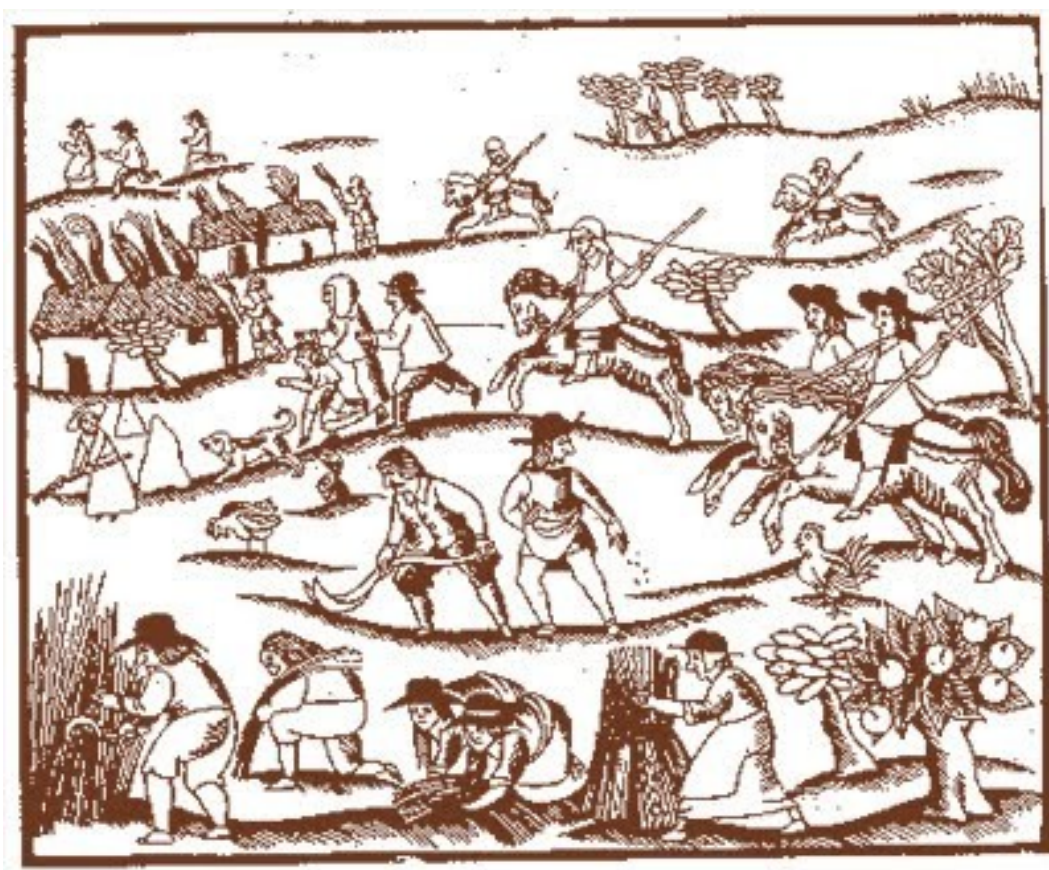


SESAME

Number 225: September 2019

AM at Edinburgh / Building Inclusivity – QLRC at Woodbrooke /
News from Polmont / Book of Discipline Revision – *an update* / John
Maclean and M.K. Gandhi at E.I.B.F. / Digger's Song / AM Minutes *etc*



Soldiers confronting Diggers, 1650

[See page 8]

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 29 October**. 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

Area Meeting will be held at Edinburgh Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, on Wednesday 4 September, starting at 7.00. The agenda is below.

1. Worship and introductions
2. Minutes of the meeting of Saturday 22 June 2019 in Kelso
3. Matters arising from the minutes
 - 3.1. Roots of Resistance (2019/05/09 and 2019/06/03.1 refer)
 - 3.2. Robin Naumann/Anna Liebmann meeting for worship for marriage – appointment of elders (2019/06/06 refers)
4. Decision by between-meetings procedure – Peace Bench in Falkirk
5. Membership matters
6. Appointments
7. Report and Financial Statements for year ended 31 March 2019 – presentation by AM Trustees
8. Matters from Local Meetings
9. Enquirers' day for Scotland
10. General Meeting for Scotland: 'menu for change' – presentation by the clerking team
11. Dates and venues for Area Meetings in 2020
12. Conferences & events
13. Correspondence
14. Closing minute

Quaker Life Representative Council, Woodbrooke, 26-28 April, 2019

This was my first time at QLRC as a 'rep' (although I had been at the gathering a few years before in another capacity), and I am grateful to South East Scotland Area Meeting for the opportunity to attend.

The topic for the weekend, *Building Inclusive Quaker Communities*, chimed with a number of initiatives already taken within our AM on inclusion and diversity, such as a day considering the topics late last year, and a series of discussion sessions at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House. Later, of course, in May, Britain Yearly Meeting would consider the same issues, and Edwina Peart, Diversity and Inclusion Project Coordinator from Friends House, spoke to Friends in Edinburgh on two occasions in June.

Hot topics, then, with which Friends are grappling nationally and locally. How can we build inclusive Quaker communities, making our meetings accessible and welcoming? It is relatively easy to look at practical changes that can be made, such as making a building more accessible to disabled people or providing an environment suitable for families and children. Much more difficult, and potentially painful, to examine unconscious bias and unacknowledged privilege that may create invisible barriers.

The weekend followed a familiar pattern of large-scale plenary sessions alternating with home groups, special interest groups and, of course, time for eating and worshipping together. I found the home group to be a safe space where sensitive facilitation enabled all to contribute – but perhaps a little too safe at times, when occasionally things were said that maybe could have been gently and lovingly challenged. As always, many interesting conversations took place over meals and in Woodbrooke's comfortable social spaces.

Plenary sessions included keynote speaker Edwina Peart, who asked us about *gatekeepers* and *gateways* in our meetings. A gatekeeper controls access, whereas a gateway enables a connection to be made. Sometimes we may think we are being open and welcoming but can unconsciously be creating a barrier. For example, the question 'Where are you from?' to a visitor or newcomer may come from an entirely well-meant wish to get to know someone, but we should be aware that it may trigger all sorts of associations in a person who is accustomed to being asked this question with a different agenda. Maybe too often it has been followed up by 'But where are you *originally* from?', or 'And where are your *parents* from?'. It's not a *wrong* question, but agenda and timing are crucial if it is not to feel like gatekeeping.

Other speakers described their experiences of being in a minority within their Quaker communities in terms of race, age and class. We were asked

to consider how it feels to be a young person/family, greeted at the door with an enthusiastic 'Oh how lovely – we never have any young people/families here!' (which might immediately make you feel that you're not going to fit in). As for the various types of privilege that many Friends benefit from (whiteness, financial security, education), we were urged not to feel that we need to become 'unprivileged', but to consider how we use our voices in our spheres of influence to make progress, and how we can be allies. These are complex issues, of course, which the Society will continue to explore.

I certainly came away feeling better informed. I also came away with an awareness that there is much that I don't fully understand and would like to learn about. A weekend can only ever be a starting point, when the subject is so broad and so important. There are certainly many questions, raised during discussions and sharing, that have stayed with me:

- *What assumptions do I make unconsciously about people, and what effect might that have?*
- *What is my sphere of influence, and how do I use my power/privilege in it?*
- *What 'invisible norms' might be operating in conversations and interactions within our Quaker communities?*
- *What do we think Meeting for Worship should be? An hour of silence and stillness done in 'the right way', or a place for meeting people as they are and understanding what they need?*

Sue Proudlove

Striving for sustainability: the Polmont Commitment

In Polmont Local Meeting we have been working towards creating our **Polmont Commitment**, where we set out our hopes and aspirations for living in a sustainable way in our beautiful world. We have used our discussion times to talk about energy use, transport and travel, and recycling. We asked Falkirk Council for some help with this; and on 25 March we spent an evening with Ian Harries, waste minimisation officer. During his presentation and our discussion, we learned to think of waste as a possible resource, and heard fascinating details about the processes taking place at our local recycling centre. We were able to ask lots of questions and went home significantly better informed. This October, Falkirk Council is holding a Climate Change Week with a wide-ranging programme of events and we look forward to going along to these.

Mariot Dallas
Clerk, Polmont Meeting

Book of Discipline Revision Committee 12-14 July

The Committee's second weekend took place at Cober Hill, a residential centre just outside Scarborough – a delightful venue to which I'd like to return, as we were working so hard there wasn't a lot of time to explore the lovely gardens, and definitely not enough time to walk down to the nearby beach!

It was good to meet up as a group again, and I was particularly delighted to see Alice Southern, the representative from South Wales, who hadn't been able to be with us in London. She came with her wife Kate and baby Idris: who, like Norma, is approximately the same age as the committee. I was at Pendle Hill in America with Alice in 2004, so it was good to catch up with her.

We appointed Elders for the weekend, and buddies to update those who were prevented from being with us. We heard from the Revision Preparation Group about the need to communicate and LISTEN – both to deepen our mutual trust and ability to work together as a committee and also better to engage with Yearly Meeting and encourage Friends' involvement, building on the understanding gained from the two-year 'Reading *Quaker Faith & Practice*' project. We shared our experiences of working on the tasks we'd chosen to do for this our second meeting – focusing on what we as individuals had learned from doing the task and what we as a committee could learn about how we work as individuals and together.

Rhiannon Grant led us in a session in which we shared and explained the words we would use for God when talking to everyone, those we would only use to certain individuals or groups but not to everyone, and words we would never use. This encouraged us to explore different ways of talking and thinking about "God", giving us a safe way to explore our differences and begin to understand others' viewpoints, helping us to avoid future conflicts arising from imperfect understanding or misinterpretation of someone else's words. In a threshing session to consider what we do next, and how we might do it, we identified three tasks on which we can work individually or in small groups and bring to our next meeting.

Saturday evening's more light-hearted sharing session and our meals together gave us time to get to know each other better: I feel that I now have a much clearer idea of people as individuals rather than a list of names, and I'm looking forward to discovering more about each one as we work together.

The committee agreed three key messages:

We are thankful for the work of the Revision Preparation Group and previous/ on-going input from Friends. We look forward to opportunities to work with central

and standing committees, and Friends across our Yearly Meeting, on aspects of our task. We welcome the approaches we have had and will respond to them when we are ready.

At this stage we are exploring some potential approaches to our task within the committee. We are not yet producing any definitive proposals, but are making progress in finding ways to be creative in exploring different ideas, in order to learn from the process about how best to plan and organise our work on the revision.

We see it as core to our work that we take the opportunity to build community as a committee in order to speak authentically to each other. In this way we are seeking to model a willingness to be open with each other about our spiritual experiences and understandings. Such openness is vital to building a healthy community within the Yearly Meeting, which we see as both essential to and a desired outcome of the revision process.

Our next committee meeting is in Edinburgh: 4-6 October. We will work in the Meeting House, and look forward to joining Friends' worship on the Sunday morning.

Mary Woodward

[See also page 9]

At the Book Festival

In the 1980s and '90s, Manchester University Press published a series of 'Lives of the Left': short biographies of notable radicals and socialists. The majority were parliamentarians, many of them Scots (Arthur Henderson, Ramsay MacDonald, James Maxton, Thomas Johnston and – the M.P. for Dundee, where he unsuccessfully tried to get our late Friend Alf Stewart sacked as Labour Party agent for being a pacifist – the former Moseleyite, John Strachey); but also included were the Chartist, William Lovett, the miners' leader, A. J. Cook, and a few writers (J. A. Hobson, R.H. Tawney and, inevitably, George Orwell). Foreigners, however, were represented only by a few Americans ('Big Bill' Haywood, Eugene Debs, John Reed) and a single European, the Czech-Austrian Karl Kautsky;; women did not feature at all; and no-one among them had been born before 1800.

Unsurprisingly, the subjects of 'Revolutionary Lives', a current series with a similar theme from Verso Press, are drawn more widely. Of the first twelve people covered, only one, Ellen Wilkinson, ever sat in the House of Commons; most would not even have been eligible. The earliest life described is that of Gerrard Winstanley (1609-1676). In his later years a Quaker, he is better known as the leader of the Diggers, or 'True Levellers' as they called themselves – the group that sought to repossess the common land annexed by the gentry in the 1640s. The song on page 8 is ascribed to Winstanley in the *New Oxford Book of Seventeen Century Verse* (ed. Alastair Fowler, 1992) and expresses both hostility to the privilege of wealth and its

upholders in the established Church and the legal profession, and the determination to “conquer them in love”. His life in this series is by a writer with the good Quaker name of Gurney.

Two of the titles in the Verso series were featured at events at the Edinburgh International Book Festival this year. Henry Bell’s *John Maclean: Hero of Red Clydeside* is an account of the only figure who was also included in the Manchester series, in which the volume by B.J. Ripley and J. McHugh was one of the best, uncovering much new material. Maclean, a Marxist schoolteacher who was described by a visiting New York journalist in 1919 as “the cheeriest firebrand you ever saw” and by the head of British Military Intelligence as “the most dangerous man in Britain” was appointed by Lenin to be the Soviet Consul in the UK, and, as the subtitle says, was an inspiration to the Left in Glasgow and beyond.

Henry Bell quotes from the letter written to one of Maclean’s earlier biographers by the chaplain at Barlinnie Prison, William Fulton, who got to know him during the third and last of his periods of imprisonment, a twelve-month sentence for sedition in 1921:

John’s religion for prison purposes was classified as ‘Quaker’ and he received visits from a worthy friend of mine who professed this faith ...

This sounds like an informal arrangement, but it would be interesting to know whether in fact any record of the visits survived in Friends’ archives. What might they have discussed?

The other title offered to festival-goers was *Mohandas Gandhi: Experiments in Civil Disobedience*, by Talat Ahmed. Again it is a book through which Quakers seem to flit: Horace Alexander and Reginald Reynolds are mentioned by name, and there are references to the Society’s support at the time for anti-imperialist campaigns (though not of the fact that Gandhi spent time at Woodbrooke). This event was more focused – the Maclean book had been half of a double-bill with *Glasgow 1919: The Rise of Red Clydeside* by Kenny MacAskill – and the audience raised many interesting questions, some of which, I felt, Talat Ahmed did not deal with satisfactorily; perhaps because they were really unanswerable. Nevertheless, I felt it was really not good enough to speak as she did of the limits of non-violence. To say Gandhian tactics would not have worked against the Nazis is a retrospective judgment; in the aftermath of the Amritsar massacre it cannot have been apparent that British rule was any more amenable to moral suasion.

Editor

Talat Ahmed – *Mohandas Gandhi; Experiments in Civil Disobedience*
ISBN 978-0-7453-3428-8 2 Verso paperback

Henry Bell – *John Maclean; Hero of Red Clydeside*
ISBN 978-0-7453-3838-5 Verso paperback

(Both are also available in hardback and as PDF/Kindle/EPUB ebooks)

The Diggers' Song

YOU noble Diggers all, stand up now, stand up now;
 You noble Diggers all, stand up now,
 The waste land to maintain, seeing Cavaliers by name
 Your digging does disdain, and persons all defame.
 Stand up now, stand up now.

Your houses they pull down; stand up now, stand up now;
 Your houses they pull down; stand up now,
 Your houses they pull down to fright poor men in town,
 But the gentry must come down, and the poor shall wear the crown.
 Stand up now, Diggers all.

With spades and hoes and ploughs, stand up now, stand up now;
 With spades and hoes and ploughs, stand up now,
 Your freedom to uphold, seeing Cavaliers are bold
 To kill you if they could, and rights from you to hold.
 Stand up now, Diggers all.

Their self-will is their law; stand up now, stand up now;
 Their self-will is their law, stand up now.
 Since tyranny came in they count it now no sin
 To make a gaol a gin, to starve poor men therein.
 Stand up now, stand up now.

The gentry are all round; stand up now, stand up now;
 The gentry are all round; stand up now.
 The gentry are all round; on each side they are found,
 Their wisdom's so profound, to cheat us of our ground.
 Stand up now, stand up now.

The lawyers they conjoin; stand up now, stand up now;
 The lawyers they conjoin, stand up now.
 To arrest you they advise, such fury they devise,
 The devil in them lies and hath blinded both their eyes.
 Stand up now, stand up now.

The clergy they come in; stand up now, stand up now;
 The clergy they come in; stand up now.
 The clergy they come in, and say it is a sin
 That we should now begin, our freedom for to win.
 Stand up now, Diggers all.

gin] contrivance, scheme *conjoin*] co-operate *advise*] ponder, consider

The tithes they yet will have; stand up now, stand up now;
 The tithes they yet will have; stand up now.

The tithes they yet will have, the lawyers their fees crave,
 And this they say is brave, to make the poor their slave.
 Stand up now, Diggers all.

'Gainst lawyers and 'gainst priests, stand up now, stand up now;
 'Gainst lawyers and 'gainst priests, stand up now.
 For tyrants they are both, even flat against their oath,
 To grant us they are loth, free meat and drink and cloth.
 Stand up now, Diggers all.

The club is all their law; stand up now, stand up now;
 The club is all their law; stand up now.
 The club is all their law, to keep men in awe,
 But they no vision saw to maintain such a law.
 Stand up now, Diggers all.

The Cavaliers are foes; stand up now, stand up now;
 The Cavaliers are foes; stand up now.
 The Cavaliers are foes; themselves they do disclose
 By verses not in prose, to please the singing boys.
 Stand up now, Diggers all.

To conquer them in love, come in now, come in now;
 To conquer them in love, come in now;
 To conquer them in love, as it does you behove;
 For he is king above: no power is like to love.
 Glory here, Diggers all.

brave] splendid

“WHY HAVE A BOOK OF DISCIPLINE?”

Nuala Watt (of Glasgow) and I are part of the planning group for a Woodbrooke weekend with this title, to take place 8-10 November. It's going to be a great weekend, offering Friends the opportunity to consider what they use the current Book for, and what they would like to see in the new one. Area Meetings are invited to send a representative, and there will be spaces for interested individuals as well – so if you want to go, speak to your AM Clerk and/or contact Woodbrooke about attending. We look forward to seeing you there!

Mary Woodward

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

Minutes of Area Meeting held on Saturday 22 June 2019
at Kelso Quaker Meeting House

2019/06/01 Worship and introductions

During worship, we have heard a reading from *Quaker Faith & Practice* 10.1. In 1667, Isaac Pennington reminds us of the importance of love and prayer in building our Quaker community. We have ensured those present know each other's names and meetings. The attendance will be recorded in the concluding minute.

2019/06/02 Minutes of Meeting of Tuesday 14 May 2019

The minutes of our last Area Meeting held on 14 May 2019 at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, have been signed by the Clerks and entered in the minute book.

2019/06/03 Matters arising from the minutes

1) Roots of Resistance (2019/05/09 refers)

We note the minute of General Meeting for Scotland, 8 June, prompted by our discussion in May. Arrangements for the event in September are proceeding. We encourage Local Meetings and individuals to support this event in any way that they can.

2) Extinction Rebellion (XR) (2019/05/11 refers)

Martin Burnell, Clerk of Trustees of General Meeting for Scotland, has circulated an email (13 June), headed *Ways to support Extinction Rebellion*. These include:

- individual giving via XR's Just Giving account:
<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/extinctionrebellionscotland>
- giving from Quaker funds – Martin sets out the powers and limitations on this;
- supporting Quakers in financial hardship, eg through meeting the costs of legal defence. Martin indicates the limitations on Quakers in offering free use of rooms, and suggests that individual Quakers may either make an earmarked donation to XR for this purpose; or ask that invoices for this purpose be directed to them. It would be open to a group of supporters of XR to set up a fund independent of Quakers, which would not be a charity, and therefore would be independent of the constraints on charities in relation to political or campaigning purposes.

3) Library Committee (2019/05/12 refers)

We note that the transfer of book stock to the National Library of Scotland is in the process of implementation.

2019/06/04 Membership matters

1) Graeme Beale – application for membership

Our clerk has read the report on the visit carried out on 13 June by Derek Morrison and Sara Davies to the home of Graeme Beale in Burntisland to consider his membership application.

Graeme was born in Oxford, and lived there for most of his early life, with some time in the US due to his father's job. He attended the Church of England in his early teens, and particularly enjoyed the singing there, though he found the theology of some of the hymns problematic. At 16, he went to the United World School in Poona, India. It was here that he had his first contact with a Quaker.

He came to university in St Andrews, and later did a PhD at the University of Edinburgh. He discovered Fife, and has lived there for the past 20 years. A strong Quaker influence in St Andrews was Jude, now Jacob, and Graeme 'thought this is the way the world should be'. He attended meeting at Central Edinburgh, and in Boston, Mass, while doing part of his PhD studies there.

He did not attend Central Fife on returning, due to differences of views with his then wife, but has now attended for the past five years or so.

He has two children, who live in Orkney with their mother, and Graeme travels there for a week every month. He is starting to have conversations about his Quaker beliefs with the older child.

He says he now thinks of Quakers as 'we' and wants to be able to say he is a Quaker.

The report is agreed by all three participants in the meeting.

We are pleased to accept Graeme into membership and ask Barbara and Laurie Naumann to welcome him and inform Central Fife Local Meeting. We thank the visitors for their report.

2) Mary Woodward – travel to Finland

Having attended Finland Yearly Meeting 2019, Mary Woodward has been invited to join Finnish Quakers at their November meeting to pursue a personal relationship with Finnish Friends. Andrew Doherty has expressed an interest in joining Mary as he has links with Denmark. We understand that financial help might be required for both of them. We support them in this venture and encourage them to pursue normal routes for requesting assistance.

3) Priscilla Bartle, (a.k.a. Pip Farrar)

Following minute 2019/03/04 (2), our Assistant Clerk (Membership) has established contact with Pip Farrar, who now lives in Canada. *Quaker Faith & Practice* 11.28, 11.30 and 11.34 apply in such situations. Though she does not participate in Quaker life in Alberta, Pip has confirmed her contact details, and says she wishes to retain her membership with Friends in Britain, particularly with Central Edinburgh LM. We agree to maintain Priscilla's membership.

2019/06/05 Appointments

Nominations Committee puts forward the following names for consideration:

1. *To serve from March 2019 until February 2022*
 - a. Beth Cross (P&M) Pastoral Care and Oversight

2. *To Serve from July 2019 to June 2022*
 - a. Alison Moore (Tw) Elder (*reappointment*).
 - b. Alison Moore (Tw) Oversight and Pastoral Care (*reappointment*).
 - c. Peter Moore (Tw) Oversight and Pastoral Care (*reappointment*).

We appoint these friends accordingly.

We have heard that Alison and Peter Moore are happy to continue in their present roles. Tweeddale meeting is small and people support each other. We are encouraged to join them in their meetings whenever possible.

2019/06/06 Request for appointment of meeting for worship for marriage

There is an intention of marriage between Anna Liebmann of 34 Eastfield, Edinburgh and Robin Naumann of the same address. We are asked to agree that a meeting for worship to solemnise this marriage be held at Bellfield, 16b Bellfield Street, Edinburgh on Saturday 16 November 2019, at a time to be determined. We rejoice at this news, and wish all involved well. We appoint this meeting as requested by our Registering Officer, and ask AM Elders to arrange for eldership.

2019/06/07 General Meeting for Scotland

We have heard a report from the meeting held at 7 Victoria Terrace on 8 June. Rachel Frith and Alison Burnley have thanked all who helped in catering for GM, and we thank them for their work.

The main topic was the presentation by Edwina Peart, national Diversity & Inclusion Co-ordinator, which is recorded in the GM minute. We will consider these issues more fully later in today's agenda. A further minute states (in part):

Minute 12. Scottish Quakers: How do we liberate ourselves to focus on spiritual growth, community building and witness in the world?

Part of Minute 15 of our last GM read 'We feel strongly that we don't want to lose sight of this process and discernment. We ask our GM Committee to ensure it comes back to a future GM agenda.' Please see Minutes 12 & 15 of GM held 9 March 2019 for full discernment. GM clerks propose that we ask LMs and AMs to work with this summary paper between June GM and November GM. We ask that each AM brings an action plan to Perth on 16 November for discernment. Discernment at this GM will produce action points for GM to work with.

We ask our clerking team, in consultation with others as appropriate, to prepare an approach for discussion at our September Area Meeting.

We encourage all to read the summary paper, which can be requested from Alastair Cameron. We ask Phil Lucas to attend the next General Meeting, to be held in Aberdeen on 14 September, and report to our November meeting.

2019/06/08 Conferences & events

1. *Climate cultures and the breath we share – an indigenous and interfaith response to our climate emergency.* Book launch & dialogue, Pacific climate cultures, living climate change in Oceania. Wed 26 June, 3.15-6.15 pm, the

Byre Theatre, St Andrews, Fife. Notify admin@interfaithscotland.org if you plan to attend.

2. *Portobello & Musselburgh LM family ceilidh*, organised jointly with the Ceilidh Collective, raising funds for Quakers at Wiston; Aid & Abet; Edinburgh Tool Library; and Bellfield. Saturday 29 June, 5.00-10.00 pm, Bellfield, 16b Bellfield St, Edinburgh EH15 2BP. Tickets on the door or from <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4204803>.
3. Edinburgh International Book Festival – *Who owns Scotland's land?* Organised in partnership with Quakers in Scotland. Panel includes Andrew Thin of Scottish Land Commission; Alastair McIntosh; and former member of Scottish land review Agnes Rennie. Tickets and info from <https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/the-festival/whats-on/who-owns-scotland-s-land>.
4. Wiston Quaker weekend 2019, 6-8 September, Wiston Lodge, Millrig Road ML12 6HT. Bookings now open, more information at <https://wistonquakers2019.bpt.me/>.
5. General Meeting for Scotland enquirers day, Stirling, 12 October 2019; full details to be published soon.

2019/06/09 Correspondence

1. Quaker Voluntary Action – newsletter 2019
2. Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture Q-CAT – update from the Convener, June 2019
3. News and an emergency appeal from Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees, June 2019

2019/06/10 Revision of *Quaker Faith & Practice*

Our Friend Mary Woodward (Portobello & Musselburgh LM) has been appointed to the Book of Discipline Revision Committee (BoDRC), which has the task of bringing forward the replacement for *Quaker Faith & Practice*. She has reported on the process of inviting the 24 members of the committee, and on the early stages of the committee's work.

Members have begun to get to know each other and started to think about how to revise our Book of Discipline, recognizing that it will be a lengthy process. They have thought about how they will meet and work and what their strengths and weaknesses are.

There will be a weekend at Woodbrooke *Why have a Book of Discipline?* on 8-10 November. It is intended that each Area Meeting will be represented at this. The committee will meet in different parts of the country, including in Edinburgh in October.

Besides a book, the committee is looking at other modes of presenting the content. Henry Thompson, our representative on Meeting for Sufferings (MfS), has pointed out that MfS will monitor the progress of the committee's work.

A collection tool has been set up, whereby individuals and groups, including study groups, local meetings and area meetings, can indicate their ideas for inclusion in the revised book of discipline. This can be found at <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/qfp-idea/>; alternatively, material can be submitted to Michael Booth at Friends House.

We wish the committee well in this exciting process, and invite Mary to seek any support she might need from us.

2019/06/11 Kelso – a wide-spread meeting

We have heard from Marianne Butler about Kelso meeting, which brings together an average of 14-15 in worship each Sunday. The meeting covers a wide area, from Eyemouth to Newcastleton, a distance of 72 miles. Public transport, especially on a Sunday, is patchy. The meeting is conscious of the need to build community.

Matilda Hall has outlined local Quaker history, going back to George Fox's visit of 1657. Early Quakers were 'big house' people. By 1777, there was a Quaker meeting house in Bridge Street in Kelso. Further buildings were used by Quakers in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In the 20th century, meetings dwindled, and there was a concentration of Quakers in Edinburgh, though it is felt some Quaker ideas were taken up by other denominations locally.

By the 1980s and 1990s, growth happened as Quakers met in each others' houses, but numbers grew beyond the capacity of domestic rooms. Kelso became a 'preparative meeting' in 1997.

The present building was acquired in 2001: this had required a major appeal to raise funds. The role of David Woolgrove and the Woolgrove family in securing the building and fitting it out was recorded with thanks.

Following Matilda's talk, we have considered ways of building community over a dispersed area. Ideas such as holding study groups, lunches and social events are suggested, but we are aware of the carbon footprint of meeting together and of ongoing difficulty for those at greater distance. We have heard of technological means such as Zoom of coming together, and of the uses of Facebook.

We are reminded of Quakers' counter-cultural tradition, and of the continued value of meeting face-to-face. The value of informal encounters in building community should not be under-estimated. We thank Marianne and Matilda for their contributions to this discussion.

2019/06/12 Diversity and inclusion in the life of Quakers

Our Friend Phil Lucas (East Lothian LM) has reported on the work of the Diversity & Inclusion Group, which we set up in late 2018. Securing a diverse membership for the group was a challenge, particularly in getting the engagement of younger people. Meetings held in Edinburgh in the lead-up to Yearly Meeting, though not well attended, were helpful.

We see the connections between diversity, inclusion and privilege.

We are also aware that these themes were a major part of the considerations at Britain Yearly Meeting 2019, as is reflected in the YM Epistle; and of the contributions made earlier in the month by Edwina Peart, national Diversity & Inclusion Co-ordinator, when she spoke at General Meeting, and again the following day in a workshop at 7 Victoria Terrace.

In small groups, we have considered ways in which we personally may be privileged. We have also thought about whether the gathered community of our local meetings is reflected in how we encounter the wider community within which our meetings are set. We recognise the need to be proactive in promoting our values of equality and inclusion, and in resisting social trends that run counter to them.

We recognise the need to embed in our Quaker life, practices which encourage an inclusive and diverse approach. We ask local meetings to consider what this might mean for them, including in relation to outreach. We ask local meetings to share ideas and approaches that are found to be helpful.

We agree to lay down the Diversity & Inclusion Group, and to ask our clerks to bring these matters back to our area meeting agendas, twice a year in the first instance, to review the changing position over time.

2019/06/13 Closing minute

26 members and five attenders have been at all or part of today's meeting. We thank Kelso friends for their hospitality. Local meeting attendance is indicated below:

Central Edinburgh	Central Fife	East Lothian	Kelso	Penicuik
7	3	2	12	1
Polmont	Portobello & Musselburgh	South Edinburgh	Tweeddale	
2	3	1	-	

We next meet on Wednesday 4 September 2019, at Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House.

(Signed)
Alastair Cameron
Clerk
Cath Dyer
Assistant Clerk

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: Bellfield, 16B Bellfield Street, Portobello EH15 2BP <i>Half an hour – no children's meeting.</i>	7.30 pm

Second Sunday in the Month

East Lothian: Dunbar Town House, High Street, Dunbar	11.00 am
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Second and Fourth Sundays in the Month

Portobello & Musselburgh: Bellfield, 16B Bellfield Street, Portobello EH15 2BP. <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

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: Dunbar Town House, High Street, Dunbar	11.00 am
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So far as we know, there are no regular meetings for worship on University premises. **Mark Borthwick** is the named Quaker contact on the University of Edinburgh Chaplaincy website, and there is a Facebook Group at www.facebook.com/groups/EUQuakerSoc

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. 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 **Joanna Swanson** at jmswanson69@gmail.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.