

SESAME

Number 214: January 2018

An Appeal/Treasurer Wanted/Meeting for Sufferings/*A heri grontapu di Gado meki bun doro, dóro!* (World Day of Prayer)/Faslane dates, 2018 /Nominations Threshing Meeting /"Achieving the Possible": *Middle East Peacemaking in Edinburgh* / Remembering Marjorie Farquharson /Reclaiming the Nonviolence of Jesus / November AM Minutes /

A TIME, I BELIEVE, IS COMING, wherein this Divine Work will so spread and prevail that *Nation shall not lift up Sword against Nation, nor learn War any more*, Isaiah ii. 4. And as we, through the tender Mercies of God, do feel that this precious Work is begun, I am concerned to encourage my Brethren and Sisters in a Holy Care and Diligence, that each of us may so live, under the sanctifying Power of Truth, as to be redeemed from all unnecessary Cares; that our Eye being single to him, no Customs, however prevalent, which are contrary to the Wisdom from above, may hinder us from faithfully following his Holy Leadings in whatsoever he may graciously appoint for us.

From 'The Introduction' to Considerations on Pure Wisdom and Human Policy, John Woolman, 1768

Published by South East Scotland Area Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Material for the next issue should be sent to Alan Frith (email: ar.frith@btinternet.com) or by post to 10, East Parkside, Edinburgh EH16 5XJ, to be received at the latest by **Tuesday 6 March 2018**. The Editors reserve the right to condense articles. If possible, please submit articles by email sending as an attachment *and* in the body of the email. An email version of *Sesame* is available in PDF format. Contact the Editors.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

The next Area Meeting will be held at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House on Monday, 22 January, 2018, starting at 7.00 pm and finishing by 9.00 pm. The draft agenda is below.

The business includes consideration of the report of the December Threshing Meeting on nominations issues, and discussing how to take forward the suggestions made at that meeting.

The meeting is open to everyone but each local meeting, the Area Meeting treasurers, trustees, elders, overseers and nominations committee are asked to appoint someone to attend, as one of the 'core representatives'.

I hope to see you there, Friends.

Elizabeth Allen

Clerk, South East Scotland Area Meeting

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Worship
2. Introductions
3. Minutes of last meeting, 25th November, 2017
4. Matters arising
5. AM Threshing Meeting on nominations issues – What next?
6. Membership matters
7. AM Nominations Committee report
8. Conferences: Quaker Peace and Social Witness Spring Conference; Quaker Committee on Christian & Interfaith Relations conference, *The Changing Face of Faith in Britain and how should Quakers respond?*
9. Checking the Marriage register
10. Received from East Lothian Local Quaker Meeting, Minute 2017/24 'Memorial minute – Alan Dickinson' *See opposite*
11. Meeting for Sufferings report
12. Scottish Government's new Scottish Energy Strategy, available at www.gov.scot – Do we wish to comment?
13. Correspondence and notices
14. AOCB
15. Closing minute

Alan Dickinson

East Lothian Local Meeting met on Sunday 10 December 2017 and agreed to send the following minutes to South East Scotland Area Meeting:

2017/24 Memorial minute – Alan Dickinson

We record the death on 27 September 2017, at the age of 87, of long term attender Alan Dickinson. His Quaker funeral took place in Dunbar on 10 October 2017, with a gathering in Edinburgh later in the day to share memories of his scientific and other work.

Alan had been attending Central Edinburgh Meeting while it was still at Stafford Street and continued attendance at Victoria Terrace until a few years ago, when he became a regular attender at East Lothian Meeting, especially after the latter started meeting in Dunbar. He and his wife, Helen, had moved from Lasswade to Dunbar in 1999 and lived together there until Helen's death in 2012.

Director of Edinburgh University's animal neuropathogenesis research unit, Alan was a distinguished scientist (brilliant, according to colleagues who spoke at his funeral gathering in Edinburgh), an expert on viral disease in sheep. We were told that he expected all his staff, including secretaries and cleaners, to attend the regular updates on the scientific work of his unit, a testimony to his commitment to social equality. He was, until the final deterioration in his health, doing significant and he believed ground-breaking work on the transmission of animal disease to humans (BSE/CJD). Gardening played a very important part in Alan's life. He was fascinated by plants and delighted in their particularity and propagation. He loved hellebores and held an RHS recognised national collection of chionodoxa.

Alan's ministry to us reflected his strong socialist convictions and, in his last few years, his commitment to doing what he could to save the National Health Service from the privatization agenda. We remember him as a kind, eccentric, generous man who was hugely enthusiastic for the things which mattered most to him.

We ask our clerk to send this minute to Area Meeting.

AN APPEAL (actually, two appeals)

Some time before January 2012, *Sesame* printed a prayer by Matilda Mitchell, on the plight of former concentration camp inmates struggling with their memories. Could anyone who has kept a copy of the issue it was in please contact Matilda (details in the Book of Members)? I would also be grateful myself for any pre-2012 paper copies, as my own run of back numbers is far from complete.

The Editor

SEARCHING FOR A SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING TREASURER

Would you be willing to offer service to Area Meeting as our Treasurer?

The duties of the Treasurer are:

- To oversee the financial matters of Area Meeting and liaise with a professional accountant to ensure that effective financial measures, controls and procedures are in place.
- To oversee the development of financial strategy, including reserves and investment policies, and bring these before the Area Meeting trustees.
- To liaise with the accountant about the formal report and accounts each year, reporting to the trustees and to the independent examiner.

Usually the Area Meeting Treasurer would also serve as an Area Meeting Trustee. Trustees have collective responsibility for the good governance of Area Meeting and report to the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR), as Area Meeting is a charity.

We heard at Area Meeting in November that much of the work is people-related, rather than dealing with figures, and that the incoming Treasurer would be 'taking over a well-run ship'.

For more information or to discuss the possibility of taking on this service, please contact Don Stubbings on 0131 336 1141, or by email djstubbings@cooptel.net

Meeting for Sufferings

Meeting for Sufferings met in London on 2 December 2017. As usual, all the papers for the meeting are available online at:

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-dec-2017-updated-agenda-papers-package>

and the minutes and other follow-up material are linked from:

<http://www.quaker.org.uk/our-organisation/meeting-for-sufferings/papers-and-minutes>

The first item to report is perhaps the most significant decision Sufferings has taken in the whole of my first term so far: we are asking Yearly Meeting 2018 to agree that we should set about revising our Book of Discipline, and that Sufferings should manage the formation of a Revision Committee to undertake the necessary work.

Book of Discipline Revision Preparation Group

“By the Holy Spirit, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.”

2nd Letter of Paul to Timothy, 1:14

Sufferings endorsed the Group’s recommendation for “a full revision” of our Book of Discipline, and forwarded it to YM Agenda Committee, asking them to bring this to Yearly Meeting in 2018.

It may be helpful to set out the context in which this recommendation is being made. The 1994 revision merged the two existing books (*Christian faith & practice in the Experience of the Religious Society of Friends* and *Church government*) but without any review of the contents of the latter. In 2014, Yearly Meeting was asked to commence a new revision but could not reach unity on whether it should. Meeting for Sufferings then established the Revision Preparation Group, charged with better preparing us for the question when it came back again. The group in turn launched the “Reading Quaker Faith & Practice” exercise, which was much more successful than they had expected. Three kinds of outcomes were reported back to them, broadly speaking:

- Engaging with the book and the process
- Understanding why revision is appropriate
- Listening to religious differences

Following on from the last of these, they established a “Theology Think Tank”, whose report, in the form of a small book entitled *God, words and us*, has just been published and is available from the Friends House bookshop.

The group concluded that the *Church government* parts really need a complete rewrite. The only altogether up-to-date parts are online; and while much supplementary information is also available it is not officially part of ‘the book’ – the discipline of the Religious Society of Friends.

A key part of the group's recommendation is to separate 'core' from 'supplementary material'. For example, in Chapter 16 on Marriage (new in the 4th edition), the first 15 sections (from "the meaning of marriage" to "registering officers") are 'core'; the rest are 'supplementary'.

Sufferings *expects* that, if Yearly Meeting agrees, Sufferings will be asked to appoint (and oversee) a Book of Discipline Revision Committee. Our minute (MfS 17/12/12) read in part:

We feel that the time is right to start a revision of our book of discipline. We also agree:

- 1) *The revision should begin with, but not be limited to church government, namely the sections which focus on our procedures and corporate discipline.*
- 2) *The revision should divide material between that in the main body of the book, which lays out principles, and supplementary material, which gives details.*
- 3) *The revision should draw on the richness of theological thought in our yearly meeting, now and historically, seeing diversity as fundamental to our community, not as a flaw.*
- 4) *The Revision Committee be given the freedom to be creative, while remaining in close contact with the yearly meeting.*

Finance report

An overall summary: the anticipated 2017 deficit is down from last year, about £125,000, out of £12 million. A further £2 million is available from 'legacy funding' for new projects. The Hospitality Company, which manages Friends House and Swarthmoor Hall, represents nearly half of centrally-funded staff, but turns a profit for us as a whole, which goes for our 'charitable work'. The planned 2018 budget is almost unchanged from 2017. Contributions were up – a little bit – in 2017, and Trustees are budgeting for them to rise again in 2018; nevertheless, a £700,000 deficit is forecast.

Investments in Israel-Palestine: West Bank

In response to a minute from Devon AM, Trustees responded that we hold no current investments in companies with interests in the West Bank. Investment policy guidelines are currently under review by Trustees.

Lobbying Act

Trustees are supporting an exploration of bringing a case for judicial review to force the passage of an amendment to remove the vulnerability to retrospective application of the Act in the case of a snap election.

Sanctuary Everywhere Manifesto

A second draft of this has come to us from the Forced Migration Advisory Group. It combines good will and aims with some inopportune phrasing. MfS offered some further amendments to try to address this, and then returned it with our approval as amended.

General Meeting for Scotland

Adwoa Bittle (GM Clerk) gave an introduction to General Meeting, with a lot of good detail, including our campaigns with regard to Fracking, Militarism in Schools and Economic Justice.

The GM website has more: see <http://www.quakerscotland.org/>

Henry Thompson

World Day of Prayer

There will be two Bible Study sessions in preparation for the World Day of Prayer, both at the Church of Scotland offices, 121 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4YN, at 10.30 am: on Friday 9 February, and on Friday 16 February. The Day itself is on 2 March – at a church near you. The service has been written this year by the women of Suriname, with the theme *All God's Creation is Very Good!* inspired by Genesis 1:1-31.

For more information, see <https://worlddayofprayer.net/index.html>

Meeting for Witness, Faslane – 2018 dates

Below are the dates when meetings for worship after the manner of Friends will be held by the North Gate of the Faslane naval base in 2018. Please remember to bring weatherproof clothing, something to sit on, and something to eat (if you wish to have sustenance before the journey home). We aim to start at 11.00 am each time; all dates are Sundays.

25 March

24 June

22 April

7 October

27 May

11 November

At the June meeting, we expect to be joined by members of the Northern Friends Peace Board, following the Board's meeting in Glasgow the previous day; and on **Saturday 15 September** there are plans for a "celebratory something" with ICAN – further details nearer the time.

Alison Burnley

(The scheduled date for the November meeting coincides with the centenary of the Armistice, which might also occasion special arrangements.)

Nomination Issues – the Threshing Meeting

Area Meeting (AM) has difficulty in finding enough people to do the jobs needed. Some 40 people were at 7 Victoria Terrace on 9 December 2017 to grapple with this – mostly from our AM, but we were joined by some from East Scotland and North Scotland Area Meetings. We are not the only part of the Society of Friends with this problem.

This was not a decision-making event: on the contrary, it was an opportunity to voice difficult thoughts that have not been explicit to date, and to think about what might work, away from our usual ways of doing things.

In early discussion, it became clear that Quaker responsibilities evoke a range of responses: people spoke of guilt, anger and frustration, while others talked of leadership, balance and energy. Some spoke of ‘undiscovered treasure’, while others were concerned about burnout or duplication.

Participants were encouraged to go for ‘blue sky thinking’ or ‘thinking the unthinkable’, but it seems we find this quite difficult. Much of the discussion spoke of the detail of how we do things.

On the other hand, someone did say we might ‘suspend the current nominations list, invite Friends to take up the roles they feel called to do; then work out how to fill any essential gaps’: those of us with leadership roles found that a challenging idea! We’ve thought it through, and feel that we are not at the point where this is needed.

The clerking team – Elizabeth Allen and myself – gathered the suggestions and proposals, and we’ve now discussed with Don Stubbings of Nominations Committee what to take to Area Meeting, and how other matters might be dealt with.

‘Do our committees meet more often than is needed? Can we do more work without face-to-face meetings, *e.g.* by phone or video link?’ This is something that committees have already been encouraged to consider. As a way of helping people be better aware of how the different committees fit together, Don will prepare a diagram and post it on our AM website (<http://www.quakerscotland.org/south-east>).

Concern was expressed that people doing Quaker jobs might feel isolated or under stress: we need to be more aware of this, and Overseers have the major role here.

Similarly, people may find themselves taking on a job that needs training. We do have quite a few people going to Woodbrooke (the Quaker college in Birmingham) for training but that’s a big time commitment. We would benefit from bringing that training closer to home, either by people passing on what they have learnt, or by using our in-house expertise. We feel that each committee should spend time once a year, looking at its own training and learning needs.

The idea of an ‘activities audit’ is appealing. This would be a close examination of the various resources and activities going on within our local meetings, and how they relate to the concerns of the area as a whole. We plan to bring to AM a proposal to hold a day to develop this approach; and we may find it fits in with the decision in November to invite local meetings to set up a memorandum of understanding of their needs and activities, on the model already followed by Kelso and Central Edinburgh local meetings.

Other issues were identified, which the clerking team feels can be progressed in different ways: we’ll be carrying this out over coming weeks, to try and ensure that the energies and ideas generated do not get dissipated.

During the meeting, we were told that Meeting for Sufferings has agreed that the time is right to revise our Book of Discipline, starting with church government, and that this recommendation should go to Yearly Meeting 2018 for a decision. The process of revision might recognise many of these issues and change expectations.

Importantly, too, we were reminded that while the immediate problem is that of filling posts, we should always bear in mind the following:

Quakers are a people seeking to build a community in which we:

- *Deepen our spiritual lives*
- *Witness to our faith in action*
- *Promote Quaker approaches to spirituality and values.*

This is the message we must carry with us, as we take on the challenge of living as a vibrant and outward-looking community.

Alastair Cameron
Assistant AM Clerk

ACHIEVING THE POSSIBLE

A Draft Treaty

for a Weapons-of-Mass-Destruction-Free Zone in the Middle East:

Vision, Process, the UN General Assembly and the 2018 Round Tables

THE EDINBURGH PREPARATIVE CONFERENCE January 22-25 2018

A project has begun at UN House in Scotland to give support to an initiative towards ridding the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and to the Scottish Government’s contribution to the process. The initiative is under the ægis of the British American Security Information Council (BASIC), and is led by individuals from within the Middle East; Scotland’s involvement, which has arisen through informal collaborative

disarmament activity and a long-standing commitment to peace in the Middle East, will be in facilitating an international meeting: the Edinburgh Preparative Conference.

In November 2013 a round-table meeting was held in Tel Aviv, organised by the Israeli Disarmament Movement (IDM), with the support of BASIC, PAX and Green Cross. (PAX, as its name suggests, is a peace campaign: Netherlands-based, it was formed by Pax Christi (Roman Catholic) uniting with IVK, the (Protestant) Interchurch Peace Council. BASIC, on the other hand, is *not* a pacifist organisation – leading British members include Malcolm Rifkind and Menzies Campbell – and Green Cross is the international environmental organisation founded by Mikhail Gorbachev.) That meeting was called in response to the lack of progress towards a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East that had been made at the conference in 2010 to review the working of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), and it sought to consider ways forward by learning about the language, rhetoric, and fears of Israeli officials – and others. It involved Israeli and international experts, Israeli foreign ministry staff, and diplomats from Finland, Switzerland and Norway, and was the first time civil society had hosted such an event in Israel. After a second, shorter conference in Washington DC a year later, it appeared that stagnation in talks arises from lack of goodwill and an inability to see past the source of suggestions to their actual content. Utilising an exercise of visualising what the region would look like, and how behaviours would change if the treaty existed, a draft proposal for a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East was written without attribution, so that its contents could be considered on their merits regardless of where they came from or who had written them. This enabled the possibility of identifying solutions to well-aired difficulties, and highlighted a need for dialogue as an alternative to focusing on the obstacles. A skeleton draft treaty, along with an outline for an organization in the zone – the Middle East Treaty Organization (METO) – was delivered to international and regional experts in 2017, with the proposal that discussions take place beyond the Middle East in venues that could be seen as neutral. In 2017, the UN-sponsored meetings for a nuclear ban treaty provided opportunities to do this. Bill Kidd MSP, Co-President of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), convener of the Scottish Parliament Nuclear Disarmament Cross-Party Group (NDCPG), and a supporter of Nobel Peace Prize laureate ICAN (the International

Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons) has consistently represented the Scottish perspective to diplomats and civil society at UN disarmament talks, as well as hosting innumerable international and Scottish meetings and events on the topic at the Scottish Parliament. Scotland is now seen as somewhere with a Parliament and Government that is interested in international peace and security, and, although not at this time a UN member-state, it is without a political agenda on security doctrines in the Middle East. The Scottish Government were thus approached as potentially useful contributors to the process. At a discussion in New York with BASIC, the Irish delegation to the TPNW Conference, the IDM and the American Iranian Council, Scotland was suggested as a location suitable for initial discussions of “Achieving The Possible”. The Scottish Government approved, and the event, named the Edinburgh Preparative Conference, was agreed as a possible way forward in a seemingly intractable situation.

The venue is UN House in Edinburgh. It was established in 2012, and has supported awareness-raising on nuclear non-proliferation, peace, security and disarmament. In 2013 the Edinburgh United Nations Association took a lead on the International Conference on a WMD Free Zone in the Middle East, hosted by Bill Kidd MSP with high level diplomatic presence from Finland and Russia and input from Israel and Palestine. UN House is a partner organisation in ICAN and a corporate member of the Scottish Parliament NDCPG.

The Edinburgh Preparative Conference will take place according to Chatham House Rules behind closed doors. Scottish Government Ministers will meet and greet participants; any follow-up media release will be issued from the Scottish Government office. A reception at the Parliament, followed by a Burns Supper at nearby Serenity Café [*see overleaf*] will allow appropriate cultural exchange with participants. This step may ensure that by the time of the 2020 NPT Review Conference, there will be enough constructive attention and official negotiation to ensure the states in the region do not take negative dramatic steps such as leaving the NPT or claiming that a WMD Free Zone in the Middle East is impossible. In May 2018 a new draft treaty can be presented to UN members at the NPT Preparatory Committee.

Janet Fenton

UN House, 4 Hunter Square, Edinburgh EH1 1QW

BURNS SUPPER

for Peace in the Middle East

Serenity Cafe, The Tun, 8 Jacksons Entry, Edinburgh EH8 8PJ
Tuesday 23 January 7.00 pm

THE EDINBURGH PREPARATIVE CONFERENCE is an exciting project to offer support for the diplomats and activists who are working together towards getting the UN to agree a special zone in the Middle East that would be free of all Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Scotland has a Parliament that is interested in international peace and security. Not a UN member-state, it is without policies or a political agenda on security issues in the Middle East. The Scottish Government can't fund the activities, but it is showing goodwill, and supporting the conference, with a safe and neutral space outside the region: UN House in Edinburgh is offering a Scottish welcome to those taking part.

Since all this is happening during Burns Week, what could be better than a Burns Supper to help raise some of the costs and have a good time! We'll keep it simple for everyone with religious or other dietary requirements, so it will be veggie, and alcohol-free. We will have the traditional celebration including the Immortal Memory, the address to the haggis and some great music. We can promise you some of our finest, and there may even be some parliamentarians taking a role!

If you'd like to join in, meet our visitors and have a good Burns supper at *EDINBURGH'S SERENITY CAFE* on Tuesday 23 January at 7.00pm, please email janet@wordsandactions.scot. We are asking for a minimum contribution of £20 from each diner.

Janet Fenton

REMEMBERING MARJORIE FARQUHARSON

Marjorie was a much-loved member of our Meeting from her arrival in Edinburgh in 2001 until her untimely death in 2016. We held a Memorial Meeting in March last year to give thanks for her life and for her many gifts. Friends will remember that she served as clerk of our Area Meeting from 2007 to 2010.

Rosemary Hartill sent me these notes:

"Marjorie was a political scientist who worked tirelessly for human rights in the former Soviet Union and around the world. In 1991, she established

Amnesty International's Information Office in Moscow, a unique venture during a fascinating period of change. Most westerners in Moscow lived a life apart, with access to foreign currency shops and good-quality food. Marjorie chose instead to live as an ordinary Muscovite, in one room with a small kitchen, even when, in 1992, the inflation rate in Russia soared to more than 2000 %.

"Later, Marjorie evaluated projects funded by the EU, and also wrote many expert opinions on asylum seekers' applications to live in the UK. She also translated work by Gogol, Bulgakov and Mandelstam, as well as writing her own poetry and short stories. One of these, 'The Weather Station', won the 2000 BBC World Service best short story prize, and was broadcast."

In March, Marjorie's partner, Irina, is to self-publish the diary that Marjorie kept during her period in Moscow. Central Edinburgh LM has decided to ask Friends throughout the Area Meeting whether they would like to help fund this book in Marjorie's memory.

If you would like to make a contribution, please get in touch with me: john.h.phillips@blueyonder.co.uk or send me a cheque in memory of Marjorie, payable to *Central Edinburgh Quaker Meeting*. I will be sending a card and a cheque to Irina in a few weeks' time, as a thank-you from Friends.

John Phillips

God's Grandeur

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil

Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;

And wears men's smudge and shares men's smell: the soil

Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

And though the last lights off the black West went

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs--

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! Bright wings.

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

Christianity & War:

Reclaiming the nonviolence of Jesus

10:30 am-4.00 pm Saturday 3 March, 2018
Threshold Centre, Princes Street, Perth PH2 8LJ

A day of prayer, study & organising

Tea/ coffee provided, please bring a packed lunch

- *Is Jesus' teaching compatible with waging war?*
- *What do the Gospels tell us?*
- *How do we make opposition to war central to our Christian witness?*
- *How do we end the Church's support for war?*

Speakers to include:

*The Revd Dr Clive Barrett, Adviser to APF & Chair of the Peace Museum
in Bradford*

The Revd David Mumford, Former Dean of Brechin Diocese.

To register or simply to find out more email: dmumford@phonecoop.coop

Organised by the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship

Frugality or Bounty

Frugality is good if liberality be joined with it. The first is leaving off superfluous expenses; the last bestowing them to the benefit of others that need. The first without the last begins covetousness; the last without the first begins prodigality. Both together make an excellent temper. Happy the place where that is found.

Were it universal we should be cured of two extremes, want and excess. And the one would supply the other and so bring both nearer to a mean, the just degree of earthly happiness.

It is a reproach to religion and government to suffer so much poverty and excess.

Were the superfluities of a nation valued and made a perpetual tax or benevolence, there would be more almshouses than poor; schools than scholars; and enough to spare for government besides.

William Penn, *Some Fruits of Solitude* (1693), 50-53

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Minutes of Area Meeting held on 25 November 2017 at Fisherrow Community Centre, South Street, Musselburgh

2017/11/01 Worship and Introductions

We began our business meeting with a period of worship.

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

2017/11/02 The Minutes of our last meeting, held on 23 September, at the Quaker Meeting House, Kelso have been signed and entered in the minute book.

2017/11/03 Matters Arising

a) Newly admitted remand prisoners without personal cash

Further to minutes 2017/08/06 and 2017/09/03 further correspondence has taken place with the Scottish Prison Service Operations Directorate. Their response reiterates the SPS protocol to which staff work and ignores our request to have our correspondence passed to Michael Matheson, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, as we are challenging current policy relating to remand prisoners without personal cash.

Polmont Meeting has set up a meeting on 27 November with Michael Matheson, at which Kate Arnot and Mariot Dallas will raise this issue.

b) Threshing Meeting on nominations issues

Further to minute 2017/09/05, Area Meeting Nominations Committee Convenor's report, our clerks have set up a threshing meeting, in accordance with the minute. It will take place on Saturday, 9 December, from 1.00 pm to 4.30 pm, at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House. [See page 8.]

2017/11/04 Fixing the 2018 fund for small donations to newly admitted remand prisoners without personal cash in HMP Edinburgh

Further to minute 2017/08/06, we have discussed our budget for providing this service in 2018 and agree that it would be appropriate to make £750 available. We ask our clerk to notify the Co-ordinating Chaplain at HMP Edinburgh of this amount and to continue our discussion with her as to how it is used.

The clerks have been informed that a contribution towards the small donations to newly admitted remand prisoners in need, falls within the criteria of the Sylvia Marshall Bequest and it was suggested that we consider submitting an application. We ask our clerk to apply to the Sylvia Marshall Bequest for a grant of £300, to supplement the £750 Area Meeting donation.

2017/11/05 Membership Matters

Jo Dubé

Jo Dubé of Tweeddale Meeting is listed in our Book of Members as being in membership elsewhere. Our Assistant Clerk (Membership) informs us that the records of Jo's previous Area Meetings, York and Cambridge & Peterborough, seem to be incomplete and that neither area meeting has a record of Jo being a current member, though Friends' House has her membership recorded under York AM.

We ask Alison Moore to contact Jo to ascertain whether she wishes to be recorded as a member of South East Scotland Area Meeting, and to report back.

Transfer of Membership – out

Hilary Constable

We have received a Certificate of Acceptance from Cumberland Area Meeting for the transfer of Hilary Constable's membership.

Gregory Valatin

We have received a Certificate of Acceptance from Surrey & Hampshire Border Area Meeting for the transfer of Gregory Valatin's membership.

Jasmine Perinpanayagam

Jasmine Perinpanayagam has requested that her membership be transferred from South East Scotland Area Meeting to North Scotland Area Meeting, where she now attends Forres Meeting. We agree to this transfer and ask our Assistant Clerk (Membership) to send a Certificate of Transfer to North Scotland Area Meeting.

2017/11/06 AM Nominations Committee Report

Nominations Committee has brought forward the names of the following Friends:

1. Nominations to Meetings for Sufferings for the triennium 2018 – 2021:

Representative

Henry Thompson, Central Edinburgh (2nd triennium)

Alternative Representative

Kate Arnot, Polmont (2nd triennium)

2. Appointments

To serve from January 2018 to end of December 2020:

(a) Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Anna Phillips**, Central Edinburgh

(b) Pastoral Care & Oversight – **Barbara Naumann**, Central Fife

(c) Elder – **Nicola Read**, South Edinburgh (2nd triennium)

(d) Quaker Life Rep. Council – **Katrina McCrea**, Portobello & Musselburgh (2nd triennium)

(e) John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust – **Rachel Crockett**, Polmont

(f) Festival Committee – **Jenny Renton**, Central Edinburgh

(g) Festival Committee – **Janet Grimwade**, Central Edinburgh

These names being acceptable to us, we appoint these Friends accordingly.

3. Assistant Convenor of Nominations Committee

We appoint the following Friends to act as a search group to find a Friend to serve as Assistant Convenor of Nominations Committee for the first six months of 2018 and thereafter as convenor:

Laurie Naumann, Central Fife
Simon Jackson, Central Edinburgh

4. Release from Service

Mark Bitel (Central Edinburgh) has asked to be released from service as an Area Meeting Elder. We agree to this request with immediate effect and thank Mark for his service.

5. Completion of Service

We thank the following Friends for their service to Area Meeting, which they will complete at the end of December:

- (a) John Fox, Central Edinburgh – Elder
- (b) Liz Law, Central Edinburgh; John Phillips, Central Edinburgh and Rufus Reade, South Edinburgh – Trustees
- (c) Annie Miller, Central Edinburgh – John Wigham (Enjoyment) Trust

We thank Nominations committee for the work it does on our behalf.

2017/11/07 Appointments to Quaker Events

a) Junior Yearly Meeting, 4 -7 May, 2018, Lee Valley Youth Hostel

JYM is for young Quakers in Britain aged 15-18 (whose birthdays fall between 1.9.99 and 31.8.02). Area Meeting is entitled to one guaranteed place but may make other additional nominations. The cost per place is £235 and the closing date for bookings is 12 February, 2018.

We agree to take up the guaranteed place, and invite local meetings to suggest the names of young people who might be interested, and notify the Area Meeting Clerk

b) The Changing face of Faith in Britain, How should Quakers Respond? Woodbrooke, 16 – 18 March, 2018

The Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations invites Area Meetings to nominate representatives to this event, which will examine the challenge for Friends in the growth of 'secular society' and changes to traditional religious expression. The cost is £245 per place and the closing date for bookings is 31 January, 2018.

We ask Nominations Committee to find a Friend to attend this conference.

c) Quaker Peace and Social Witness Annual Spring Conference, Swanwick, 23 – 25 March, 2018

The 2018 theme is 'Journeys of Witness'. The conference will focus on the work that QPSW does in the world on behalf of Quakers, and how QPSW seeks to support Friends individually and in meetings to translate

faith into action. The cost is £190 per place and we are invited to send two Friends. The closing date for bookings is 28 January, 2018.

We ask Nominations Committee to find two Friends to attend this conference.

2017/11/08 Area Meeting Treasurer

A report from the short-term working group appointed by minute 2017/09/07 has been circulated electronically and Kate Arnot has spoken to the report and answered our questions.

The report teases out the elements of Area Meeting Treasury work which are already in place and clarifies the AM Treasurer's duties as:

- To oversee the financial matters of the charity, South East Scotland Area Meeting, and liaise with a professional accountant to ensure that effective financial measures, controls and procedures are in place;
- To oversee the development of finance strategy, reserves and investment policies and bring these before the Area Meeting Trustees;
- To liaise with the accountant about the formal report and accounts each year, reporting to the AM Trustees and to the independent examiner.

The AM Treasurer also serves as an AM Trustee.

Kate notes that much of the work is people-related, rather than dealing with figures.

The report points out that SESAM Treasury matters are in good order and that the following AM Treasury support is in place:

- Standard forms and letters have been collected on one file;
- A detailed task descriptor covering all work and contributions to these accounts was created and has supporting notes;
- Area Meeting employs a bookkeeper who is fully up to date with legislation and requirements of OSCR and HMRC;
- The bookkeeper runs the payroll, although the Treasurer pays salaries;
- The Edinburgh Meeting House Managers are responsible to the Treasurer and carry out the every day finances of 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh.

The incoming Treasurer would be 'taking over a well-run ship'. It would be helpful, though not essential, for the Treasurer to have ready access to Edinburgh.

The main recommendation of the report is to send an advert for the post to all local meetings within South East Scotland Area Meeting. [*See also page 4.*]

We accept this report and ask the clerking team to prepare an advert, to be made available before the Nominations Threshing Meeting on 9 December.

We thank the members of the short-term working group for their work and release them from service with immediate effect.

2017/11/09 Memoranda of Understanding with Edinburgh and Kelso Meetings

We have heard that a Memorandum of Understanding between Area Meeting Trustees, on behalf of Area Meeting, and Central Edinburgh Local Meeting has been agreed and was signed off on 3 September 2017. A Memorandum of Understanding between Area Meeting Trustee and Kelso Local Meeting has been agreed and was signed off in October 2017. Electronic copies of these documents were circulated with the papers for this meeting and paper copies are available today. These documents can be updated as and when required. They were produced in line with *Quaker Faith & Practice* 4.34.

John Phillips and Marianne Butler have spoken to us about the purpose and value of Memoranda of Understanding and what is involved in drafting and agreeing them, with John focusing on Central Edinburgh and Marianne focusing on Kelso. John and Marianne have answered our questions.

The speakers have emphasised that the purpose and process of completing these memoranda have been interesting and productive. They provide an insight as to roles needed within local meetings, and how they can be shared. They record how things are done at the time of writing, but are living documents, open to change, and requiring periodic review.

We ask our local meetings to prepare similar memoranda of understanding. We note that these documents should be included in our Area Meeting archives.

Trustees are looking into the possibility of posting all Memoranda of Understanding on an internet-site, which could be accessed by authorised members of local meetings and area meeting.

We thank John and Marianne for the work they have done for their respective meetings, and for speaking to us today.

2017/11/10 Meeting for Sufferings Report

Kate Arnot has reported on Meeting for Sufferings held on 7 October, 2017 in Mount Street Meeting House, Manchester. A full report of this meeting is published in *Sesame*.

Members heard a comprehensive account of the work of Quaker Peace & Social Witness, carried out on our behalf locally, at a European level, and internationally.

Following on from Yearly Meeting's request to consider how Quakers can be more diverse and inclusive, we are asked to reflect on the following questions:

- (a) *In what ways is your meeting (or committee or group) already diverse?*
- (b) *In what ways could it be more diverse?*

(c) *What would help it become more diverse? What are the opportunities and barriers?*

We agree to consider these questions at a future Area Meeting, as part of a long-term national consideration.

We thank Kate for her report and for attending Meeting for Sufferings on our behalf.

2017/11/11 Festival Committee Report

Mark Bitel, Festival Committee Convenor, has reported on the August 2017 Festival Fringe events at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, which were a great success, with ticket sales up by 58 % and positive reviews for the shows. Donations to our festival charities are the highest we have given in more than three years. Outsourcing the festival café to Eating House worked well. The downside was the increased noise, which resulted in some disturbance for quieter performances.

Our aim of outreach was achieved in full measure.

Alan Sayle, Festival Committee Treasurer, has presented his 2017 accounts. We are pleased to hear that £8750 will be transferred to Area Meeting funds and distributed as follows: £1250 to each of the charities we support, Mary's Meals, Aid & Abet, and Quaker central work; and £5000 to Area Meeting for the use of the Meeting House. We express our gratitude to the committee for this donation.

The success of this year's festival events was thanks to all our local and national volunteers, our Festival Committee and the Meeting House Managers and staff.

We thank Mark and Alan for their report.

2017/11/12 Minute from Area Meeting Elders

The following minute was received from AM Elders. It was circulated with the papers for this meeting and has been published in *Sesame*.

South East Scotland Area Meeting Elders, 7 October 2017

Memorial Minutes and Testimonies to the Grace of God as Shown in the Lives of Friends

A minute from a meeting for learning of SESAM Elders.

Ten SE Scotland AM Elders, at a gathering on 7 October 2017, have noted that practice in our Area Meeting and its constituent Local Meetings regarding the writing of memorial minutes about deceased Friends (including well established attenders) has continued to be inconsistent, despite this subject having been visited more than once in the fairly recent past (*Letter from Clerk of AM Elders 1 July, 2004; AM minutes March 2007 min 4; March 09 min 9; 2013/09/08; 2014/02/09*). This may be partly due to established practice not being passed on successfully when there has been a change of LM clerks.

We agree that a memorial minute should

- record factual information about the life of the deceased person, their engagement with Quakers and what they meant to their Meeting;
- be forwarded on every occasion to the AM Clerk.

We are clear about the value of memorial minutes but are less clear about response to the advice in *Quaker Faith & Practice* 4.29 regarding the subsequent writing of testimonies to the grace of God as shown in the lives of friends. We are uncomfortable with the inequality implicit in the suggestion that further discernment may lead to the writing of such a testimony for some and not other deceased Friends.

One suggestion made is that we collect all we write about the lives of deceased Friends under the heading 'Patterns and Examples', recognising that the grace of God is potentially shown in every life, although it may sometimes be difficult to discern. On the other hand, bearing in mind the introduction to *Q.F. & P.* Chapter 18, are we letting down our Yearly Meeting and subsequent generations of Friends if we do not send on testimonies on those whose lives and influence have clearly had considerable impact on Friends and in the world at large?

We wish to refer these matters to Area Meeting for further discernment.

Kerstin Phillips, co-clerk of Elders, October 2017

We note this minute and agree to return to it at our March Area Meeting.

2017/11/13 Dates and Venues for Area Meetings in 2018

Further to minute 2017/09/11, the list of provisional dates was circulated to local meeting clerks and as no requests for amendment were received the list is confirmed as follows:

Monday evening	22 January	Edinburgh Quaker MH
Saturday all day	17 March	East Lothian
Monday evening	14 May	Edinburgh Quaker MH
Saturday all day	23 June	South Edinburgh
Tuesday evening	14 August	Scottish Churches Housing Action office, Edinburgh
Saturday all day	22 September	Penicuik <i>or</i> Polmont
Saturday all day	24 November	Penicuik <i>or</i> Polmont

2017/11/14 Proposal for joint event with Scotland China Association.

We have been informed that Scotland China Association have arranged a talk by David Brough of Newcastle, on his father's service in the Friends Ambulance Unit in China. The event is at 7.00pm for 7.30 pm on 12 December, at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House. Tom Nisbet, a member of Central Edinburgh Meeting and of the Scotland China Association

has asked if we would consider making this a joint event between the Scotland China Association and Area Meeting,

Our AM Management Group has discussed this informally and suggest that this would be a good idea and an appropriate link to make. Area Meeting is asked to consider whether it would be willing to charge 50 % of the room hire cost for the event, which is £25.

We agree to this request.

2017/11/15 Correspondence and Notices

We have received an appeal for funding from **Wigton & Ayton School Trust**. As interest rates are so low, bank interest can no longer finance their giving. The Trust gives grants towards attendance at Quaker events such as Shindig, and anything which could be perceived as educational. Meetings are asked to consider holding a special collection to support the work of the Trust.

AM Threshing Meeting to consider nominations issues – Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, 9 December, 1.00 pm to 4.30 pm. Teas and coffees available from 12.30 pm. If you wish to attend, please inform the Area Meeting clerk.

Talk by **David Brough** of Newcastle, on his father's service in the **Friends Ambulance Unit** in China - Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, 12 December, 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm.

AM Training Workshop: Building and nurturing an all-age community – Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, 13 January, 11.00 am to 4.00 pm. If you wish to take part, please inform the Area Meeting clerk.

Patterns and Examples: Deep roots for strong communities Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, 17 February, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. Everyone who holds a role within their Quaker Meeting is invited to this day of inspiration, support and refreshment organised by Britain Yearly Meeting and Woodbrooke. Cost £20, lunch included.

For more details, see

www.quaker.org.uk/events/patterns-examples-2018-edinburgh

2017/11/16 What we did today

We gathered to worship, to share a meal and to explore the nature of our Quaker community. Quaker Faith and Practice 10.20 was read during our all-age worship. In the afternoon, we had our Meeting for Worship for Business and Catherine Holmes spoke to the adults about her experience of attending the Quaker United Nations Office Geneva Summer School 2017. The children enjoyed their own programme, which included making music, storytelling and making gingerbread houses. We came together again at the end of our day and listened to each other's stories of our separate afternoon activities.

We thank Portobello & Musselburgh Friends for being our hosts today.

2017/11/17 Closing minute

A total of 61 members and attenders, including 13 children, representing nine Local Meetings have attended all or part of this Area Meeting, as indicated below:

Central Edinburgh 12	Central Fife 1	East Lothian 4	Kelso 2	Penicuik 1
Polmont 8	Portobello & Musselburgh 23	South Edinburgh 4	Tweeddale 2	Unidentified 4

We next meet at 7.00 pm on Monday, 22nd January, 2018 at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh.

(Signed)
Elizabeth Allen
Clerk

Friends at Area Meeting greatly appreciated Catherine Holmes's report of the QUNO Geneva Summer School and it is hoped to include a written version of it in the next *Sesame*. Janet Fenton was present at the celebrations in Oslo to mark the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to ICAN, and we hope to have a report of them also.

Both Alan Dickinson and Marjorie Farquharson were subjects of obituaries in *The Guardian* which may still be read online; for Alan's, see

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/nov/23/alan-dickinson-obituary>

and for Marjorie's,

<https://www.theguardian.com/law/2016/jul/01/marjorie-farquharson-obituary>.

In 2016, Tim Wallis of QPSW launched his book, *The Truth About Trident*, at Edinburgh Meeting House. A revised and updated version has now been published: *Disarming the Nuclear Argument: The Truth About Nuclear Weapons*—Timmon Milne Wallis. Luath Press, in association with Quakers in Britain: ISBN 978-1-912147-17-5; paperback, £10.99

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
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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 sarah.martin@ed.ac.uk 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: Fisherrow Community Centre, South St, Musselburgh EH21 6AT. <i>Children welcome.</i>	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
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Fourth Sunday in the Month

North 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. 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.