from five organisations which work with “older people” – the only one I had heard of was Chest, Heart and Stroke. The other four were Alternativity, Silverline, Befriending Networks and Roar Connections for Life.

They all emphasised the importance of finding out what people needed or wanted - none of the “what you need to do, dear, is...”. It was also about having sufficient volunteers to visit, help, have information, keep in touch by telephone, be available to go to places where there is company. We also need to learn to listen, because there are times when people know they want something but are not sure what is available: how to get to places; what to do when you get there; whether it is safe; and, if necessary, confidential.

It was a very interesting day. I have leaflets from all these organisations if anyone is interested. They range from getting

people to keep exercising, to a helpline telephone, and generally getting out and about and keeping fit and making friends. Sometimes this is hard as people don't want to join a group or work in a shed or play bowls, but still want to see people. To encourage some people is the hardest part.

I thank General Meeting for this opportunity to learn more about what is available. □

**Dates for Meeting for Worship for Witness
at the North Gate at Faslane 2018.**

We aim to start at 11.am. Please remember to bring weather-proof clothing and something to sit on and something to eat if you wish to have sustenance before the journey home.

March 25, April 22, May 27, June 24, October 7, November 11
with the Northern Friends Peace Board (NFPB).

There will be a celebratory something on September 15th with
International Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).
Watch for information!

Alison Burnley

George Lakey's visit to Glasgow Meeting - Part 2

Alastair McIntosh

October's Scottish Friend did not have room for the whole of Alastair McIntosh's account of that presentation, so his comments on it were left out. Here they are.

[The Nordics came up with a vision for a fair society and they worked consistently and methodically to realise it, targeting their attention right where the power lay, including the individuals with whom power lay, such as the now-imprisoned Icelandic bankers.]

Quite where that vision first came from he did not get round to explaining. George's style of presentation had us laughing so much, with many funny anecdotes and such a grandfatherly storyteller's style, that our critical faculties were perhaps suspended. After all, once upon a time, the marauding Vikings were hardly paragons of social justice. Was it something in their predominantly Lutheran faith background? Is it something about small nations on the periphery, of which Scotland is also an example? Or something about societies not far removed from their rural roots? We didn't quite get round to asking those questions.

We didn't, because much of the lecture was taken up with George's fascinating account of how a group of Quakers whose organisation he co-founded – Earth Quaker Action – had campaigned on mountaintop removal as a method of extracting coal in the USA. 500 mountains have been blown up by corporations to take the coal out without the need to mine. The result is local environmental devastation in areas such as Appalachia, that are already poor.

I would have appreciated deeper spiritual insight at this point in the discussion. My question to George was how they communicated a Quaker understanding to activists who might not be Quakers. How was the spiritual ground held, so that it didn't become just another form of political activism? He said that the Spirit achieved this. He gave an example of an action

where one young man stilled the whole gathering with his ministry, even to the point where the police officer turned off his chattering radio out of respect.

I would like to have heard much more on that theme. Do the roots of our nonviolence not press us to go more deeply into the spiritual foundation and dynamics of action for a transforming world? As the preamble to the chapter on the peace testimony in Quaker Faith and Practice has it, our testimony's "roots lie in the personal experience of the love and power of Christ which marked the founders of the Quaker movement." Have we fully understood this? George Lakey mentioned "Spirit", but I don't think he spoke at all of God, let alone the non-violent example and teachings of Christ. It may be that such an approach is passé. It may be something to be edited out in the next revision of what was once called our book of discipline, or discipleship – that which we follow. But do we really understand what is found there? Do we understand what it means to follow something that goes beyond the ego domain of human reason? And if we do not, can we, with integrity, claim to be ready to move on from it whether passively, by not speaking of it, or more actively abandoning ship?

As I listened to George, I thought how much we need not just the strategic skills in campaigning that he so aptly addressed. We also need a sustained explicit grounding, a shared practice and literacy, in those "sources eternal" that are of the Spirit.

George said that for him it is not about kindness, it is about "tough love". I get that. But there's also much more that could be said, and needs to be said, about how we do that. Winning a campaign is one thing. Winning over one's erstwhile enemies is quite another, and it is not always as impossible as it might sound. George emphasized that we must campaign, campaign, campaign. I couldn't help feeling that while confrontation is important, it must also be about transformation, and had time permitted I should have loved to have heard more from him about that theme. Such is what can distinguish Quaker activism, or spiritual activism, from the activism that any other group for social justice can do with only a materialistic basis.

I must be careful here. It is not that these things were not implicit in what George said. I just think we live in times when we need to find the courage to turn the inside out, to show how and why the spiritual is crucial. George's lecture was witty and inspirational. Perhaps it is a token of its richness that it raised many questions, some of which were only partly answered and others, perhaps, unanswerable. His presence both in what he emphasized, and what was under-emphasised, widens the window on what it can mean to be a Quaker in today's world. His visit to our Meeting was a blessing and I am thankful to whoever made it possible. □

19.61 *The Truth is one and the same always, and though ages and generations pass away, and one generation goes and another comes, yet the word and power of the spirit of the living God endures for ever, and is the same and never changes.*

Margaret Fell.

Quaker faith & practice

A Highland Quaker Meeting

Roger H Quinn, Inverness Meeting

Inverness Local Meeting first came into being in the time of the Commonwealth when soldiers of Cromwell's troops brought this new form of worship to the town. It was not accepted by the townsfolk, who persecuted Friends to the extent that the Seed lay dormant for around three hundred years.

Some time in the early 1960s Mike Newbury was appointed assistant district valuer and the meeting restarted. By the time I arrived in 1969, Friends were meeting once a month in a variety of venues, in a somewhat nomadic fashion. Thus the venue of the first meeting I attended was moved from a hotel in the town centre to a dilapidated scout hut on the outskirts, where four souls huddled round a table against a large pile of broken chairs! Monthly Meeting was held the following weekend at Rosskeane Old Manse on the northern shore of the Dornoch Firth. This residential gathering was the forerunner of Pluscarden, where our August meeting has been held for most of the last forty-odd years.

With the rebirth of Inverness Meeting the monthly meeting boundary has been redrawn. No longer did the North of Scotland MM stretch all the way down to the Tay. Today the AM is still the largest in BYM, with distances so vast as to be almost incomprehensible to English Friends. But this has the advantage of being connected with Friends many miles apart, who stay in different culture zones; from the Doric of the east coast, through the Gaelic of the Highlands and Western Isles to the historic Viking tradition of the Northern Isles.

In the early days and well into the seventies Aberdeen Meeting supported the fledgling meeting by appointing Friends to drive the hundred and fourteen miles to Inverness. The journey was often made by Ernie and Edna Beyts in their VW campervan. A hazardous trip in wintertime when driving through the snow and ice of Huntly and Keith.

In the early 1970s we were fortunate to take a repairing lease on a Mission Hall in an idyllic rural setting. Scaniport Hall on the road out to Loch Ness had been built during a period of religious revival in the early twentieth century. The surrounding countryside must have been well populated to warrant such a solid construction although the roof timbers, as we learnt to our cost, spoke of poverty. Inside there were hard wooden benches, a lectern with a Gaelic Bible, candles and paraffin lamps to lighten “the encircling gloom” of a winter’s afternoon.

Here for a number of years the meeting found stability. A flourishing children’s meeting was established, starting off in a disused hen house! And the first Quaker wedding in the Highlands solemnized. The whole spirit of the meeting was enhanced by having to make do in somewhat primitive conditions. Thus, in winter months when the campsite across the road was closed, water came in bottles and the Elsan into its own.

Changes in the management of the estate, which owned the entire area, meant a less sympathetic approach to the Society. So that when the poverty-struck roof showed signs of collapse, during a period of “tacit relocation” of the lease, we had to inform the Superior. Although we were prepared to replace the roof, the

lease on offer showed a forty percent increase with the threat of a commercial rent after five years.

Since then we worshipped in the beautiful chapel of the Northern Infirmary, until we were frozen out. Currently the workshop at L'Arche provides shelter and warmth, together with space inside and out for children complete with trees to climb. The move into Inverness has brought more people and diversity to the Meeting for which we give thanks. As the dawn of Brexit comes ever closer let us remember the words of George VI's Christmas message and put our hands into that of God. So that others may find the peace which passes all understanding. □

*...And all my dear Friends,
dwell in the life and love, and
power and wisdom of God, in
unity with one another, and
with God; and the peace and
wisdom of God fill all your
hearts, that nothing may rule
in you but the life, which stands
in the Lord God.*

George Fox
Epistle to Friends in Ireland, 1655

Dunblane Meeting's Jubilee

Robin Davis

Just over fifty years ago, in November 1967, our Friends Bill and Betsy Aitken hosted a Meeting for Worship in their home in Dunblane. The seed prospered and three years later we began to meet in the Chapel of Scottish Churches House in Dunblane. Several moves later we currently rent rooms in the Braeport Centre just up the hill from there. We have been through many ups and downs, from the wonderful years of supporting Peace House, the peace education concern of Helen Steven and Ellen Moxley, through the trauma of the Dunblane shootings of March 1996. Children have grown from infancy to adulthood - we have always nurtured a children's meeting. Our members have contributed much to the life of the Society, locally and nationally. There were good grounds for a celebration.

In the summer we revived a tradition by holding Meeting for Worship one Sunday in a small kirk in Glen Artney (about fifteen miles away), followed by a picnic by the Water of Ruchill.



Dunblane Jubilee Meeting

On October 28th, we met again in what is now Old Churches House, Dunblane, for a day to celebrate the life and community that is Dunblane Local Meeting. Friends whom we had not seen for years came along to join us. We cut a cake and sang Happy Birthday. We produced a Dunblane Book as a souvenir. Young Friends urged us to ponder what we find necessary and what is mere indulgence. One told us of her recent visit to Palestine. Older Friends discovered how far they had come to be there that day, and who had been the first to join the meeting. We spent time reflecting on what was special about our Society and Dunblane Meeting in particular, and what belonging to a meeting means. We read some sections of Chapter 10 of Quaker Faith and Practice and looked forward to many more years of worshipping together. In the evening we adjourned to the Victoria Hall, a local community hall, for a ceilidh. This had been advertised widely in the town and a number of local folks joined us, as did some young Friends who travelled out from Edinburgh and Glasgow.



Thomas Hancock and Elaine Millar, Clerk of the Meeting.

Quaker Housing Trust in Scotland Barbara Potter, Quaker Housing Trust

Yearly Meeting's own housing charity makes a difference to housing inequality.

Quaker Housing Trust (QHT) is Yearly Meeting's own housing charity that uses its resources where it can to make a genuine and positive difference to redress the worsening



Mary Hill of YMCA Glenrothes presenting the keys to their new tenant Imogen in Glenrothes with QHT Clerk Barbara Potter and the Nationwide Foundation Gary Hartin. QHT supported the project with a capital costs grant to help them buy the property to provide supported housing for homeless people

inequality in housing options in Britain today. Our emphasis is on the provision of homes – not just housing. We are a practical expression of the Quaker concern about the needs of badly housed and otherwise homeless people in Britain. And, in the last 10 years QHT has supported more than a dozen projects in Scotland. Some of them are in remote and rural locations such as Durness, Helmsdale and Mull. These are areas where new homes had not been built for many years, and older houses have low energy performance, leaving many people in fuel poverty.

However, two recent project applications came from Glasgow and Glenrothes. QHT provided a funding package for Street Connect in Glasgow, a charity supporting drug-addicted street homeless people through the process of rehabilitation to independent living. The grant and loan helped Street Connect buy a flat for clients who have completed a residential rehab course, and who need a supported tenancy to develop the skills to manage living independently.

YMCA Glenrothes in Fife is part of a consortium of charities that have entered a Public Social Partnership with the local council to address homelessness. The project provides supported, shared, move-on accommodation for local homeless people. QHT was asked for funding to buy an empty, abandoned property that needed work to bring it up to a habitable standard. Our grant and loan, together with support from Nationwide Foundation to finance the refurbishment work, has given a home to a single mum and her new baby.

We are impressed by the ongoing support and integrated approach of both Street Connect and YMCA Glenrothes.

In 2017 we held our annual residential meeting in Glasgow, which gave us the opportunity to meet with representatives of some of the projects we have supported. QHT assistance does not just mean a grant or loan. We often appoint one of our Trustees as ‘trustee-in-touch’, who meet with the projects, follow up any questions from QHT meetings, and can offer a personal interest and guidance. The feedback we get from projects shows that they find this approach helpful.

QHT is unusual among grant-making charities. Our funding programme is entirely based on the Quaker money donated to us. QHT funds successful project applications for capital costs, and makes grants and interest-free loan packages to charities with a turnover of under £1million. We provide advice to charitable organisations, and offer grants for good practice that will make a



QHT Trustee Peter Ranken (left) and former QHT Clerk Jenny Brierley (right) in animated conversation with Ann MacInnes from Penington Co-Housing (centre) at the QHT Residential ‘conversation’ with QHT-supported projects in Scotland.

housing project 'greener'. We also advise and support Meetings, such as Dundee Friends Property Trust, where we were able to support Friends with a grant to upgrade a flat they owned to give a home to a Syrian refugee family.

The flexible approach QHT takes in its funding and advice programme means that we are able to support new-build projects as well as fund the smaller practical things that turn a house into a home.

For more information about our work, or how you can help QHT by making donations, loans or legacies, e-mail QHT Secretary Paula Harvey at involve@qht.org.uk or look at our website www.qht.org.uk I would also be happy to come to your meeting to talk about our work. □

QUAKER
HOUSING
TRUST

GM for Scotland will be held on 10th March at the Meeting House, Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh. EH1 2JL

Arrivals 10:30 for coffee, Business to start at 11 am.

We are keen to involve as many Friends across Scotland in the thinking around this event. In particular we would like to enable families with children of any age to attend. To this end we are planning a day of action for young people 12+ and associated activities more on-site for younger children.

To enable the planning of this we would appreciate knowing the numbers and ages of children who could come. Please return the form previously sent out, to Adwoa Bittle by **February 10th**.

I hope you all received my letter about our meeting in March. I do not propose to copy it here as it was long, however if you did not receive it or your LM/AM clerk did not get a chance to pass the information to you please email me and I will forward it to you. In summary GM will look like this:

The agenda of this GM will be to work out how to deal with our priorities for GM for the next few years. We need to think about: how we support families with young children to come to GM if they would like to and how we support each other between Meetings; how we work as a team with our ecumenical and interfaith links; how we support our Nominations Committee and how we facilitate information sharing and support for our Parliamentary Engagement Working Group.

We would like to invite you all to spend some time between now and then considering these responsibilities. We encourage Friends to go back to basics and think “outside the box”. What as a religious society ought we to be doing? *“If we are going to change, let us feel free to do it. Let’s discern what our Meetings need, be prepared to start with a blank sheet and*

let's get on with it". (Ben Pink Dandelion 2014 Swarthmore Lecture.)

You could hold a study group, have a quick AM and/or LM discussion or put this in the to-do pile that doesn't get done...

I am grateful to Dunblane for their meeting and minute about this. Is it too late for you to get together or think on your own about these issues so you are prepared for GM?

I extend a warm welcome to all Quakers in Scotland. I am interested in finding out how to reach all in Scotland to raise awareness of, and interest in, the workings of GM. Anyone with questions about GM that could help you to decide to come please email adwoabittle@hotmail.co.uk or phone 01738 583 108 mob 077854 177 450

Please bring a **packed lunch**. Soup/tea/coffee/cake will be provided.

Tea/coffee/cake 4:30 and departures

A BUNCH OF KEYS

A place I can go, but can no longer
Her flat, that view of the mountains, that smile, now locked out

A place where I should go, but do not want to,
Illness, suffering, the mantelpiece clock slowly ticking to a stop,

A place engulfed by flames,
Nothing remains but a key

A place of toil,
Long hours, petty squabbles, chained to a computer screen,

A place of my past, locked in,
I know it's out there somewhere, but cannot reach

A place of my imagination, I will never know
Only the cold iron key I found in the forest long ago

By Alastair Simmons
Inverness & Nairn LM