



August
2014

Scottish Friend



Mirror Garden and Fountain at St. Andrew's cathedral in Glasgow. MP
"A space for quiet reflection"

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Please send material for next Scottish Friend by 3 October to Margaret Peacock, 16 Drumlin Drive, Milngavie, G62 6LN, or nmjpeacock@yahoo.co.uk.

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 Bronwen Currie know. You are strongly encouraged to do this, in view of escalating postage costs - and of course you get the photographs in colour, as an incentive!

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.



Testimony from a beneficiary of the John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust

"To begin with, I would like to apologise for having taken so long to write and thank the Trustees of the John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust for the generous grant that was given to me.

I do not have good health and I have restricted mobility which can make everyday life challenging. I used the money to go for acupuncture treatment to help with pain control so that I was able to attend classes at University.

I do realise that studying for a degree was not a priority, given that day to day survival was a greater imperative, however I do derive great pleasure and inspiration from my studies. Some of the residual benefits from having received a good education, other than improved self-esteem, are that I am much better informed about many of the serious issues that affect our world and I can, now, contribute an informed opinion to any debate.

I am delighted to say that I graduated in June 2013 and was given a BSc with Distinction. I feel that this achievement can be described as an additional pleasure, "of an exceptional nature over and above the usual necessities of life," and so fits in very well with the aims of the Trust. The timing of the grant was also crucial as, at the time, I was coping with many difficult family issues as well as a deterioration in my health, and had to abandon my studies. Help from Members of my Quaker Meeting and well as the grant from the Trust, helped me to get back on course, as it were."

The award recipient wishes this to be published anonymously

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Quaker Tapestry Exhibition

Perth Friends are busy preparing for the exhibition of photographs from the Quaker Tapestry to be held in the AK Bell Library in Perth from 2 - 13 September. We shall also display the Scottish panel, originally loaned to Scottish Churches' House and now kept in Edinburgh Meeting House.

Under Alison Burnley's excellent guidance, we have been working on a new tapestry for Perth. This will also be in the Library and we hope that as many people as possible will come and add some stitches. If you plan to come, it would be helpful if you could let Adwoa Bittle (01738 583 108; adwoabittle@hotmail.co.uk) know so that we can be sure there is someone there to guide you.

As preparation, we are holding a Tapestry Day on Sunday August 24th in the Subud Centre, St Leonard's Bank, Perth. We'll start with Meeting for Worship at 10.30 (coffee available first for early arrivers), then Alison Burnley will tell us about the Quaker Tapestry in Kendal and the twelve panels we have chosen for the exhibition. After lunch (bring your own sandwich, drinks provided), there will be an opportunity to learn more about what stewarding the exhibition involves (Volunteers from all Meetings are most welcome!). The Perth tapestry will, of course, take pride of place and all present will be invited to add to it. We would be delighted to see Friends from other Meetings for all or part of the day. Further information is available from Alyson Buchan (01796 474 121 or alysonbuchan@gmail.com).

General Meeting June 2014**Min. 13 Religious Leaders Forum (Interfaith Scotland)**

We agree to use the next issue of *The Scottish Friend* to ask Friends who would be interested in ecumenical and interfaith engagement to make themselves known to the convener of the Nominations Function Group (Alyson Buchan) and to reconsider this appointment at our next meeting.

Are you interested in ecumenical or interfaith issues?

General Meeting receives a number of invitations to participate in ecumenical or interfaith bodies and to attend meetings and conferences of other churches. We would like to broaden the pool of people we can draw on to represent us and are looking for experienced Friends who have an interest in extending contacts with other faiths or other churches. Please consider if this might be an opportunity for you to give service, and if so contact the convener of the Nominations Function Group, Alyson Buchan (Tel: 01796-474-121 Email: alysonbuchan@gmail.com)

While we have got a possible nomination for the Religious Leaders Forum, I still feel it would be helpful to make this appeal, and GM agreed to do so.

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Preparations of a Northern Newby

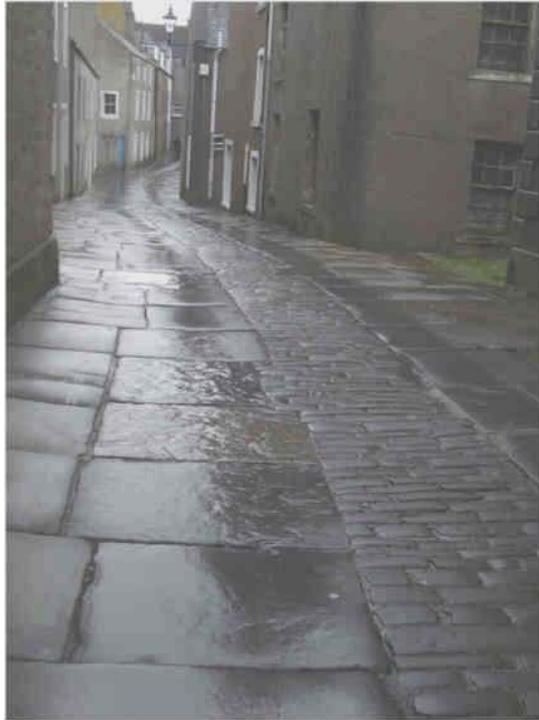
Jackie Ward - Orkney Meeting



That's it. Decision made. I'm off to BYM and briefly leaving my northern sanctuary.

The narrow roadway in Stromness, Orkney has no pavement; it winds through the town with cobbles meant to aid the horses' hooves and meanders past the tall gables that look onto the harbour. I live here. Hamnavoe - safe haven it has long been and for me too these last few years. From The Street, if you look up you will find fuchsias flowering in the chimney pots at 59° north. Looking out from these islands a 180° view of sea and sky is every day. A beach, a cove, a bay, a stretch of coastline all to yourself is often and often and the birds marking the setting sun over the sea is our quiet pleasure.

Worship is easy here.



This has been the backdrop to my growing Quaker faith. My first meeting was in the home of a dear friend with five present not including the dog. My journey has been slow, contemplative, quiet, gentle, and deep so far so what am I thinking of to be attending BYM? I think it has to do with a growing awareness that gathered worship is the way Friends approach all things in life. Quiet and stillness are easy here in my particular corner of the world. Today I've spoken to two souls briefly and run away to the shore in the motorhome with Jack the dog. The tide is now turning for the second time and at 10.30pm the setting sun is painting the world a deep orange. I will camp here for the night and be perfectly safe.



I count myself as enormously fortunate that my God has always been around; there when I have looked up and looked out; there now for 65 years as I've stumbled along many a rocky road. Finally, living the Quaker way seems so right. I don't have the Quaker language but I do so relish my direct line to God. Clocking in to God is how I try to start my days.

During the last 5 years I've attended Area Meetings and Meeting for Worship in Scotland, England and Wales. I've been to Woodbrooke for a Friendly Introduction and benefited enormously from the 'Becoming Friends' course covered with local Friends here in Orkney. I'm a member of a small 'Light' group and an Attender. In the Quaker testimonies I've found such a sense of coming home. Some certainties that have been with me for many years have been chugging along as part of The Quaker Way without me knowing that this huge body of people worldwide got there first! So faith in action is recognisable where truth, equality, simplicity, peace and sustainability are evident.

Concerns can begin within even the smallest local meeting and end up being considered at Yearly Meeting which represents the whole British organisation of Quakers. It is this remarkable process that tempts me to travel so far. Being a seeker and being welcome in this larger arena is important.

I find the language of George Fox enormously beautiful and, yes, it does it for me. I don't expect to be particularly good at any of this during my process of growing understanding. Indeed, when exactly is the day likely to come when I can say I'm a Quaker and not just somebody trying to live that way? Just as we may feel changed or re-charged after Meeting for Worship each week, I hope the experience of attending BYM will reveal the true nature of a Spirit-led gathered worship of much larger proportions to those I'm used to. Maybe the experience of BYM is the very encounter needed next on this particular spiritual journey.

I shall be 700 miles from home and desperately trying to adapt to the crowd. Say hello if you spot me and if you are not there I'll tell you more about it all later.

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Turning up the Volume on Poverty :

Poverty Truth Commission presentation & report 21 June 2014

Barbara Potter

I went to a previous presentation by the Commission and knew that this would be a lively presentation by those in poverty about the issues that affected them; there would also be presentations by those addressing these issues.

The Poverty Truth Commission was based on the Truth Commission used after the civil unrest in South Africa, to reveal the truth behind what had been happening, and to heal the community. It started with Commissioners as members of the establishment and witnesses as those affected by poverty. They quickly saw that this model did not work, and the witnesses were invited to become Commissioners as they are the experts in how poverty affects them.

"In Scotland, one of the richest countries in the world, **over 20% of children are growing up in poverty**. As very low wages fail to keep pace with the cost of essentials, over half of those in poverty are also in paid work. Behind these numbers are real people who love their families. They want and deserve a better future."

The issues that were highlighted in this presentation were the **stigma** of being poor. The issues for children not having the right clothing to go to school, the attitude of officials to claimants (and how that attitude changed when an advocate was present). As well as stigma there was also a problem of **isolation**. With reduced funds it is hard to participate in society. Charities like Mind the Gap were praised for their work in this area.

We heard from Aimee Ottroh from Ivory Coast, whom I had met the previous night as a fellow classmate of Derek Read's graduating with HNC in Community Development. She told her story of how she had been in Egypt when there had been a change of government at home, and as someone politically active with a name associated with the former president, she dare not return home. She came to the UK

with a visa and claimed **asylum** on arrival. She felt herself safe when she arrived, and told her story to the home office officials, only to find herself accused of lying. The difficulties for the asylum seeker don't end when they are granted status, as they then have to move from the NASS accommodation, and register as homeless, and claim UK benefits (daunting tasks for those of us who have English as a first language). The staff at DWP were unhelpful with her JSA claim when she was taking an English course to improve her employability chances, as this course made her less available for taking up employment.

Another **JSA claimant**, a young man, used a snowstorm shaker to illustrate what the effects of being **sanctioned** did to his brain. It was all shaken up, his thoughts were everywhere about how he could or would manage. His sanction period lasted 4 months last year, and he acknowledged the support of Mind the Gap, and the meetings of the Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) as being helpful in that period. It has taken him most of a year to get himself back on track.

A single mother told her story of **in work poverty**. She found a job as a carer, and had to put her children into a nursery, for which the government gave a 70% grant against the fees. The hours she was working were 9 to 5 which suited her for nursery care, however after a while the company wanted to change the hours of all its staff to be more flexible, including early starts, late shifts and sleepovers. They felt that they could not discriminate between their staff and offer them different hours. Despite the fact that the speaker had talked with her colleagues and knew that they would not mind her continuing with her hours the company insisted that all workers go onto the new regime. She took time off sick as she didn't know what else to do, and was eventually sacked.

We heard from a woman with rheumatoid arthritis and a spinal condition about her **Work Capability Assessment (WCA)**. Her consultant had given her a copy of her spinal X-ray on CD to show to them, and she explained the significance of the picture. Her assessment day was on one of her good days, and she explained that

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her condition was variable at the interview. The following day she went for her regular outpatient appointment, and was kept in for 11 days because her bloods were not right. However, the WCA report was passed to the decision-maker and she was declared fit for work. Going through the process of appeal was expensive for her in time and energy and support required, let alone the government expense of running the tribunals. Her question was about the decision making process, and why it made so many mistakes, needing so many appeals many of which were upheld.

The **cost of being poor** was highlighted. Buying electricity on a "card meter" where the key has to be taken to the local shop to top up means that the lower tariff rates available to those who subscribe online, and pay by direct debit are not available. The presenter for this section told us that the power company had told her she was over £100 in arrears because the meter had not been changed to take account of a price rise, so that if she topped up by more than £3 at a time then money would be taken off to pay the arrears. Needless to say she only topped up £3 at a time, which was a great inconvenience as it meant a trip to top up every day through the winter months. She managed to change suppliers eventually, and was sent a £39 refund as she had in fact overpaid !

Kinship carers are those family members, usually grandparents, who take in the children for family members unable to care for them. Frequently this is because of drug and alcohol abuse. Access to benefits is a problem for them, and the PTC has worked on this previously. This time we heard of a grandmother's efforts and delight at the progress made when her child, who was struggling with foot and leg coordination (one of the effects of drug use during pregnancy) had become enchanted by football.

In a film entitled "**No Ball Games**" we were taken on a tour of the bleak, child-unfriendly environments created by the "schemes", where there appeared to have been no thought of providing for social activities.

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We heard from a **grant making charity** that they had made 1500 grants last year, all of less than £250, for items like beds, cookers and washing machines. The Community Care Grants, which used to fund these items for those being rehoused has been scrapped and replaced with another grant making system, which is less well funded. The speaker told us of families making choices about whether to have a bed for a child, or a cooker, or washing machine. Significant numbers of the appeals came from women fleeing domestic violence, where it was hard to reclaim goods from the family home, so they were starting from nothing in a bare boards tenancy. We heard the story of one such mother with 4 children, whose 6 year old son had started wetting the bed, with the strain and upheaval of the situation. The washing machine had broken down. Mother was called into the school because her son had been fighting in the playground, teased because he was smelly. The trust were able to make a grant for a washing machine.

The work of the Poverty Truth Commission goes on, with a new set of commissioners. Copies of the report are available from
759a Argyle Street, Glasgow G3 8DS
Details also available on their website:
www.povertytruthcommission.org

Many people may ask "What can I do?" One of the biggest problems is stigma, and when we hear that in conversations around us we can all be active in challenging that. It is not easy or comfortable, but it is worth doing. If you have time to give then training and working for a local mental health advocacy service, or Human Beings on Benefits (contact Alastair McIver in Glasgow), or any poverty based charity. If you have money but not time, then local charities, like Citizens Advice Bureaux, Move On, West GAP welcome donations, these mean that they can try innovative things and test them out before applying for funds from trusts or government. Quaker Social Action is based in East London, if you prefer a Quaker charity for your donations. They have developed innovative work, which they are happy to offer to local groups around the country. There is one Clydebank group using their ideas already, and the Church of Scotland are talking to them about their Down to Earth funerals scheme.

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General Meeting for Scotland

held in 7 Victoria Terrace Edinburgh on 14 June 2014

Margaret Boland

This was a very enjoyable and satisfying day. I had extended the pleasure by accepting hospitality from a friend in Edinburgh and I travelled the previous day.

The day got off to an uncertain start - Would the route of the Queen's baton for the Commonwealth Games affect bus routes? However a phone call to the bus company was reassuring. Arriving at the Meeting House the foyer was crowded so we got our badges and signed in and went upstairs expecting the welcoming aroma of filter coffee but alas it was self service instant tea and coffee and no biscuits - well I am overweight!

Up another level by lift and into a bright sunny meeting room. Alas, papers in advance on the seats (though one was dated the previous Month). I am afraid that wearing my Quaker Disability Equality hat, I was not impressed. There was just time to read one to my Visually Impaired friend.

I found the day satisfying because we managed to make decisions; one after lengthly due process. This was to proceed to appoint a part-time person to facilitate our involvement with the Scottish Parliament (of whatever format after 18th September). The cost of this will be shared between GM and BYM, with Scottish area meetings being asked to increase their GM quota by 60%. Since Ireland YM manages to work across an international boundary, this should be no problem.

Another item of import was the National WWI Commemoration Service on Saturday 2nd August in Glasgow Cathedral - Quakers had been invited; should we send a representative. The invitation had come first to Glasgow LM and been passed via West Scotland AM to GM. A Glasgow member with strong ecumenical connections had

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approached the Cathedral minister (Church of Scotland though still called a cathedral) and a fruitful dialogue had followed, eliciting the form of the service including the fact that a red poppy would be on every seat. The topic of Conscientious Objectors was raised and Friends House helped with information and the minister added two sentences to his sermon.

The feeling of the meeting was against sending a representative but a suggestion of a vigil outside the cathedral with white poppies was not thought to be appropriate. We thanked our Friend for her conscientious preparatory work and I felt we had Spoken Truth to Power, even if only in a background way.

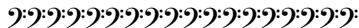
The afternoon session led by Sarah Richards of Northumbria AM was excellent. Sarah described how they had revitalised their AM and increased attendance at Business meetings from around 30 to 60-80 from a membership of 280. In short they have halved the number of occasions they hold a 'Monthly Meeting' and have created an Area Working Group which meets 4 weeks before and does all the preparatory business. This Group is composed of reps from all LMs and function of AM, AND is open to any member to attend. I see this as a Meeting for Worship for business for business minded Friends who are prepared to do the 'nitty gritty'. This leaves the Area friends to make the decisions on visitors' reports and other membership matters; to consider such things as trustees' and other reports as recommended by Working Group; and to discern appropriate action on concerns, with the Working Group acting as an initial filter and subsequently as an instrument to progress agreed concerns. In other words Area Meeting for worship for Business is still the decision making body but the business can be dealt with concisely leaving time for spiritual and community activity, especially as AM is held all day on a SUNDAY. This was because Saturday was proving to be unsuitable especially for families. AM now has all-age worship and the children insist their parents go so that they can meet their friends from other LMs!

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Working Group Meetings are held at 6.15 on a Tuesday and the 4 AMs circulate so that each cluster of LMs has it once every 2 years except for the large Newcastle meeting which hosts it every year. The host meeting decides the form of the day around the short business section.

This new idea is one I will be taking back to my AM to inspire us to continue appraising how we do our business. We already hold half our business meetings by telephone conferencing which does help include the island LMs but this does not aid an increase in face to face spiritual, community building or all-age involvement.

Alas by 4pm I was very tired so skipped socialising over tea and walked rather wearily, but satisfied, to the station for an earlier train home.



Membership Procedure in North of Scotland Area Meeting

After Pamela Affleck's article "A plea from an attender" in the last edition of the Scottish Newsletter North of Scotland; E/Os have discussed it widely.

Our last review of the membership procedure was in 2012. It is reviewed regularly, and we will revisit it at a face to face meeting prior to the Pluscarden residential weekend at the end of August. We would welcome further thoughts from Friends and Attenders before this .

Sandy McEwen and Oriole Hall

Co - convenors
North Scotland Eldership and Oversight Committee"

Northern Young Friends Summer Shindig

Another really successful Young Friends Summer Shindig was held at Ackworth School at the end of July, with just over 50 young people from Scotland, the north of England and Ramallah, Palestine. Marwa Afaneh, a student at the Friends School in Ramallah, was able to join the event thanks to the support and co-ordination of Hexham Meeting. Unfortunately Ibrahim, who was also supposed to be coming, was prevented owing to his visa application being turned down.

The theme this year was "Journeys" and there were talks from Geoff Tansley, Rowan Whittington and Bronwen Currie which covered everything from food miles, to choices about travel, to Zionism, refugees and checkpoints. As usual the amazing young people engaged with everything and asked the questions adults never seem to get around to asking. And all this was mixed with creative activities, trips to York and Lightwater Valley and the usual endless fun and friendships.

Huge thanks to the committed and apparently tireless staff team, and especially to the clerking team of Luke Burton (clerk), Susie Reade (assistant clerk) and Helen Robbie (co-ordinator), without whom none of this would happen.

Bronwen Currie

Pilgrimage

Robert Hay

It seems hard to imagine but there is historical evidence that, at times, as many as a quarter of the people in medieval Europe were taking part in a pilgrimage to the site of a Christian saint. Because the churches along the way took care of pilgrims, opportunities were open to all, rich or poor. These were the popular holidays of the Middle Ages. The great pilgrimages of the day were to Jerusalem (when that was possible), Rome and Santiago in North West Spain, but there were many more modest destinations - for example to the tomb of St Thomas a Becket in Canterbury (as celebrated in the *Canterbury Tales*) or the shrine of Our Lady in Walsingham, Norfolk. The principal pilgrim routes in Scotland before the Reformation were to St Andrews and to the almost forgotten shrine of St Duthac in Tain, which was repeatedly visited by James IV to do penance for his role in the murder of his father. Now Iona has taken over as the most favoured destination.

Today there is a strong revival of interest in the idea of pilgrimage, with a network of walking routes being developed in Scotland, celebrating Saints Andrew, Columba, Cuthbert, Margaret, Mungo and Ninian - but not Moluag of Lismore, yet. In Norway, the traditional route from the south to St Olaf's great church at Nidaros (Trondheim) is fully waymarked, and pilgrims following the way to St Birgitta's convent can qualify for accommodation in Vadstena in Sweden.

The most spectacular revival has been in the Camino de Santiago. Pilgrims have been walking to the Shrine of St James for at least 900 years, but the Camino faded into obscurity in modern times.

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However, Don Elias Sampedro, a parish priest from Cebreiro, almost single-handed over 30 years, took on the task of researching the old route, negotiating with landowners for access, and marking the way with yellow paint.



In 1972, 6 pilgrims were awarded a "Compostela", having completed the main route from France to Santiago, but the popularity of the Camino then took off, particularly in the years after Franco's death in 1975. By 1989, nearly 6,000 pilgrims completed the way; now around 150,000 converge on St James' shrine by several routes.

The most popular way, the Camino Francés, starts on the French side of the Pyrenees; descends through the wooded foothills of Navarra to Pamplona; and crosses the wine growing area of Rioja to around Burgos, and the start of the high, dry and austere rolling plains of the Meseta, with wheat fields stretching to the horizon.

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Beyond Leon, approaching the Atlantic, the way passes through a broken hilly area, more like the west of Britain, with more familiar plants and trees, and more livestock farming. Some of the route, marked clearly with scallop shells, lies along



busy roads but it is mostly in countryside, along pathways linking villages and churches.

The total length is around 780km (485 miles), broken up into 34 recommended stages. Avoiding the holiday periods (pressure of people and very high temperatures), it is possible to "recreate" a traditional pilgrimage, arriving at the end of each stage without booking in advance - securing basic accommodation and hearty food (3 courses, wine and water) for around 20€ a day. With the many thousands of pilgrims passing along the way each year, the towns and villages have recognized the economic benefits of providing hospitality, and there are many "municipal" albergues, providing dormitory accommodation, with bunks, toilets, hot showers and laundry facilities - all scrupulously clean. The religious hostels, generally more basic, ask for donations only.

Dorothea and I started the Camino in October 2011 with two friends, Jennifer and Jeremy, both with strong Catholic backgrounds, which were useful in many ways. We opted to walk (not cycle); to carry our packs (not to send them in advance); and to enjoy the standard accommodation and food. The first day, 27km across the Pyrenees, was gruelling, but after that we settled into a reasonable routine: up before dawn to enjoy the cool of the morning; breakfast (café con leche and croissants) at the first village; and the stage (20-25km) completed by 2pm, followed by a siesta, and dinner later. Mostly we stayed in municipal albergues but did sleep on the floor in churches and, in one case, were forced to resort to a hotel when all alternatives were ruled out.

Walking the Camino is an uplifting experience, with the local people wishing you "Buen Camino" or "Buenas Dias" as you walk through their villages. We attended Mass several times, when pilgrims were welcomed and, in more than one occasion, the Scots were mentioned. There is a feeling of great security - many women walk alone. Companions appear and reappear as you go along - we were accompanied by pilgrims from England, Spain, France,

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the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Norway, Brazil, New Zealand, the USA and Canada, and particularly lively groups from Ireland and Sweden. Our diaries are full of details of memorable meals; troubles with blisters; Visigoth castles and Romanesque churches; dealing with snorers; and the terrifying behaviour of lycra-clad camino cyclists, as well as the flood of stories along the way.

We completed 17 stages in 2011 and returned in October 2012 to complete the remaining 17. On arrival in Santiago, we tendered our "passports", stamped each day to show that we had completed the way honestly, moving on each day. After being questioned about our motives for taking part (spiritual, sporting or recreation?), we were awarded out "Compostelas" - scrolls in Latin. The final climax of the walk was the mass for thousands of pilgrims in the cathedral, when the enormous incense burner was swung up and down the nave - originally necessary to deal with the odours of the many grubby pilgrims.

Walking the Camino de Santiago, in beautiful weather, with problems of accommodation and food taken care of, allows you to clear your mind. I took the decision not to bring anything to read, so as not to divert my mind from the way. In many ways, it was one of the most important events of my life.

If you want to walk the way, you need to join the Confraternity of St James -

www.csj.org.uk

to get up to date information and your passport. In the context of today's international problems, it is important not to dwell too much on the identity of St James. One of his manifestations is as St James the Moor Slayer, celebrated widely in religious art, including a huge equestrian painting of the saint, trampling and spearing an unfortunate Moor, mounted above the gilded altar in the pilgrim chapel of Burgos Cathedral.

General Meeting for Scotland

13th September 2014 from 11 am to about 4 pm
in Ness Bank Church, 1 Ness Bank Road, Inverness, IV2 4SF

Directions to get to Ness Bank Church

From rail (and bus) stations, cross Academy Street into Union Street, which starts directly opposite. At Mercure Hotel turn left along Church Street. At end, turn right down to river (but do not cross it), then left onto Castle Road and along Ness Bank to the riverside Church Hall entrance (about 14 minutes)

There is no parking at the church. Long stay car parking is available at the Cathedral car park opposite across the river and also at the Eastgate Centre (which is on the left as you approach the city centre from the A9 via B865).

Inverness Meeting will provide soup, bread and cheese and fruit to supplement Friends' packed lunches, and there will be tea and cakes at the end.



General Meeting for Scotland

"Let us set our minds to see the [central] committees not as some distant 'they' with documents emanating from an impersonal 'Friends House'. It is we who compose the committees and the document we dislike was, like as not, drafted by Friends in meetings not far from our own."

Quaker Faith and Practice 8.23

Dear Friends and Attenders throughout Scotland,

The afternoon of *General Meeting* will be a special session organised in conjunction with *Meeting for Sufferings*. It is one of a number of regional gatherings being held throughout Britain to explore and strengthen the relationship between area meetings and *Meeting for Sufferings*. The *Sufferings* team will be Juliet Prager, Deputy Recording Clerk, Anne Ullathorne (Assistant Clerk to *Sufferings*) and Peter Christy (a member of the *Arrangements Group* and *West Scotland AM's* representative on *Sufferings*).

It will be an opportunity to learn how *Meeting for Sufferings* works, to ask questions, and to explore the process whereby concerns arising in *Area Meetings* or *General Meeting for Scotland* can be passed to *Sufferings* and what happens thereafter. It would be particularly valuable for *AM* clerks and assistant clerks to attend, as well as *Scottish* representatives on *Meeting for Sufferings*.

Business in our morning session is likely to include an update on the new parliamentary engagement post; a report on *Scottish Government* consultations on amendments to the *Marriage (Scotland) Act 1977* to permit same-sex marriage; a report on the young people's *Summer Shindig*; and further consideration of how we might commemorate the resistance to the *Military Service Act 1916*.

I encourage you to attend, even if you have not been to *General Meeting* before.

Martin Burnell, Clerk

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Etty Hillesum: an interrupted life

**"In what sort of fatal mechanism have we become enmeshed?
The answer cannot simply be that we are all cowards"**

Etty [Esther] Hillesum, born to Jewish parents in the Netherlands in 1914, died with them and her brothers in Auschwitz in 1943. She lived in Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation and from 1941 kept a diary of her mental and spiritual development. In 1942 she voluntarily went to work at Westerbork transit camp, from where she and her family "left singing" in 1943. The last volume of her diary went with her to Auschwitz, but the others were kept by a friend, and published in 1981, along with some of her letters.

**"I'm not finished with you, God, not
by a long chalk, or with this world"**

Susan Stein, an American actress, has known of Etty and loved her work since 1994. Using material from the diaries she has developed a one-woman show, letting Etty speak in her own words, to bring Etty to people who might not otherwise encounter her, and to promote thought and discussion about the wide range of issues her story raises.

"If I should not survive, how I die will show me who I really am"

After Susan's performance in Jesus Lane Friends' Meeting House, Cambridge, The Friend [21 March 2014] had this to say:-

"More than forty Friends and non-Friends paid rapt attention - - -
. We Quakers badly need to rediscover and learn to articulate the

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intense spiritual experiences which so energised and galvanised

early Friends, from which they received such power and which sustained them against persecution. ETTY's diaries record her progress towards a deep relationship with God, from which she received such power..."

South East Scotland Area Meeting has invited Susan to perform her play in Edinburgh. We hope that many Friends and friends will take the opportunity to encounter this extraordinary young woman who had such an effect on people she encountered in her 'interrupted life' and who continues to influence people throughout the world.

7pm Thursday 9 October 2014
Augustine United Church on George IV Bridge
[just down the road from Edinburgh Friends' Meeting House]

Tickets £8/£6 (including refreshments)
from www.brownpapertickets.com/event/830309
or phone Marianne on 0131 332 2996

Contact Mary Woodward
mpwfisherrow@gmail.com / 0131.665.9192
for more information.