

Quakers in  
Scotland



October 22

# Scottish Friend



Light through a window at Teampall Mholuaidh, Eórapaidh, Isle of Lewis.

Scottish Friend is distributed by Sue Proudlove, on behalf of the General Meeting for Scotland.



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## From your editor

Friends, I would like to thank all the contributors for their generosity.

This Sunday morning I attended Glasgow meeting and I was touched by David's reading of the *Advices and queries, 18:*

*How can we make the meeting a community in which each person is accepted and nurtured, and strangers are welcome? Seek to know one another in the things which are eternal, bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another. As we enter with tender sympathy into the joys and sorrows of each other's lives, ready to give help and to receive it, our meeting can be a channel for God's love and forgiveness.*



The notion and creation of *community* has never been so important as it is in the current era. Strong and well cared communities are needed to counteract the potential fragmentation of the society. Collective action by communities in various forms from meetings to protests, certainly indicates a gradual shift in way we think, experience and act to clearly express that status quo is not sustainable. Communities however are not immune to differences as in the end we are all different in many ways. I do hope that we continue to accept, nurture and value each member of community- any community that we belong to- and as we heard in A&Q 18, we *bear the burden of each other's failings and pray for one another.*

The current issue is somewhat thin in terms of quantity of contributions compared to previous issues nevertheless, quite rich in terms of quality. I do hope you enjoy reading the contributions.

*In Friendship  
Amer*

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# 1 GM affairs

## 1.1 Calling for General Meeting for Scotland Elizabeth Allen, GM Clerk

**Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

Dear Friends,

Greetings to you all!

One of the joys of being clerk of General Meeting is that I hear about all the aspects of our Quaker life in Scotland. I drew on this knowledge when I spoke about General Meeting, at Meeting for Sufferings on 1st October. I told folk about our Quaker community and the ways we support it, how we are living out our faith, our witness, including the significance of our advocacy work, and the importance of working with others. I had a lot to say and I could have said more because in our Quaker life, from the local to the national level, much is being done. I could see that when I went to the opening of the newly refurbished Dundee Meeting House. The attractive space has been used creatively and the result is a splendid Meeting House at the heart of its community, thanks to the commitment of many local Friends to making this happen. At GM, we will hear more from Friends about their committed service.



**Our next General Meeting will be on 19<sup>th</sup> November, in Aberdeen.** It will be a ‘blended’ meeting, with some Friends present in the Quaker Meeting House, 98 Crown Street, Aberdeen AB11 6HJ and others joining by Zoom.

**We will start with worship at 11.00 am, break for lunch from 1.00 pm to 2.00 pm, and our afternoon session will finish about 3.30 pm.** In my final arrangements email, I will include details of how to register and join in. **Please do come! All are welcome.**

This is an opportunity to meet in person and virtually with Friends from across Scotland. We worship together and in a spirit of worship we attend to our church affairs, and matters concerning the spiritual life and witness of Quakers in Scotland. We hope to make arrangements for young people of Shindig age (11 and up) to come to GM. Details of these and guidelines for young people attending GM will be circulated with the final arrangements email and papers in advance.



So, what will we be doing at GM in November? We'll hear from our young people who participated in this year's Shindig, about their personal experience. They were prevented from attending the September GM. Kate Arnot from the West Scotland Area Meeting group on gender-based violence will speak about this issue, introduce the work of the group, and tell us about the UN 16 Days of Action on Gender-based Violence, in November. We are going to decide the 2023 priorities for Local Development Work in Scotland and the parliamentary engagement work priority areas, for the following

three years. Meetings have been consulted about priorities, as part of the discernment process. Our Treasurer, Nigel Dower, will present the GM Budget for 2023 and answer our questions about it. At each GM we hear from our link people about our work and witness with other bodies and organisations. In November we will hear about our links with Scottish CND, Peace and Justice, and the Scottish Peace Network. We will also have an update on Meeting for Sufferings.

Papers and the draft agenda will be circulated about a week prior to GM. if you do not receive them, please ask Sue Proudlove [scotfriends@gmail.com](mailto:scotfriends@gmail.com) for a copy. If you have any questions, please contact me, your clerk, by email [essallen@msn.com](mailto:essallen@msn.com) or telephone 01620 894834.

Elizabeth Allen,  
Clerk, General Meeting for Scotland.

*Planned engineering works are taking place on 19 November between Dunblane and Perth and as such some trainlines will be closed. Journey time for Friends travelling on train from Glasgow or any station between Glasgow and Perth to Aberdeen may be extended and may involve replacement bus service. Please do check Scotrail website or station announcements closer to the day of travel for updated information. Ed.*

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## **1.2 Report of the GM for Scotland in September 2022**

### **Gisela Creed, West Scotland AM**

Will the Scottish General Meeting ever feel the same again? And what exactly does same mean for Scottish F/friends?

About 50 people from all parts of Scotland “attended”, but less than half were there in person in the welcoming, spacious, sunlit Edinburgh Meeting room. Even with the most splendid and well-run technology and the best will in the world, for me, the Friends attending by Zoom feel somewhat remote in front of their computers at home. I wondered what really keeps people from travelling and attending meetings with their F/friends? Is it fear of Covid, environmental considerations, lack of finance and time, lack of desire to meet in person, preferring home comfort ????... I could go on. There used to be such joyous celebration of coming together, meeting old and new friends, sharing our passions, joys and sorrows, and joining in genuine lively debate and discernment to find ways to make our community and the wider world a better place. I miss that, and I am sorry that some newer F/friends have never had that experience. Lets not kid ourselves, perhaps we are losing something important to hold our community together, despite of the splendid technical advances of communication?

This meeting had a very busy agenda with many reports and appointments,



North Tolsta, Isle of Lewis.

all very much essential business of the General Meeting (GM). The 9 reports or

updates and 11 appointments demonstrated GMs amazing and wide-ranging engagement in Scottish Politics, Peace and Climate Justice issues, and the hard work by many individual Friends who act on our behalf and represent Scottish Quakers on committees in the wider world. We also heard from our Quaker representatives about the inspiring work with the younger age groups, Meeting for Sufferings, the Book of Discipline Revision Group and the working group who is looking at future options for the simplification and effectiveness of Quakers in Scotland.

For me the highlights and most stirring issues of business were provided by



Weathering equipment, Isle of Scalpay.

the hardworking Parliamentary Engagement Working Group (PEWG), which could easily have provided content for a whole day meeting, with reports and discussions about its important activities on our behalf. These included an ongoing and encouraging conversation with the Scottish Greens, continuing advocacy around peace building and peace education and the Land reform bill. Most importantly they have left us with 3 calls for action, which I hope might penetrate to LM levels:

1. Write to MSPs concerning implementation of the Scottish Government's

- Loss and Damage Fund and the need for reparations.
2. In the lead-up to COP27 in October , contact MSPs in support of a statement by “Stop Climate Chaos Scotland” on the phasing out of oil and gas in collaboration with “Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance”.
  3. The PEWG are responding to the Scottish Government’s consultation on the Circular Economy Bill and will alert Friends to the opportunity to follow up on this locally when the bill comes before the Scottish Parliament.

Time was pressing and we moved on to the rest of the agenda:

As a result of the Meeting for Sufferings report we promised ourselves to come back to exploring reparations for historic slavery in a Scottish context including modern slavery

We squeezed in a report about the problems of the interesting “Opposing War Memorial” (OWM) project initiated originally in 2018 by the Peace and Justice Institute, who sadly no longer have the capacity to carry this project forward, GM agreed to remain part of the OWM consortium.

There were other more domestic matters, all needing time and consideration, the clerks did a marvellous job of steering us patiently through the whole lot. We had no excuse not to be adequately prepared with 6 papers and draft minutes issued beforehand, yet still time seemed too short and content too much !

So, work goes on mostly quietly behind the scenes until we meet again in November in Aberdeen, and we are grateful to all those inspiring Friends who devote their time and energy.

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## **2 Update from BoD Revision Committee: committee meeting Woodbrooke July 2022 Mary Woodward, South East Scotland AM**

Your committee met in person for the first time in over two years, spending a long weekend at Woodbrooke in early July. It was a huge joy to be physically present with each other after simply staring at faces on a screen. Being together also helped those committee members who had begun to feel very isolated and in some cases quite divorced from our work. Some people had been and still are working on discrete topics: others, like me, had finished their topic work some time ago and not started new work.

Circumstance and Covid prevented some of us from being present, including our co-clerk Rosie Carnall, who tested positive on the Friday. This meant Catherine Brewer had the huge task of clerking the whole weekend, ably assisted by Michael Phipps, our assistant clerk, and Michael Booth, the committee secretary. We were delighted to be joined by Rosie during our opening worship, and also to get our first glimpse of Jess Hubbard-Bailey's new baby, Walter, a brother for Norma, our very own committee baby, born the day Jess heard she'd been appointed to the BDRC.

Those of us who had been appointed to the committee after the start of lock-



A bright afternoon at the Port of Ness.

down were meeting in person for the first time. They will have known some

people through working in topic groups but only had contact with others in breakout groups during on-line committee meetings. Our newest member, Stevie Krayer, was very recently appointed to the committee by Meeting for Sufferings, and had to cope with all of us at once!

The main focus of our weekend was to look at what we've done so far and discern the way forward. Being physically together made this task much easier than it would have been were we working remotely: not only did we have our business sessions together, but we had opportunities for 'between meetings' conversations and exchanges of ideas. It was a pleasure to get to know the newer members of the committee and, being away from home, we were able fully to concentrate on the business in hand. I personally felt very much more connected to all those present than I often am when joining the committee via Zoom.

We were joined during the weekend by David Loxton, head of communica-



Sunset at Eórapaigh beach.

tions at Friends House, and Linda Craig, who has been appointed our project manager. At Friends House, David's brief is to "make sure Quakers are seen, heard, and understood"; his task here was to get us to look at what we are trying to communicate in writing the Book, who we are writing it for, how to deal with an age in which there has been a massive and accelerating change in the ways we communicate and the language we use, and what things might be getting in the way of effective communication. Rachel Muers pointed out

that for Friends in the 17th century the bible was the common language for everyone and everything: nowadays we live in a world which has no shared cultural language. This is a major challenge: we can but do our best.

I have to confess to being surprised by the fact that a project manager had been appointed to the committee, being unsure quite what one was and what they would do. Having experienced Linda in action, I'm profoundly grateful for her appointment, and deeply appreciative of her work. She began by telling us that we have already come a very long way, which was good to hear given the challenges and isolation of the last couple of years. She invited us to consider the whole arc of our work and produce a suggested timeline: working backwards from the end point of asking Yearly Meeting to approve the Book would better enable us to see what steps we need to take next. It was both exhilarating and terrifying to realise that all our work will have an end product and a finishing date, something it's been easy to lose sight of.

Much of the weekend's work was to do with what has already been written - which texts are 'good enough' for now and can be stored for later use, and which need further attention. We are working towards sharing some of our draft text with a wider audience, initially with Meeting for Sufferings. We thought about what wider sharing might look like, and the sort of questions we'd like people to ask themselves as they read.

The language and glossary group are continuing to work towards ensuring a unity of language and tone in all that we write, and to producing a style guide for us to follow when working on new topics. The tagging group gave us an insight into the incredible amount of work that has gone in to creating a 'submissions library' that we can all access.

There has been an ongoing concern for pastoral care within the committee: at present we have committee Elders, but no-one appointed specifically for pastoral care. A questionnaire from the clerks didn't produce a clear preference. Many thought that our Elders had enough to do already but were not clear that a pastoral care team needs to be appointed. Three committee members including myself volunteered to be Named Pastoral Care Contacts for one year, after which the situation will be reviewed.

Our next meeting will be in October, when Linda Craig will guide us in working out the practical steps we need to take next. Friends House guidelines state that committees should only meet in person once a year: we feel very strongly that we need to meet in person to do this challenging work, and hope that this will be permitted.

The weekend's timetable was packed, and the work exhausting but exulta-

rating. I'm very glad that we weren't given new tasks to undertake over the summer – my energy levels are still not what they used to be. I'm still 'in charge' of responding to invitations to the BDRC to talk to Meetings and groups, and find it most interesting that we've received no new invitations since Yearly Meeting.

Our key messages from the weekend:

1. *We continue to progress the drafting of fresh texts on our agreed set of topics, and are planning for sharing some draft text more widely.*
2. *We have done some work on planning which has led us to identify a timeline for our work. We want to do some more work on details to build confidence that our suggested timeline is feasible before sharing it more widely.*
3. *In collaboration with the BYM publications team, we are exploring the possibilities that can be brought by accessible formats for the new book in addition to traditional formats.*
4. *We welcome new invitations from Friends across Britain to visit their meetings in order to share progress and listen to suggestions.*

Please continue to uphold us as we work on your behalf.



Beach near the Butt of Lewis.

### **3 Serving on Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee.**

**Sila Collins-Walden. North Scotland AM.**

I decided to fill in an offer of service form that I found on the BYM website late last year. I wanted to learn more about the work Friends did at BYM level. I was contacted in January of this year by Central Nominations Committee by email and then I had a friendly conversation by telephone with a member of the committee. I was asked if I would be willing to have my name go forward to serve on central committee. I didn't think I would be contacted so soon, However, after giving it much thought I decided to accept to serve in a role with Quaker Peace and Social Witness Central Committee (QPSWCC). I hadn't served in any major role apart from area Meeting (AM ) Nominations and had been the editor of the Scottish Friend for four years and my experience was rather limited.



When I had my first meeting with QPSWCC I was a little nervous and feeling daunted about serving on a committee, meeting members some of whom had a wealth of experience that I didn't have, although I was told you bring your whole self and your life experience to the committee. I actually knew very little about the work of QPSWCC. I was sent information along with a handbook with other material that would give some idea of how central committee works.

I read the introduction in QF&P 8.1. on the centrally managed work of QPSWCC, along with other material sent to me by the committee. This gave me some idea of how the committee worked. Meetings take place at least three times a year, with some in between meetings, one blended in- person, others via zoom. The committee's skills are drawn from a number of areas and Friends who may have experience in peace, peace education, economic justice, finance, climate justice and much more.

The centrally managed work of Quakers in Britain has three elements: first discernment and decision making; secondly governance; and thirdly management.

I was given an induction by the clerks and allocated a “buddie”



West Coast Beach. Oil on Canvas. By Sila Collins-Walden.

or mentor whom I can contact if needed to give support and spiritual guidance. I'm not expected to be familiar with all the responsibilities. There are opportunities to engage in workshops and courses and you are encouraged to attend them. I attended one recently by Kate Gulliver. One of seven being held from Oct-Nov. Engaging with Centrally Managed work. <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/central-work-participation-workshop-registration/>

As a member of the committee, I am expected to prepare well in advance and to read the papers sent to me in good time before the meeting takes place. I represent QPSWCC at Mfs and I'm expected to report back to the committee, with a written or oral report.

I didn't realize just how much work we do at central committee until I undertook this role. We are involved in so many projects not just in Britain but across the world. We support community led peace building from the work in East Africa to the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme Palestine and Israel( EAPPI). I find the role exciting as well as challenging. At present we are in need of Friends to fill roles. Normally there are fifteen serving, we have ten. Nominations have their work cut out to find Friends to fill them.

We as Quakers are known for our peace testimony. Our work comes from a deeply spiritual experience to serve in a role. As Quakers we are impelled by our faith to make our lives an active witness for peace and justice. QF&P 8.11.



Lealt, Skye. Oil on Canvas. By Sila Collins-Walden.

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## **4 Dundee Quaker meeting house welcome event Pamala McDougall, East Scotland AM**

After several years of closure due to Covid and extensive renovations, Dundee Meeting held an Opening and Welcome event on World Quaker Day, 2nd October. This occasion was to thank all those who had supported our building fund and to showcase our new facilities. A small exhibition was appreciated by the visitors who admired the paintings, posters, and tapestries including the Scottish Tapestry panel on loan from Edinburgh Meeting House. Our guests included Friends from other meetings in ESAM, our tenants, users of our rooms, Local Development Officer, Zoe Prosser; General Meeting for Scotland clerk, Elizabeth Allen; Michael Hutchinson, assistant GM clerk; Maggie Chapman, Green MSP; Billy Kay, local historian, writer and broadcaster with his wife, Joao.

The guests were welcomed and thanked by Martin Pippard, clerk of Dundee Property Trust, and Pamala McDougall from the Fundraising Group. Bill Edgar was thanked in his absence for all the work he has carried out for the building development, and Marion Sharkey, Administrator, for all the overseeing and support she has given over a long period of time.

The Meeting House is now accessible on street level into the Meeting Room and a lift has been installed to the basement where a fitted kitchen and toilets, including a disabled toilet, have been installed. There are also plans to create a library in the basement to house our extensive collection of books. We look forward to using our beloved historic Meeting House, being part of the community, and serving both for many years to come. It is hoped that many individuals and groups will continue to rent our rooms conveniently situated in the centre of a thriving city centre.



Kris Thomassen, Elizabeth Allen, Pamala McDougall, Billy Kay and his wife Joao, and Michael Hutchinson.

## 5 Poetry corner

### 5.1 Seeds of Love

Lysana Robinson, North Scotland AM

Cast the apocalyptic news aside,  
put on your walking boots  
and step out through the door.  
Fill your backpack with kindness  
to share with all you meet.

Cast handfuls far and wide.  
Let it go where it will.  
Fallen on barren ground,  
seeds of hatred cannot survive  
in a field fertilised with love.



A tree along cycle path in Crammond, Edinburgh.

## 5.2 There's a Hush

Lysana Robinson, North Scotland AM

There's a Hush descending, a calm  
before the first Atlantic storm arrives  
to close summer and open this year's  
season of autumnal gales.

The Robin in the holly, sings  
his mournful September song  
as if sending condolences for our  
national and personal bereavements.

Eras and lives inevitably end.  
New forms arise. Life itself continues  
What will emerge I wonder  
from this gestating pregnant lull.

Will the immanent strong winds  
blow hatred, anger and war  
from our human limbs allowing  
hopeful buds of peace to swell.



Near Butt of Lewis lighthouse.

## 6 Notices

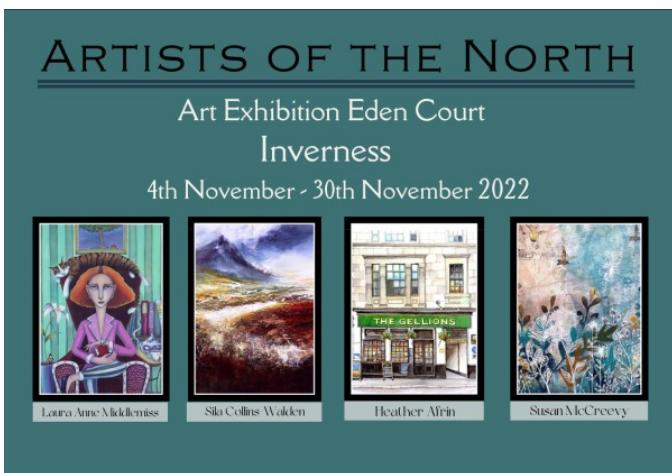
### 6.1 Revision of Book of Members & Attenders and GM Database

**Sue Proudlove, GM Administrator**

Firstly, sincere thanks to the valiant Friends who are helping with this process by acting as ‘Book Contacts’! If you are taking on this role for your meeting, you should have received a printed checklist of names/contact details back in late August/early September, for you to return to me with any changes or additions. **If you didn’t receive it, please contact me as soon as possible.**

I look forward to receiving everyone’s updates by the end of October – if this isn’t going to be possible, please get in touch. Thank you to those who have already returned the lists. The plan is for the new Book of Members and Attenders to be published in January, which means I need to get all the confirmed copy off to the printers in December – your help is much appreciated in this considerable collective task!

### 6.2 Art Exhibition



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