



GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND

12/13 November 2016

Perth

Min. 1 Reading

During Meeting for Worship we heard a reading from Quaker Faith and Practice paragraph 26.62 in which Thomas Kelly speaks of apprehending the universal light.

Min. 2 Welcome

We welcome 5 attenders to this GM plus Rob McKay and Beryl Milner, and David Cowling from the Scottish Methodist Synod.

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

| | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| East Scotland | 16 |
| North Scotland | 9 |
| South East Scotland | 14 |
| West Scotland | 4 |
| Other | |
| Total: | 43 |

Min. 3 Reporter

We appoint Mary Dower from North Scotland AM to report this meeting to *The Friend* and the *Scottish Friend*. We ask East Scotland AM to report on the next GM.

Min. 4 Developing a Vision for General Meeting

Adwoa Bittle led us in the morning session. She introduced us to General Meeting as if we knew nothing about how it works and what it is for. We heard about how the function groups of GM are organised and how discipline in a business session works. We broke into four groups: two discussion groups and two worship sharing groups. We were given a list of questions to shape our sharing. (Appendix 1)

There were many threads that arose from this sharing; many that were very similar. Topics like the nourishment received from attending GM, concerns over the differences between attenders and members, communication at various levels, feedback to our Local Meetings, looking for engaging sessions to attend and consideration of ways to engage younger people and have fun.

These discussions need to go further. How do we engage Friends across Scotland in where GM is going over the next years? Please use the list of questions to hold discussions at your AM or LM or both. Please feel free to fill it in as an individual.

It is so important that the spiritual life of GM is upheld by the various structures. Neither the structures nor the spiritual life will exist without people. We need to grow and deepen our already valuable community across Scotland.

Min. 5 Nominations matters

Nominations Function Group have brought forward the following names and we agree to appoint them:

1. **GM Treasurer**
Nigel Dower (1st triennium) January 2017 to December 2019
2. **Newsletter Editor**
Margaret Peacock (one year) January 2017 to December 2017
3. **Parliamentary Liaison Function Group**
Martin Pippard (1st triennium) January 2017 to December 2019
(member East to replace Joyce Taylor who becomes Convenor)
4. **Custodian of Records**
Paul Burton (4th triennium) January 2017 to December 2019
5. **Iona Community Board**
Bob Dixon (1st triennium) January 2017 to December 2019

Min. 6 New members and deaths

We record the following new members since our last meeting:

Rebecca Howard (E)
Pascoe Harvey (SE)
Mark Borthwick (SE)
Esther Shreeve (SE)

We record the following deaths:

Douglas Nelson (SE)
Margaret Thomson Davis (W)

Min. 7 Action of Churches Together in Scotland

Alison Burnley, our representative on the ACTS Members Meeting, has told us that she joined the body at a difficult time when Scottish Churches House was being sold. ACTS organises a number of special events and services and provides a presence at the Highland Show. It organises a meeting of church representatives with the First Minister each year.

There are groups working on ending human trafficking and on rural affairs amongst others. Local ecumenical partnerships are also encouraged. A delegation from CTBI went to

Greece and ACTS has publicised the plight of refugees, particularly unaccompanied children. Two Friends joined the delegation to Brussels prior to the EU referendum. The World Council of Churches is likely to meet in Glasgow in 2021. ACTS also dispenses various grants.

A question arose about the continuation of the Church of Scotland Ecumenical Relations Committee and Alison tells us she strongly supported the continuation of ecumenical work and feels it is important that all churches are recognised as equal partners in ACTS, irrespective of size.

Min. 8 Scottish Joint Committee on Religious and Moral Education

A letter from the Joint Secretary of SJCRME inviting Quakers in Scotland to join the organisation and appoint a member to the Committee was reported to GM in November 2015. Consideration was deferred pending the development of guidelines on donations and affiliations by GM Trustees.

The Committee promotes the teaching of religious and moral education in Scottish schools. Its membership includes most Christian denominations in Scotland together with Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Bahais, the Scottish Government, teachers unions and the SQA. GM was a member of this body at one stage in the past but membership lapsed for reasons which are not known. The membership subscription is £60 pa.

Mairi McCormack, a member of South East Scotland AM, teaches this subject and would be willing to be our representative on the Committee. We agree to accept the invitation to join the SJCRME and to appoint Mairi McCormack as our representative. We ask Mairi to report back in 12 months on the work being undertaken and we will then reach a decision whether to continue membership of this body.

Min. 9 Budget for 2017

Our Treasurer, John Phillips, has presented budget proposals for 2017. Area Meeting quotas remain at the same level as in 2016. Provision has been made for printing a new edition of the Book of Members, but otherwise budgeted expenditure broadly follows the existing pattern, including the drawing down of reserves to support the post of Parliamentary Engagement Officer.

John has also presented a list of proposed donations for 2017, following a very similar pattern to 2016 but implementing the previous decision to cease donations to the Scottish Churches China Group. With these changes, he projects an expenditure of £31,730 and income of £27,710. Our reserves, after allowing for the deficit of £4020, are projected as £11,794.

We accept the proposed budget, a copy of which will be attached to these Minutes, subject to our previous decision to join the SJCRME.

Min. 10 Review Process for Parliamentary Engagement post

The part-time post of Parliamentary Engagement Officer is jointly funded by General Meeting and BYM for an initial three year period and the Memorandum of Understanding governing the arrangement provides that a review should be undertaken before the end of the second year.

It has been agreed between GM Trustees and BYM Trustees that two Friends be appointed to carry out an external review and to report back to both bodies. The Friends appointed are Beryl Milner and Douglas Rennie and Beryl has described how they propose to go about their task.

They will speak to a number of GM and AM office holders and the Parliamentary Engagement Officer plus staff at Friends House and the Clerk to BYM Trustees. They also invite thoughts, comments and observations from individual Friends by 5th December. (Beryl's email is listed under Perth in the current Book of Members).

It is envisaged that Trustees will bring a recommendation regarding the future of the project to GM in March.

Min. 11 Enquirers' weekend and Enquirers' Day

Pat Lucas has reported on the Enquirers' Weekend held from 2nd - 4th September at the Conforti Institute in Coatbridge and the Enquirers' Day held on 22nd October in L'Arche, Inverness. There were eight participants at the first event and evaluations were positive. Nine attended the day event. The restricted time meant valuable elements had to be omitted, including evaluation forms.

A particular suggestion was that there was a need for practical guidance on ways into silence. We thank Pat Lucas for her report and SESAM for organising the events.

Min. 12 Cadet Forces in Scottish Schools

The Clerk has reported that Meeting for Sufferings considered the concern we had forwarded to them at their meeting on 1st October. Their minute 16/10/14 reads

"We receive minute 10 of General Meeting for Scotland held on 11 June 2016, regarding the proposed introduction of cadet forces to Scottish state schools to be financed from fines levied on banks. General Meeting for Scotland's Parliamentary Liaison Function Group is working on this, supported by the Parliamentary Engagement Officer. However, as the funding is allocated by the UK Government via the Ministry of Defence, the Scottish Government has no influence over how the funding is used

We forward this minute to QPSWCC, asking it to consider what work might be done alongside General Meeting for Scotland, and to report back in due course."

Jane Pearn, our representative on Meeting for Sufferings has advised the Clerk that in

ministry and subsequent comments it was clear that our sense of injustice was shared by the Meeting. We will continue in Scotland our concern about wider militarisation in Society.

Min. 13 Report by Parliamentary Engagement Officer

Our Parliamentary Engagement Officer, Mairi Campbell-Jack, has told us about some of the work in which she has been involved in the last year. One major item was the petition to the Scottish Parliament about armed forces visits to schools which had to be researched thoroughly in order to be accepted. There were 1027 signatures in support and the Petitions Committee decided to gather further views from other bodies. Mairi is now developing responses to the views of these other organisations and there will be a further hearing before the Petitions Committee.

The exercise to send white poppies to MSPs has been repeated for a second year with the addition of Scottish MPs and MEPs, and has received some press publicity. Mairi has begun work with other organisations investigating local authority investment in arms companies and conversations have taken place with individual MPs and MSPs to support our concerns regarding military recruitment of young people.

Mairi and Elizabeth Allen attended part of the SNP conference and made some useful contacts. Mairi will be meeting in December with Mike Russell MSP, Minister for Brexit, and will talk to him about Quaker expertise in working with divided communities.

Another priority in her job has been economic justice and a symposium was organised in partnership with the Edinburgh Independent and Radical Bookfair at which Leslie Riddoch, Andy Wightman and Richard Murphy spoke. The seminar was attended by at least 200 people and evoked a lively and questioning response.

Mairi is using the Quakers in Scotland Facebook page and Twitter to encourage communication with younger Friends and others.

In terms of future work, we need to be alert to the opportunities that may arise in a fluid and uncertain political situation, drawing on Quaker values and conflict resolution skills. Let us take this as an opportunity for Quakers in Scotland to support each other. We will be considering the future of this work at our next General Meeting and Friends are urged to think carefully about the way forward and come prepared.

We thank the Parliamentary Liaison Function Group and Mairi for their work on our behalf.

Min. 16 Closing Minute

We record our thanks to East Scotland Friends for being our hosts at this residential GM, and look forward to meeting again on 11th March 2017 in Edinburgh when our speaker will be Gretchen Castle, General Secretary of Friends World Committee for Consultation.

Martin Burnell
Clerk

Developing a vision for General Meeting - Questions

Individual or collective responses to these questions are invited and should be returned to Adwoa Bittle by **1st February 2017**

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|---|
| What do I/we come to GM for? |
| How do I/we grow the Spiritual life of GM? |
| What does that mean? |
| Do I/we need to? Why? Why not? |
| What are our/my priorities? |
| How do I/we grow our community? |
| Do we need to? Why? Why not? |
| Is it ok that the same people often fill the roles needed to help GM function? |
| How can I/we help the GM nominations process in my/our local meetings? |

GENERAL MEETING FOR SCOTLAND - BUDGET FOR 2017

Budget for GM's general fund, as approved at at General Meeting on 12th November 2016

See NOTE (1)

| Item | Budget set for 2016 £ | Estimated actual sums for 2016 £ | Budget set for 2017 £ | Notes |
|--|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| RECEIPTS: | | | | |
| General income: | | | | |
| AM Quotas (for general expenditure) | 16,000 | 16,000 | 16,000 | NOTE (2) |
| Grants and donations to support GM | 8,200 | 8,230 | 8,400 | BYM, Camfield Trust |
| Bank interest | 50 | 25 | 10 | |
| Sales, payments for events: | | | | |
| Sale of lists of Members and Attenders | 0 | 0 | 1,500 | Next printing early 2017 |
| Special events: Enquirers & Families weeke | 2,000 | 2,885 | 1,800 | NOTE (3) |
| Special event: Rowntree Trust | 0 | 950 | 0 | NOTE (3) |
| TOTALS: | 26,250 | 28,090 | 27,710 | |
| PAYMENTS: | | | | |
| General Meeting activities: | | | | |
| Parliamentary Engagement Officer | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | GM contribution, matched by BYM |
| Grants and subscriptions to outside bodies | 5,000 | 5,320 | 4,730 | See separate table |
| Newsletter (<i>Scottish Friend</i>) | 3,500 | 3,200 | 3,500 | |
| Function Groups: costs | 800 | 600 | 800 | |
| Special events: Enquirers & Families weeke | 2,000 | 3,760 | 2,200 | NOTE (3) |
| Special event: Rowntree Trust | 0 | 950 | 0 | NOTE (3) |
| Costs of GMs incl. Residential GM | 1,000 | 600 | 600 | |
| Outreach (website) | 300 | 100 | 300 | |
| Administration: | | | | |
| Staffing costs | 4,900 | 4,900 | 5,200 | |
| List of Members & Attenders | 0 | 0 | 1,600 | |
| Administration costs (GM administrator) | 800 | 800 | 800 | |
| Administration costs (trustees, officers) | 900 | 1,100 | 900 | |
| GM insurance; Information Commission | 600 | 630 | 660 | |
| Contingency: | | | | |
| Miscellaneous | 500 | 300 | 500 | Contingency for 2016, 2017 |
| TOTALS: | 30,300 | 32,260 | 31,790 | |
| BALANCE IN HAND | | | | |
| AT END OF PREVIOUS YEAR | 19,984 (actual) | 19,984 (actual) | 15,814 (predicted) | NOTE (4) |
| SURPLUS/DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR | -4,050 (budget) | -4,170 (predicted) | -4,080 | NOTE (5) |
| BALANCE AT END OF YEAR: | 15,934 (budget) | 15,814 (predicted) | 11,734 | |

NOTES

(1) This budget relates to the **General Funds** of General Meeting for Scotland. Two **Restricted Funds** (supporting teenagers' Link Weekends, and the GM Fund for Healing) have been omitted from the budget, though their accounts will be included with the GM accounts at the year end.

(2) The AM Quotas were reduced to £10,000 in 2011. In 2015 they were increased by £6,000 to support GM's Parliamentary Engagement Officer.

(3) Three special events in 2016: Enquirers Weekend; Families Weekend; Edinburgh Book Fair conference session on Scotland's future (the latter organised by the Parliamentary Liaison FG and funded by the Rowntree Trust).

(4) ACTUAL = actual balance at 1st January 2016 held in General Funds
PREDICTED = balance predicted for 31st December 2016 / 1st January 2017

(5) GM budgeted for a deficit of £4,050 in 2016, aiming to reduce its reserves by about £12,000 over the period 2015-2017.

(6) The above figures include the decision taken at GM to join the Scottish Joint Committee on Religious and Moral Education