

# SESAME

Number 201: February 2016

Reading *Q.F. & P.* / Valuing Gifts / Prison Work / Exploring Spirituality / War of the Poppies? *Red v. White* / Faslane Dates / Polmont's Birthday / Quaker Ministry / STIR / NFPB / AM January Minutes / A Lenten thought

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**THE  
MILITARY SERVICE ACT,  
1916,**

APPLIES TO UNMARRIED MEN WHO, ON AUGUST 15th, 1915, WERE 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OVER AND WHO WILL NOT BE 41 YEARS OF AGE ON MARCH 2nd, 1916.

**ALL MEN (NOT EXCEPTED OR EXEMPTED),**  
between the above ages who, on November 2nd, 1915, were Unmarried or Widowers without any Child dependent on them will, on  
**Thursday, March 2nd, 1916**  
BE DEEMED TO BE ENLISTED FOR THE PERIOD OF THE WAR.  
They will be placed in the Reserve until Called Up in their Class.

**MEN EXCEPTED:**

SOLDIERS, including Territorials who have volunteered for Foreign Service;  
MEN serving in the NAVY or ROYAL MARINES;  
MEN DISCHARGED from ARMY or NAVY, disabled or ill, or TIME-EXPIRED MEN;  
MEN REJECTED for the ARMY since AUGUST 14th, 1915;  
CLERGYMEN, PRIESTS, and MINISTERS OF RELIGION;  
VISITORS from the DOMINIONS.

**MEN WHO MAY BE EXEMPTED BY LOCAL TRIBUNALS:**

Men more useful to the Nation in their present employments;  
Men in whose case Military Service would cause serious hardship owing to exceptional financial or business obligations or domestic position;  
Men who are ill or infirm;  
Men who conscientiously object to combatant service. If the Tribunal thinks fit, men may, on this ground, be (a) exempted from combatant service only (not non-combatant service), or (b) exempted on condition that they are engaged in work of National importance.

Up to March 2nd, a man can apply to his Local Tribunal for a certificate of exemption. There is a Right of Appeal. He will not be called up until his case has been dealt with finally.  
Certificates of exemption may be absolute, conditional or temporary. Such certificates can be renewed, varied or withdrawn.  
Men retain their Civil Rights until called up and are amenable to Civil Courts only.

**DO NOT WAIT UNTIL MARCH 2nd.  
ENLIST VOLUNTARILY NOW**

For fuller particulars of the Act, please apply for Leaflet No. 11 to the nearest Post Office, Police Station, or Recruiting Office.

The Introduction of Conscription, January 1916

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## SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

**The next Area Meeting will be held at Edinburgh Meeting House on Saturday, 27 February, 2016, starting at 11 am. Coffee will be available from 10.30 am – PLEASE BRING A PACKED LUNCH.**

The morning session will be an exploration, led by Michael Hutchinson, clerk of West Scotland AM and previously assistant recording clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting, of Quaker 'concern' and the related process of personal and corporate discernment. When an individual Friend (or attender) feels strongly about an issue and wishes to take action on it, how do they share this effectively in a Quaker context? How does the Local Meeting discern whether this is a concern which might be adopted by Quakers more widely, perhaps at Area Meeting level or perhaps even nationally? Do we have appropriate channels of communication, listening and empowerment in place?

We shall spend much of the afternoon receiving and giving initial response to the report of the STIR group, which has been exploring how our Area Meeting has been working. After receiving their report, we shall spend about 45 minutes in groups responding to it. It will be very helpful if you are able to come to this session with heart and mind prepared. **Please be familiar with the first part of Chapter 4 of *Quaker Faith & Practice* and especially with 4.02, copied in part opposite.**

**Phil Lucas, clerk**

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*We would like to send a very big thank you to everyone in Area Meeting and Central Edinburgh meeting for the wonderful loving gifts of kind words, pictures, drawings, creations, cards and the large contribution to our new garden for our retirement from the Meeting House.*

*We hope that some of you will come and visit if you are in the area. For those who would like to keep in touch our new address is:*

**6, Reidhaven Crescent, Findochty, Buckie, Morayshire AB56 4QG**

*Tel. 01542 834542 and new email [buxched.ab@gmail.com](mailto:buxched.ab@gmail.com)*

*In love and Friendship,  
Anthony & Sue Buxton*

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## **“THE AREA MEETING**

*is the primary meeting for church affairs in Britain Yearly Meeting. Its role is to develop and maintain a community of Friends, a family of local meetings who gather for worship and spiritual enrichment. It should provide that balance between worship, mutual support, administration, learning, deliberation and social life which can make its meetings enjoyable occasions and build up the spiritual life of its members.*

*“Area meetings act as facilitators and co-ordinators, ensuring that their constituent local meetings have access to opportunities for fellowship, spiritual development, and spiritual and pastoral care, including the care of children and young people. They also provide mutual support through the shared testing of concerns.”*

**Q.F. & P., 4.02**

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### **Draft Agenda**

1. Worship
2. Welcome and attendance
3. [11.20 am – 1 pm] **Concern and corporate discernment** - Michael Hutchinson  
Lunch: 1 pm – 1.45 pm (please bring your own)
4. Minutes of last meeting held 10 January 2016
5. Matters arising:
  - a) Correction to minute 2015/11/13a
  - b) Edinburgh Interfaith Association (minutes 2015/11/08 & 2016/01/04a)
  - c) Our prison ministry (minute 2016/01/08)
  - d) Britain Yearly Meeting 2016 (minute 2016/01/13)
6. [2 pm - 3.30 pm] **The future of our Area Meeting** - reception of the STIR group report [See p. 18]
7. Meeting for Sufferings – brief report
8. Membership matters
9. Appointments
10. Correspondence and notices
11. Closing minute  
Tea: 4.30 pm

### *Lest We Forget*

The Military Service Act 1916 was hustled through Parliament in January of that year, using “[a] blend of history and deception, of bogus precedent and heroic tradition”<sup>1</sup>; its provisions were outlined in the poster shown on page 1. A leader in *The Guardian* on 27 January this year (the anniversary of its receiving the royal assent) asserted that, as well as bringing in conscription, the Act “also introduced the concept of conscientious objection to the law” – but not so. The first ‘conscientious objectors’ to be recognised as such in statute had been parents who resisted having their children vaccinated against smallpox, in terms of the Vaccination Act 1898; that law’s system of tribunals to test their objection (superseded in 1907 after proving itself wholly inadequate) was also borrowed in principle by the 1916 Act. Only one member of the Coalition Cabinet – Sir John Simon, the Home Secretary – resigned over the new measure; Labour MPs having opposed its enactment, the Party Conference voted not to agitate for its repeal. That a government was dishonest, and politicians lacked moral courage, may of course seem strange to us now, a hundred years on. (Or not.)

Other things we certainly still live with. The Act “excepted” from military service “clergyman, priests and ministers of religion” (as the poster calls them) and this was a factor in Yearly Meeting’s decision in 1924 to discontinue the status of Recorded Minister, lest its holders should claim, or be accorded unasked, exception from conscription. It was far from being the only reason – it had been felt for some time that distinguishing the contributions of some Friends inhibited those of others – but encouraging ministry became a problem to which “British Friends have still not found a wholly adequate solution” as Alastair Heron put it twenty years ago<sup>2</sup>; although active seeking for one goes on [– see p. 14].

The centenary of the 1916 Act was marked by events at Westminster and Holyrood; the latter, on 28 January, was arranged by Mairi Campbell-Jack, Friends’ Scottish Parliamentary Engagement Officer, and hosted by Patrick Harvie MSP. It was not concerned with political process or religious consequences, but focused on the experience of Conscientious Objectors; rightly, since, as the first speaker put it, “anyone seeking heroes need look no further than the 16,000 C.O.s”; and it is fitting that their courage be acknowledged. Gratifying too (perhaps) that this should be said by an ‘establishment’ figure (he, Trevor Royle, the journalist and military historian, sits on the Government’s Scottish Commemorations Panel overseeing centenary

celebrations in 2014-18); for all that it is obviously easier to praise long-dead protesters of long-won causes than living, breathing trouble-makers. Not, of course, that the C.O.s of the First World War are all *that* long dead; and it is questionable, too, that their cause *has* been won, except to the extent (hardly negligible) that subsequent generations of war-resisters have had an easier time of it because of their stance. Bertrand Russell, however, was in no doubt as to their achievement: at the final public meeting of the No-Conscription Fellowship, on 30 November 1919, he said it had been

*completely victorious in its stand for freedom [...] The whole power of the State has not been able to compel the members of the N-CF to kill or help in killing. In winning this victory you have won an even greater victory; you have won a victory for the sense of human worth, for the realisation of the value of each individual soul. It is that, above all, that we must assert and put before the world, that sense that each human soul [...] has within him [sic] something sacred, something that must not be warped and destroyed by the imposition of outside forces.*<sup>3</sup>

Well – asserting “human worth” had not helped the four Quaker MPs to keep their seats in the 1918 election – all had been ousted – and Russell himself, having had his Cambridge fellowship withdrawn in 1916, was not able to re-enter academe, at least in the UK. For others who found themselves likewise barred from their pre-war employment, but lacked the opportunities open to the brother of an earl, it must have been hard to feel victorious. Suffering did not end with the release of the last C.O. from jail. Yet even while former “conchies” were shunned, their message was heard. C. E. Montague, an over-age volunteer in 1914 who had risen to the rank of captain, wrote in 1922 of the “five or six million ex-soldiers ...[who were] the most determined peace party that ever existed in Britain”; metaphorically at least, they would “clap the darbies [handcuffs]” on all future warmongers<sup>4</sup>. The red poppy was their emblem, then. But now? [See p. 12] At risk of seeming churlish – we should be wary of official praise of C.O.s. For if hailing them as heroes co-opts (*conscripts* even) their memory to being part of the tale of a tolerant, democratic, peace-loving UK (whose nuclear weapons only deter terrorists and preserve jobs) it dishonours them. Heroism, like patriotism, is not enough.

1. John Rae – *Conscience & Politics: The British Government and the Conscientious Objectors to Military Service 1916-1919*, Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 35.
2. Alastair Heron – *Quakers in Britain: a century of change 1895-1995*, Curlew Graphics, 1995, p. 43
3. Quoted in David Boulton – *Objection Overruled*, MacGibbon & Kee, 1967, p. 291.
4. C. E. Montague – *Disenchantment*, Chatto & Windus, 1922: 1924 edn, p. 228.

## *So, how's it going in your meeting?*

How is *what* going please? Oh, following the "Reading *Quaker faith & practice*" calendar of course.

Up and down the country meetings are getting together and getting to know *Quaker faith & practice* and each other. Groups are meeting early on Sunday mornings, later on Sunday mornings, on weekdays or evenings, in homes and in Meeting Houses. Some Meetings have had to arrange more than one session to cope with numbers, some groups are a faithful few.

In some Meetings Elders lead the group, in others an interested Friend, in some Friends just come together. It's easier than you might think to volunteer to facilitate a group, there is a step-by-step guide with suggested activities on the "Being Friends Together" website where the "Reading *Quaker faith & practice*" resources are free.

For many Friends these reading sessions are a journey of exploration and a great joy. Some Meetings have used them to encourage Attenders to learn more and to ask questions, and some have discovered that ministry in Meeting for Worship has deepened.

It's not too late to join in, it's not too late to ask your Meeting to start a group or even to start one yourself. Your Meeting could also book a 'Woodbrooke on the Road' day to explore the book together. And if you find yourself far from your Meeting, you can just read alone or look at the "Being Friends Together" website. Did I mention that the "Reading *Quaker faith & practice*" resources are free? There you can find help to follow the reading programme as an individual.

Be a part of the conversation, discover how *Quaker faith & practice* speaks to you and to others. On the way we may learn from the stories that other Friends bring and find the love that binds us together in our faith.

**Sheila Houldin**

Revision Preparation Group

*The suggested reading for March is Chapter 10: Belonging to a Quaker meeting, and Chapter 11: Membership. The full calendar is online at <http://qfp.quaker.org.uk/reading/calendar/>.*

## On Valuing our own Gifts and Service

*From being an unenthusiastic youth ("I frequented meetings and the greater part of my time I slept" – Q.F. & P. 19.60) Samuel Bownas (1676-1753) became a celebrated Quaker minister: one of the first to be 'recorded' as such when the practice began in the 1730s, he was known for the depth and wisdom of his spoken contributions. This comes from a work addressed to would-be ministers, but his comments apply to all: note that "he or she" is in the original. (The reference to Aquilla and Priscilla is to a couple who held meetings in their home: at Corinth where Paul stayed with them [Acts 18:2] and at other times, apparently, in Rome [Romans 16:3] and "in Asia" [1 Corinthians 16:19].)*

Some are always repining, and thinking meanly of their gifts and services, which is a wrong mind; and where it prevails will do hurt, and hinder our improvement and growth. We ought to consider that every gift of God is good and ought to be regarded as such. He or she that has the smallest and least degree of a gift in the ministry, as they wait in it, and mind to keep to it, and neither on the one hand go before it, nor on the other neglect it, but carefully mind the openings of it and follow its leadings, they will in due time by experience find an enlargement both of matter and spiritual understanding, which will give them great encouragement to go on. I have known sundry such become able ministers, and of very great service in the church; and I have known others, as well as myself, that have begun very poor, and seemed contemptible and mean in the eyes of their friends, nay, have been advised to desist, as not being called to that work, nor qualified for such service, which is very wounding and discouraging. In which time some kind sympathizing Aquilla or Priscilla have been concerned to heal the wound, by instructing more perfectly in the way of the ministry, by giving proper advice and encouragement to go on in the work under the government of the divine Spirit, with a meek and humble conduct; advising on the one hand not to take too much notice of what others say in dispraise of thy service, but endeavouring to remove their objections by a prudent behaviour; nor on the other, too much regarding what may be said in commendation thereof. For without exercising judgment, the former may cast down too much, and the latter may exalt the mind above its place.

*A Description of the Qualities Necessary to a Gospel Minister, 1750*



## Quaker Prison Minister's report 2016

I am now at the end of my second triennium of this service.

The main threads of our ministry for Edinburgh Prison have really remained substantially unchanged over this last year. Financial help has been requested for 33 newly-remanded prisoners, and £260 has been given to them – sometimes five pounds, at other times ten, depending on needs. The chaplains continue always to thank us for our donations to the specified prisoners – they say that the prisoners really appreciate this service and so do they. I am well-acquainted with the staff on the cash-desk – they recall my name and details more quickly than I do!

A cordial relationship has also been maintained with the staff of the Visitor's Centre – we provided a quantity of good quality art materials – paints, paper, brushes – which are very much appreciated. The manager particularly commented on the brushes; she said that so many which are given to the children are of poor quality, but those which we gave are lasting and effective. We spent just under £123 on these materials, and £95 on another small table and chairs for the play-area.

The staff at the Visitor's Centre had said some time ago that there was a real need for good-quality books which could be used to support projects and personal reading within the centre. I approached my former colleagues in the City Library Service, and they really did come up trumps – boxes of lovely books about environmental studies, wildlife, sports – and quantities of picture-books.

Security has been noticeably tightened over the last few years. I can no longer see any prisoner who wishes to see me, in the previous venue of the chaplaincy centre – I have to meet them in a glass-walled room where they can be seen at all times – and so do the other chaplains. However, it has to be said that the prison itself is far more welcoming than it used to be – the entrance has been modernised so that it is very similar to an airport; facilities for play and seating for very young children are in situ, and the atmosphere is non-threatening and friendly. The prison service has worked very hard to ensure this is so.

For the future, there is a possibility that we may be able to take part in facilitating some worship-groups. Elizabeth Allen, from our Area Meeting and Robin Baker, of Perth Meeting, had a meeting with the Chaplain



for the Scottish Prison Service to discuss possibilities for Quaker chaplaincy within the prison service – they did this on behalf of General Meeting for Scotland. I continue to be asked to services for “special” occasions – Easter and Christmas.

I do feel that the work which we have been doing in Edinburgh Prison is worthwhile and important to the recipients. I do hope that we can continue it. And I do hope that those Friends who continue it for us will enjoy it as much as I have.

**Margaret Mortimer**

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### **“A light for those who dwell in darkness”**

was the title of the BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship on 31 January, which came from HMP Long Lartin in Worcestershire. One of the presenters was Judith Roles, one of the two Quaker Chaplains at the prison; the programme also featured prisoner testimony from a man who described Meeting for Worship as the highlight of his week. The recording is available on the BBC iPlayer until the end of February, so if you are quick you may catch it – go to <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06z1zdp> (where there is also a full transcript).

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### *Elizabeth Seale Carnall, 17. vii. 1935 - 23. xii. 2015*

*At the memorial meeting in Edinburgh, Pam Brunt of St Andrews read this poem of Elizabeth's which was incorporated into the Quaker Women's Group's Swarthmore Lecture, Bringing the Invisible into the Light (1986).*

### ***The Names of God***

God is our mother,  
 Father, brother  
 Sister,  
 And any other  
 Name  
 That God chooses  
 To give us.  
 Compassionate, Merciful,  
 Loving and Just,

Source and Completion,  
 Beginning and End.  
 These are words  
 For the Word.  
 Forgive us,  
 For we know not  
 What they mean,  
 Unless we feel  
 Where words come from.

## EXPLORING SPIRITUALITY 2016

### *Diverse Concepts and Experience*

*Sessions on the theme of 'Exploring Spirituality' will be held at the Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh, EH1 2JL. They are intended to be of interest not only to Quakers, but also other spiritual seekers. All are welcome. Admission is free, but donations towards expenses will be gratefully accepted. Each session will probably comprise a talk, questions & answers, sharing experiences and discussion, and a time of meditation or silent worship. They will take place monthly on a Saturday afternoon, from 2.30-4.30 pm. Tea/coffee will be available for a modest charge from 2.00 - 2.30 pm. [The first session, **Reconciling Spirituality and Science**, led by Bob Harwood was on 6 February.]*

#### **2. 12 March – Rev. Paul Newton: *Rudolf Steiner and Modern Spirituality.***

Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) developed Anthroposophy as a modern 'spiritual science'. We will explore the spirituality and the understanding of human and word development underpinning the well-known practical fruits (Steiner Education, Biodynamic Agriculture, etc.).

*Rev. Paul Newton* works in Edinburgh as a priest of the Christian Community (Movement for Religious Renewal). He has been involved with Anthroposophy in the UK and the US over the last 20 years.

#### **3. 2 April 2016 – Simon Jackson: *Fuzzy definitions and personal choice.***

Ben Pink Dandelion's Swarthmore Lecture, 'Open for Transformation', was delivered at Britain Yearly Meeting 2014. Ben characterises Quakerism at its core as being based in the reality of spiritual experience, which is prioritised over doctrine. However, he suggests that the absence of teaching Quakerism within the Society of Friends has allowed everything to be questioned and related to personal choice. Some questions emerge – can Quakerism be taught, or, is it 'caught' by association and intuition?

It is hoped to be able to show a video of the Lecture.

*Simon Jackson* trained in Art at St Martin's School, London, then as an Art Therapist at St Albans. He later obtained a degree in the Philosophy and Ethics of Mental Health at Warwick University in 2005, before moving to Scotland, where he became a Quaker in 2008, attending Central Edinburgh meeting.

#### **4. 7 May – Helen Holt: *Mysticism, psychology and Rufus Jones.***

Today's Liberal Quakerism owes much to Rufus Jones and his psychologically informed interpretation of Quakerism as a mystical religion.

This session will provide an introduction to his thought and the opportunity to reflect on some of his ideas in small groups.

*Having spent 20 years working as a scientific copy-editor while studying theology and spirituality in her spare time, Helen Holt decided to combine her interests in 2013 by embarking on an M.Sc in Science and Religion at Edinburgh University. Somewhat unexpectedly, her studies led her to Quakerism. She is now an attender at Tweeddale Meeting and a Ph.D candidate investigating how Rufus Jones related mysticism and psychology.*

**5. 25 June – Jim Pym: *The Message of the Myth.***

In 1988, Joseph Campbell, the distinguished scholar of 'myth', gave six hour-long recorded conversations with veteran journalist, Bill Moyers, entitled 'The Power of the Myth'. The second of these will be shown here. Jim will conduct the discussion that will follow the video. Myth is a language that speaks directly to the heart, and is an interesting reflection of mysticism.

*Jim Pym has had a life-long interest in comparative religion, especially Buddhism and Quakerism, and particularly from a mystical point of view, which leads naturally into his interest in, and vocation for, spiritual healing.*

**6. 16 July – Janet Saunders: *Playing with the cosmos: The journey of the soul from Plato to Ficino.***

Our ideas about the cosmos can have profound implications for the way we behave towards ourselves and our world. Iain McGilchrist in *The Master and His Emissary* has argued that we, in our society, tend to rely too much on left-brain reasoning and that our relationship with our world has slipped out of balance. It was not always so. We have lost touch with an older cosmology that was the norm for 2,000 years and from India to France. Could there be lessons we can learn from our own deep cultural history that might help us live more balanced lives here and now?

*Janet Saunders is a student at Canterbury Christ Church University studying for an MA in Myth, Cosmology and the Sacred. Her ideas for this talk are drawn from her creative project and studies of the works of Ibn 'Arabi and practice of astrology.*

***For further information, contact [anniemiller15@gmail.com](mailto:anniemiller15@gmail.com),  
or 0131 447 3268.***

## Poppies and Peace

At our last Area Meeting, a concern from East Lothian LM was raised about the practice of selling red poppies in the Edinburgh Meeting House. We could not reach agreement, with several Friends speaking movingly of their personal choice to wear a red poppy in November. I respect their wish to do so, and their motivation, although the red poppy trademark has now come to signify something other than purely 'remembrance'. There has been a deliberate, and successful, attempt in recent years to harness it to the notion of 'supporting our troops' and by implication, supporting decisions to send them to war. But that personal choice is I think different in quality from the sale of the poppies in a Meeting House, where a connection is being made between Quakers and the cause.

'Balance' was also mentioned. Some questions arise for me: why do we need balance? We are the Religious Society of Friends, not the BBC. We try to be faithful to the promptings of love and truth in our hearts. Do we have to balance every expression of our testimony with another view? Do we say, 'We seek a right use of the world's resources but of course there's something to be said for exploiting fossil fuels as much as possible'? The world, our world, is out of balance and we need to try to redress that balance. If you want a see-saw to be level, and there's a weight at one end, you don't sit in the middle.

I've been wondering whether the problem we have is not with the red poppy at all, but with the white one. After all, if we didn't promote the white emblem with its message of No More War, I doubt that this question would arise. I don't deny for a moment that the military charities provide necessary help for women and men who have been damaged by their participation in warfare. But would we single out the Earl Haig Fund as a charity especially close to our hearts?

So, what is it about the white poppy? If we believe that it is a divisive and hurtful symbol, that needs 'softening' - why do we sell it? If we believe that its message is in keeping with our long-held testimony against war, why do we feel the need to 'balance' this message? Are we being faithful to our leadings, do we have the courage of our convictions? Or, carried away on the tide of popular sentiment, are we more concerned with what people may think of us? I hope not.

I used to wear a red poppy, then a white poppy, then both. Now I wear neither, because each of them seems to mean something I don't want it to mean. I may donate to either or both the Poppy Appeal and the Peace Pledge Union, but choose now not to advertise my decision by wearing a paper flower – at any time of year.

How strange that Quakers, of all people, are exercised by symbols and influenced by times and seasons. Let us always remember the dead, the damaged, the brutalised and the bereaved of all wars, past and present. Guided by the inward voice, let us work for a more peaceful world in whatever way we can, whenever we can.

**Jane Pearn**

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## **Meeting for Witness – Faslane**

On various Sundays throughout the year, Friends hold a meeting for worship outside HMNB Clyde – Faslane, home of the UK's Trident submarines – as a witness to our opposition to these (and all) weapons of mass destruction. The dates for 2016 are:

**20 March 24 April 22 May 19 June 25 September & 13 November**

We foregather at the North Gate at 11.00 am. Please come with something to sit on; something to eat before the journey home; and (most important) something that deals with the weather, from rain to midges – some of us take bin bags to keep our feet dry.

To arrive in good time we leave Edinburgh at approximately 8.30 am !

**Alison Burnley**

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## **POLMONT MEETING IS HAVING A BIRTHDAY**

How time flies. Quakers have been worshipping in the Greenpark Centre in Polmont for 30 years and we are planning to celebrate this in a number of ways during 2016. We hope to have a Peace Pole erected in one of our public spaces around Falkirk. We are researching for an exhibition on local WW1 conscientious objectors and also planning an open day/birthday party/celebration. As our plans become clearer we will be passing on more information and we hope to share some of these events with our Area Meeting friends.

**Mariot Dallas**

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## **“What is Quaker Ministry?”**

### ***Woodbrooke – 27-29 November 2015***

This, my first ever Woodbrooke course, was run by three wise women: Patsy Wilson, Hazel Rowntree and Annique Seddon (as Elder). I had imagined it would focus on *vocal* ministry, and I admit to wondering whether we could fill a whole weekend. I now realise that, of course, we *could* have; but as it was, the event was extremely wide ranging and went further than any of us had expected. Imagine a weekend that explored Quaker history, life stages, the pleasures and pains of vocal ministry, and also gave us the opportunity to experiment with a mini Meeting for Clearness. All this, and almost four hours of free time on the Saturday too. I think I got value for AM’s money!

We began by extending a special welcome to one of our number, Ann Brown, who had been sent by her General Meeting, Melbourne Australia, on a tour of the UK that included London, Woodbrooke and the Quaker community at Bamford in the Hope Valley. She brought with her a Travelling Minute: a piece of Quaker tradition which delighted those of us who had not heard of it before. It seems Quakers in Australia use this convention quite frequently but it was a fascinating novelty to many of us; perhaps partly because it was a tangible *thing* which Ann handed to Patsy on that first evening. An actual paper which had come all that distance – how quaint in this digital age!

We went into a session on our Quaker forebears and how they had experienced ministry: living faithful lives, some of them dying for that faith, and forging the way of silent worship and Spirit-led vocal ministry.

We spoke of how to test our leadings:

- Walking – experiencing nature, especially big skies;
- For those not able to walk, a meditative activity with the hands, such as knitting, which allows the musing mind to take over;
- Someone else spoke of feeling peace while sitting safely indoors watching raindrops on window glass, or trees moving in the wind, and that this was a time to explore leadings.

The focus on Friday night and Saturday was on how the actions of our lives can be lived and experienced as ministry. I was reminded of how, in conversation with Alistair Cameron, I had said that there was very rarely any ministry at our meeting in Polmont, and he gently corrected me: “You mean *vocal* ministry”. I had instantly agreed, trying to look wise, but in fact it was a new thought to me. We were given a lot of opportunity to explore this idea of being patterns and examples, and appreciating the different forms that ministry might take.

### **“LIFE STAGES”**

Helped by quotes from Thomas Merton and others, we did exercises on what it means to live authentic lives. An illuminating one on “Life Stages”, asked what freedoms and restrictions we were currently experiencing in our own lives. It was valuable to be doing this in a very mixed age group – whereas I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the demands on my time, with two small children and a full-time job, there were others beginning to experience the loneliness of later life. While I could look longingly at their clear diaries, so they looked longingly at my jam-covered twins. Most instructive, to be brought anew to a sense of gratitude for what we currently have.

### **“ARRANGING THE CHAIRS”**

The conversation about our actions *being* our ministry ranged from awe at the early Quaker martyrs, to celebration of people in our own meetings who seem to live entirely for social justice. This soon broadened out into an appreciation of those Friends who take on the seemingly mundane tasks of opening up, arranging chairs, and making sure there is enough milk for teas and coffees. There was an honest debate about this: Some people thought there was something more “dense” about Quaker Ministry, and that to talk of arranging chairs being a form of ministry was to dilute the power of the word. Annique, our Elder for the weekend, suggested that reserving the term for the more elevated, visible or heroic acts, might convince some people that they are not capable of ministry, even as they are actually ministering in a most beautiful way, and others are gratefully receiving it as beautiful ministry. If you have done the inward work, Annique said, the way you put out the chairs, can be done in God. If it is grounded in love, then it is ministry. This idea was received thoughtfully by all present.

### **“VOCAL MINISTRY”**

On Saturday evening we enjoyed a session on Vocal ministry. We came into the room to discover three tables covered in picture postcards, depicting everything from famous paintings, to photographs of landscapes, to inspiring quotations. Hazel asked us to spend a minute walking around the tables to select a postcard to represent a significant piece of vocal ministry we had given or received at any point. We were then invited (if we wished) to share this with the group. I chose a Picasso, *Dove Flying Over A Rainbow*, which reminded me of my very first Quaker meeting, when someone ministered about Nelson Mandela and the very great hopes resting in him at the time. Someone else spoke of attending a meeting while on holiday and gratefully received ministry in the depths of her grief. When she went to thank the speaker, after meeting, he confessed astonishment that he had been



given those words to say: the meeting was a tiny mid-week meeting and in all the years of its running, there had rarely been any vocal ministry. They marvelled together. There were several “goose-bumpy” stories of this nature. Some people wanted to talk about problems that can arise with vocal ministry. It seems that in larger meetings, a speaker or speakers can sometimes dominate (not an issue in our rather quiet Polmont meeting). It was agreed that skilful eldering was needed in these cases; respecting the fact that when such problems arise it can be a rich opportunity for a meeting to nurture the dominating person. People shared responses that they had witnessed, some kinder than others. Someone had seen an Elder rise and say with some sternness: “I think our Friend has delighted us long enough”. On another occasion someone rose and said “Thank you. I would like to share something” and then stayed quiet. While people waited to hear, the silence deepened and the meeting gathered again.

Annique reminded us that one of the thrilling things about Quaker worship is that it can go wrong! I had never quite thought of it in this way, but of course it is true; when it goes right it is all the more marvellous.

#### **“MINI MEETING FOR CLEARNESS”**

This was the most extraordinary event of the weekend for me. I had read about the process and heard the experiences of Friends who had had meetings for clearness, but this was the closest I had ever come. We were put in groups of three, and given an instruction sheet which explained very precisely what we were to do. One person was the “focus person”, *i.e.* the one who was seeking clearness on an issue. The others were there to gently ask questions, not for the focus person to answer vocally, but rather to stimulate their thinking. As it said on the instruction sheet “Your purpose is to help the individual... You are helping them listen to God. Being there prayerfully is a contribution.” A time-keeper sat near us and told us when to start and end each phase of the process. Looking back at the instruction sheet, and the extremely tight time restrictions I can scarcely believe what we achieved! This was the process:

- 1 minute of silence to centre*
- 3 minutes for the focus person to outline the issue*
- 1 minute for clarification questions*
- 1 minute for silence*
- 8 minutes for open questions*
- 1 minute for silence or prayer*
- 1 minute for transition*

In my group, we helped our focus person make a really enormous decision! As the time-keeper brought the session to a close, she threw her hands above her head and cried “Thank you! I know what to do!” The other two of us were amazed; we had been asking our questions with no plan at all, neither of us having had a strong opinion on what we thought she should do, and yet we had accompanied her faithfully in her decision-making process; and she had been given an answer. She was completely elated, and so were we.

To help me prepare this report I was given three questions, which I repeat here with my answers.

***What inspired / moved me?***

Some words of Thomas Merton made a big impression on many of us. Patsy provided the text, which reads: *“There is a pervasive form of contemporary violence to which the idealist most easily succumbs: activism and overwork. The rush and pressure of modern life are a form, perhaps the most common form, of its innate violence. To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns, to surrender to too many demands, to commit oneself to too many projects, to want to help everyone in everything, is to succumb to violence. The frenzy of our activism neutralizes our work for peace. It destroys our own inner capacity for peace. It destroys the fruitfulness of our own work, because it kills the root of inner wisdom which makes work fruitful.”*

***What does Area Meeting need to think about?***

I think it would be very useful to explore mini meetings for clearness, facilitated by experienced Friends. It is one thing to read about them, or to think one understands the theory, quite another thing to experience the process.

***What does Area Meeting need to do?***

I was moved by the offer of a bursary to attend Woodbrooke; I would not have sought it without strong encouragement (almost commands!) from overseers. Perhaps AM could enquire how many people have not been to Woodbrooke. My guess is, that the cost might be a major factor: those eligible for help often do not consider asking because they are used to going without. I know that over the years it has often been mentioned during Notices that there are “funds available” to send people to Woodbrooke, but the fact never really got through to me somehow. Perhaps AM could explore how to encourage people of limited means really to understand that these offers are genuinely for them? It was a wonderful experience and I am thankful for it.

**Jessica Paterson**

## STIR Group – Final Report

The STIR (Short-Term Review) group was set up just over a year ago, to look at how Friends in South East Scotland view our Area Meeting. Our aim is to improve the experience of people attending meetings, and to enhance the sense of ownership.

There are six on the group – Jane Pearn from Kelso; Deirdre Armstrong from South Edinburgh; Rachel Fitzgerald and Don Stubbings from Central Edinburgh; and Justin Kenrick and myself from Portobello & Musselburgh. During 2015, we've had a fascinating time visiting almost every local meeting, and holding meetings with most of the committees within Area Meeting.

When we gave an interim report in October, we spoke of the dual aspect of Area Meeting, drawing a distinction between 'Area Meeting the event' on the one hand, and 'Area Meeting the community' on the other. Reflection since then has led us to the view that this is an inadequate description, and we now prefer to present our ideas about Area Meeting as a trefoil, on the lines of the Celtic 'everlasting knot'.



In this perspective, Area Meeting brings together the three key elements of the life of Quakers in South East Scotland, all underpinned by the work of the spirit:

- Building the community of Quakers in our area, helping us to know each other, offering love and support wherever we live;
- Encouraging our witness in the world and our own and each other's spiritual growth;
- Doing the necessary 'housekeeping' that underpins the maintenance and nurture of Quaker worship and traditions in our area.

The key conclusion of our discussions is that many feel that the last of these has become over-dominant in the way Area Meeting the event takes place – and so our trefoil is out of balance. We have asked people what their priorities are, and their visions for the future, and very few are about more effective administration – they are about how we share our Quaker approaches to peace, social justice, better economics and spiritual growth.

The **way** we hold our meetings is important only insofar as it promotes these.

If balance is to be re-established, we need to identify ways in which our structures and practice nurture all three essential elements, providing space for the different skills and enthusiasms of all to flourish – our members, attenders, children and contacts with kindred spirits and fellow-travellers.

At Area Meeting in February, we will present the conclusions of our work, and make the case for a re-balancing process. There will be an opportunity to discuss this in small groups, and to think through the consequences together. The STIR group will then take away the responses, with a view to bringing proposals for change to a future Area Meeting.

This is not a finished process – there is plenty of opportunity to influence things. If you can't get to AM in February to take part, we are very glad to have any views or insights you may want to offer in writing: write to my address in the Book of Members, or email me at [mandolin.alastair@gmail.com](mailto:mandolin.alastair@gmail.com).

**Alastair Cameron**

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**S**TIR up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people, that they plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

*The Book of Common Prayer, 1662*

## Northern Friends Peace Board

At a conference in York in January 1913, Friends from the Quarterly Meetings of Yorkshire, Lancashire & Cheshire, Cumberland and Westmorland agreed to establish a “permanent peace board” (originally of 18 members with a full-time Organising Secretary), with the *special duty ... to advise and encourage Friends in the North, and through them their fellow Christians and citizens generally in the active promotion of peace in all its height and breadth*. They were motivated by the accelerating arms race between the European powers, a deteriorating international situation and an increasingly militarised society at home; in their first annual report, they wrote: *We are determined to maintain, as an integral part of our religious faith, our abhorrence of war, and not to whittle down in any way our testimony that that it is a violation of the divine laws of human fellowship*. The outbreak of war a few months later reshaped how this determination was put into effect: the Board was involved in supporting detained ‘enemy aliens’ and, later, conscientious objectors, while continuing to produce literature and posters under the difficult conditions of wartime censorship.

Fifty years later, literature and posters were what made me first aware of the Northern Friends Peace Board – I suppose others remember too the cover of the booklet *Orange & Green*, with the two donkeys, although I only learned later how influential its analysis of the situation in Ulster had been – and I first served on the Board as a representative for what was then East Midlands of Scotland Monthly Meeting in the early 1980s. When I started my current stint, representing South East Scotland Area Meeting, it was good to see that, as on the last occasion I had been at a Board meeting in Edinburgh, Geoffrey Carnall was there; less good that we were hearing about a ‘new’ CND publication, *Fortress Scotland*, the first edition of which had actually appeared thirty years before, during my first period of Board membership.

In most respects the NFPB of the 20-teens is very different from what it was in the 1980s, however. The focus of those years, when Rowland Dale was secretary, was on the Cold War and the nuclear threat, almost to the exclusion of all else: Leonard Bird, a member from Hull, produced his book *Costa Rica: a Country Without an Army* with NFPB support, but otherwise attention was devoted to East-West relations. Board

members visited Moscow and Leningrad (attracting virulent criticism in the *Yorkshire Post*); a delegation from the Soviet Peace Committee came to Scotland and Northern England; and a booklet *Towards a Quaker View of 'Russia'* was published. However other aspects of the “height and breadth” of peace were perhaps neglected, and a shift in priorities took place in the mid-80s, when the ‘secretary’ became a ‘co-ordinator’, the ‘chairman’, a ‘clerk’, and there was a conscious effort to return to the principles of the founding minute. My memory is that despite the presence of such formidable Friends as Jessie Baston of Sheffield and Eva Pinthus of Leeds, the Board membership of the early ‘80s was predominantly male; and I think that, apart from myself, Colin Hunter of Bradford was the only regular participant under 40. Nowadays, the gender balance, at least, is very different, although probably, still, more members are grey-haired than not.

Board meetings are still peripatetic, but nowadays, I am glad to say, at least one a year is in Scotland; and setting out from Edinburgh, rather than stationless St Andrews, all the venues have been accessible without having to stay away overnight. The agenda usually includes some item of local concern or interest – in Huddersfield, we heard from Cyril Pearce about his researches into war resistance in the town in 1914-18 (since published in the revised edition of his *Comrades in Conscience*) although more usually it is a Friend or Friends from our host meeting. At one meeting (at Darlington in 2012) our guest speaker was unable to attend through being in prison! - a thirteen-day sentence for her part in a 2009 protest against bombing in Afghanistan.

The Board has, at any one time, a number of projects which will result in conferences and other events, or publications, or both: present themes include *Sustainable Security; Challenging Militarism; Peacebuilding*.

**Alan Frith**

*This report, prepared for but not delivered at the last AM, appears now because the Board will have met again before the next Sesame; I hope to include a note of the March meeting in issue 202. Area Meeting is currently looking for a second NFPB rep. – could it be you?*

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### **EDINBURGH PEACE & JUSTICE CENTRE**

*has moved. Its new address is 5 Upper Bow, Edinburgh EH1 2JN (next to the Meeting House at 7 Victoria Terrace); tel. 0131 629 1058; email [contact@peaceandjustice.org.uk](mailto:contact@peaceandjustice.org.uk); Twitter @EdinPandJ.*

## SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

**Minutes of Area Meeting held at 2 pm on Sunday 10 January 2016  
at the Open Door, South Edinburgh**

**2016/01/01 Worship**

During our opening worship *Quaker Faith & Practice* 21:23 has been read to us. We have reflected on Jesus' question in the Sermon on the Mount, "If ye salute your brethren only, what do ye to excess?" [*Matt. 5:47, as cited by Phyllis Richards, 1949*] Though the world deems it foolish, might we seek the Grace of God to love to excess?

We have remembered with thanksgiving the life of Elisabeth Seale Carnall, who died on 23 December 2015, and that of Andrew Morton, who died on 7 January 2016. In our worship, we have upheld their families and friends as they mourn their passing.

**2016/01/02 Introductions**

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

**2016/01/03 The minutes of our last meeting**, held on 28 November 2015 in Portobello, have been signed and entered in the minute book.

**2016/01/04 Matters arising****a) Edinburgh Interfaith Association** (Minute 2015/11/08 refers)

We expect our nominations committee to bring a suggested name for our representative to our next meeting.

**b) Representative to Junior Yearly Meeting** (Minute 2015/11/13b)

Immediately after our last meeting, where we failed to appoint a Young Friend to attend Junior Yearly Meeting, **Callum Booth Lewis** offered his name. He was appointed by our between-meetings procedure and a note to this effect has been inserted in the minutes of our November 2015 meeting.

(\*\* **Mairi Jones** (*Central Edinburgh*) has now also asked to attend JYM. Having ascertained that spaces were still available, she was also appointed, on 12 January by between-meetings procedure, to attend.)

**2016/01/05 Sharing the life of our Local Meetings**

At the invitation of the clerks, our Local Meetings have, since September 2014, been sharing with us in turn something of their meetings' lives. Eight of the nine have now reported, with Tweeddale, whose report has been delayed, due to take their turn in July this year.



We agree that this has been a helpful process, not only to those receiving the reports but also to local meetings preparing for them. We agree to repeat the cycle, starting in early 2017.

### **2016/01/06 Meeting for Sufferings**

Henry Thompson's report on the residential Meeting for Sufferings, held at Woodbrooke from 4 to 6 December 2015, has been published in *Sesame*. Residential meetings are held early in each triennium.

The matter of responding centrally to concerns about TTIP (the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) was raised but not agreed.

Henry pointed us to the trial vibrancy project, which will see 'vibrancy officers' in three locations around the country for three and a half years. Janet Grimwade has reminded us of the project's purpose and we understand one aim is to share ownership of Yearly Meeting work with the regions. We look forward to learning more and we hope that the project will strengthen the work which will follow from our STIR review. We were reminded by another Friend that meeting for worship is at the heart of our life and is the source of each Meeting's vibrancy.

About half of the meeting was devoted to reflection on the status and state of Area Meetings, with widespread unease about their effectiveness leading to reviews such as the one we are currently undertaking and which will be under consideration at our next meeting.

### **2016/01/07 Nominations priorities**

Our nominations committee, in consultation with other experienced friends, has drawn up a guidance schedule prioritizing Area Meeting appointments and indicating which posts are suitable for the appointment of attenders and which should be reserved for members only.

We thank the committee for its work and ask that the guidelines it provides should be followed. We note that our nominations committee intends to hold its meetings around the Area Meeting to help all Local Meetings to engage with the nomination and appointment process. We also note that it is helpful, when appropriate, to invite Friends to volunteer their names when tasks need to be done.

### **2016/01/08 Our prison ministry**

Margaret Mortimer, our appointed prison minister who is now completing two triennia of service, has shared with us something of the work she does on our behalf at Edinburgh Prison. [See p. 8]

The main threads of her work have remained substantially unchanged over the last year. 33 newly remanded prisoners have requested finan-

cial help and £260 has been shared with them in small grants, a service which is much appreciated by both prisoners and chaplains. A good relationship has been maintained with the Visitors' Centre, where the gift of good quality art materials and a table and chairs for the play area, costing in total £218, have also been appreciated. Margaret has also been able to respond very effectively to a request for books by exploiting her links with former colleagues in the City Library Service. Security has been noticeably tightened, but despite that the prison is far more welcoming than used to be the case, thanks to good work by the prison service. There is a possibility that in the future we may be able to help facilitate worship groups, and the suggestion of Quaker chaplaincy is being broached by representatives of General Meeting for Scotland.

We thank Margaret Mortimer warmly for her report and for all the prison work she has done on our behalf.

#### **2016/01/09 Haig Fund Red poppies - a Local Meeting concern**

We have received the following minute from East Lothian LM:

*Minute 2015/20 Sale of red poppies at 7 Victoria Terrace*

*Our AM clerk passed on our concern to the clerk of the Management Committee about the prominence and sale of red poppies at the Edinburgh Meeting House which we felt gave out the wrong message, especially whilst we are acting on our concern about growing militarisation in schools.*

*Having read her reply which recognised that there are differing views on the matter, we agree to ask our clerk to contact AM clerk with the request now that this matter be brought to Area Meeting so there can be a full and careful consideration of the issues involved. We ask Elisabeth Wilson to introduce this on our behalf at Area Meeting and we send this minute to Area Meeting.*

Elisabeth has spelled out the reasons for the East Lothian concern and countered arguments made defending the purchase and sale of red poppies, pointing out the role the British Legion has in supporting militarism. Others feel it is right that we should sell both red and white poppies, thus showing sensitivity to those who have suffered as the result of war.

The view was shared that, while the message of the red poppy may at one time have been 'Lest we forget', it is now understood much more to be a symbol of support for militarism and the military, and we have

been told that red poppy events are sponsored by arms manufacturers. In a changing world, the meaning of the red poppy has moved on. Its use with children and in schools is seen to encourage a wrong attitude to war and a warped understanding of heroism.

We find we are not united in our response to East Lothian Meeting's minute and will return to the matter later in the year.

### **2016/01/10 What is Quaker ministry? - report of a Woodbrooke course**

Jessica Paterson, attender at Polmont Meeting, represented us, with Cath Dyer, also of Polmont, on the course *What is Quaker Ministry?* held at Woodbrooke in November 2015. Her written report has been submitted for the next issue of *Sesame*. [See p. 14]

The focus on Friday evening and Saturday was on how the actions of our lives can be lived and experienced as ministry. Quotes from Thomas Merton and others illuminated a session on 'life stages', exploring what it means to live an authentic life in differing circumstances. Participants were reminded that ministry can lie in mundane acts of caring and kindness and is not restricted more visible, vocal or heroic acts.

The most extraordinary event of the weekend for Jessica was the experience of a mini meeting for clearness, something she had heard about but not previously experienced. She asks if it would be helpful for the Area Meeting to explore greater use of such mini meetings for clearness.

Jessica very much appreciated that Area Meeting made it possible for her to attend this course and hopes we will encourage others of limited financial means to understand that our bursary fund is genuinely for them.

We thank Jessica for this wonderful report.

### **2016/01/11 Membership matters**

#### **a) Transfer of membership**

**Anthony and Sue Buxton**, until recently managers of Edinburgh Meeting House, have moved to Findochty, Buckie, and will be worshipping with Forres meeting. They have requested that their membership be transferred to North Scotland Area Meeting. We ask our assistant clerk (membership) to send the necessary certificate of transfer, and wish Anthony & Sue well in their new home.

[See note on p. 2]

#### **b) Record of death**

We record the death of **Elisabeth Seale Carnall**, a long time

member of Central Edinburgh meeting, on 23 December 2015. We note that Elisabeth's funeral and memorial meeting for worship will take place at the Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh at 2.30 pm, on Saturday 30 January 2016. We ask Central Edinburgh local meeting to prepare a memorial minute outlining Elisabeth's life and service.

## 2016/01/12 Appointments

### a) Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee

We record that **Liz Law** (Central Edinburgh) has been appointed to QPSWCC for a second triennium.

### b) Conference on reading *Quaker Faith & Practice*, Woodbrooke, 22-24 April 2016.

We appoint **Janet Grimwade** to represent us at this conference.

### c) National Outreach Conference ('Catching Light') 12-14 February

We appointed Katrina McCrea and Max Marnau to represent us at this conference [2015/10/05b] but Max Marnau is now prevented. We appoint **Margaret Mortimer** (Central Edinburgh) in her place.

### d) Representatives to General Meeting, 5 March 2016 in St Andrews

We appoint the following to represent us at General Meeting for Scotland on 5 March: **Alison Burnley**, **Jane Pearn** and **John Phillips** and ask Jane Pearn to write reports of that meeting for *The Scottish Friend* and *The Friend*.

### e) The following names have been brought to us by our nominations committee, all to serve from January 2016 to end of December 2018:

- 1) Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Meg Gustaves** (East Lothian)
- 2) Elders – **Mark Bitel** (Central Edinburgh)  
**Simon Jackson** (Central Edinburgh)
- 3) John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust – **Melissa Richards** (Central  
Edinburgh)

These names being acceptable, we appoint them accordingly.

### f) Completion of service

- 1) Doreen Dodd (East Lothian, Elder), Pauline Browell-Hook (Central Edinburgh, Trustee) have asked to be released from service and we do so.
- 2) We note that Hilary Davies (South Edinburgh, John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust), Marianne Ferguson Rice (Central Edinburgh, Overseer) and Laurie Naumann (Central Fife, Trustee)

have completed their terms of service.

We thank them all for their service to the Area Meeting.

### 2016/01/13 Correspondence and notices

- a) **The Book of Discipline Revision Group** will be meeting in Edinburgh at the end of January and have given an open invitation to Friends to join them in Edinburgh Meeting House on Friday 29 January between 3 and 5 pm.
- b) **Yearly Meeting 2016.** This will be held from 29-30 May at Friends House in London. The Spiritual Preparation document will be published in February and all Friends, not just those hoping to be in London, are encouraged to engage with the issues under consideration. Friends wishing to attend are asked this year to register *in advance*. We will return to this matter at our next meeting.
- c) We have received details of a series of workshops on creativity and spirituality being organized by The Kindlers.

### 2016/1/14 Closing minute

31 members and three attenders, representing eight Local Meetings, have attended all or part of this Area Meeting, as indicated below:

Central Edinburgh <b>14</b>	Central Fife <b>1</b>	East Lothian <b>4</b>	Kelso <b>1</b>	Penicuik <b>1</b>
Polmont <b>1 + 1A</b>	Portobello & Musselburgh <b>1</b>	South Edinburgh <b>8 + 1A</b>	Tweeddale <b>-</b>	<i>Other Area Mtg</i> <b>-</b>

(Signed)

**Phil Lucas, Clerk**

### Thought for the month

The musician DONALD SWANN (best known for his partnership with Michael Flanders, which produced 'The Hippopotamus Song' among many others) was a pacifist and former member of the Friends Ambulance Unit, but not himself a Quaker, and so observed times and seasons as we do not . . .

*I remember deciding [at Oxford after the War] that I was becoming altogether too austere, and I took up smoking for Lent. I used to have one Balkan Sobranie per day, and it reminded me that this world must at no cost be spurned altogether.*

*The Space Between the Bars*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1968, pp 85-6

**Quaker Meetings for Worship in South East Scotland****Every Sunday**

Central Edinburgh: 7 Victoria Terrace	9.30 am & 11.00 am
South Edinburgh: Open Door, 420 Morningside Road	10.30 am
Polmont: Greenpark Community Centre	10.45 am
Kelso: Quaker Meeting House, Kelso	10.30 am

**Every Wednesday**

Mid-Week Meeting: 7 Victoria Terrace	12.30 – 1 pm
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**First Sunday in the Month**

Penicuik: Valleyfield House, 17 High St., Penicuik <i>Children welcome, bring and share lunch</i>	11.00 am
Portobello & Musselburgh: Old Parish Church, Bellfield St. EH15	7.30 pm

**First and Third Tuesdays in the Month**

Edinburgh University Common Room, Muslim Prayer Rooms (opposite Weir Buildings) at Kings Buildings: contact Sarah Martin 07818050853 or <a href="mailto:sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk">sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk</a> for details	1 – 1.30 pm
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**Second Sunday in the Month**

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
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**Second and Fourth Sundays in the Month**

Portobello & Musselburgh: Old Parish Church, Bellfield St. Portobello	11.00 am
Tweeddale: Nomad Beat, 10-11 Cavalry Park, Peebles <i>All welcome, but please phone to confirm 01721 721 050 or 01896 850 389</i>	10.30 am
Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am

**Fourth Sunday in the Month**

N. Edinburgh Meeting: Broughton St Mary's Church, Edinburgh	7.00 pm
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**Fifth Sunday in the Month**

Central Fife: Hunter Halls, Kirkcaldy (Kirk Wynd, opposite Old Kirk)	10.30 am
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**Last Sunday in the Month**

East Lothian: St Andrew's Centre, Dunbar	11.00 am
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**Distribution of *Sesame* and *Scottish Friends Newsletter***

The current practice is to distribute one copy of *Sesame* and the *Scottish Friends Newsletter* to every Member and Attender household. Contributions to the costs of *Sesame* are always warmly welcomed by the Area Meeting Treasurer, Mark Hutcheson. An email version of *Sesame* is more ecological and is free; if you would prefer to receive it this way, or to change the address to which a paper copy is sent, or if you would like to get one by post and currently do not, please contact Kim Smith at [kimdsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:kimdsmith@yahoo.com). A large print version is also available on request. Published by the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain, South East Scotland Area Meeting, Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL. Scottish Charity No. SC019165. Printed by Footprint UK, Riverside Works, Edinburgh Road, Jedburgh TD8 6EE.