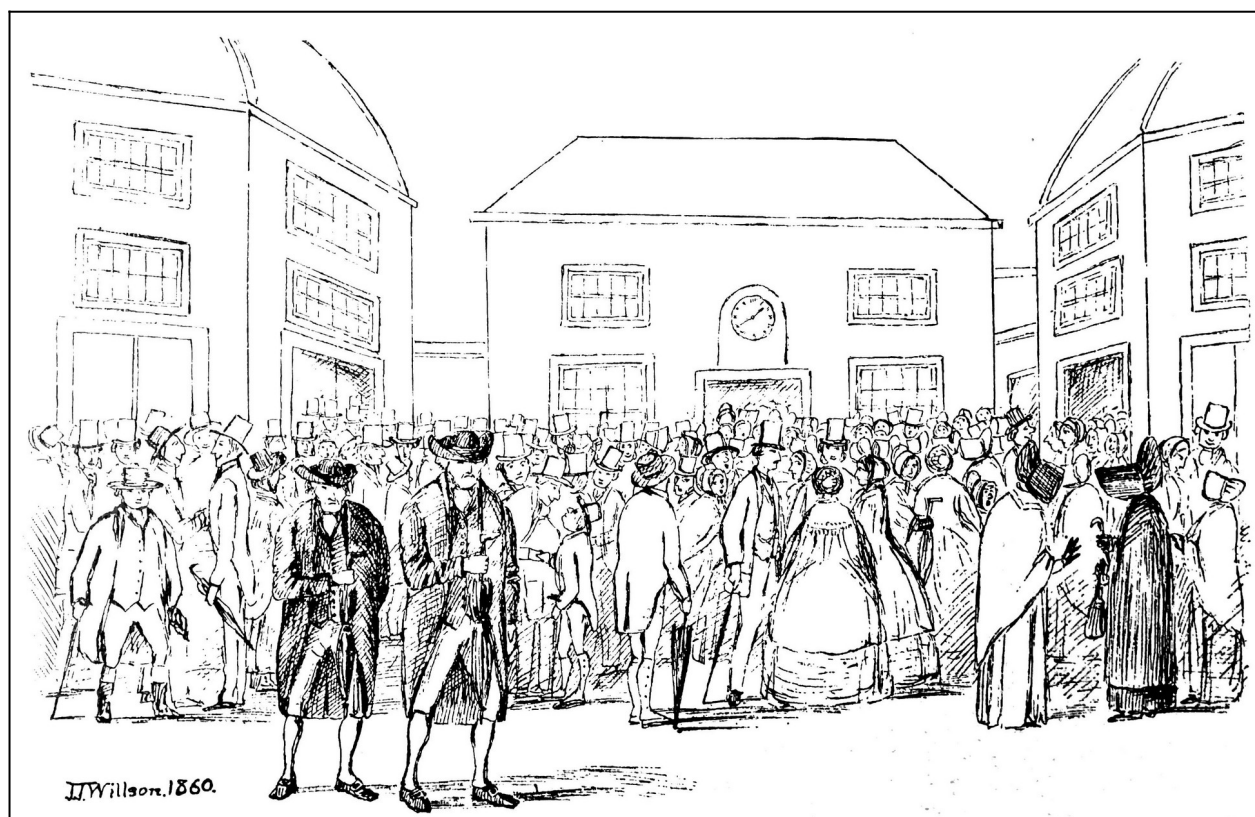


SESAME

Number 242: June 2022

Area Meeting on 25 June/YM Epistle/Interfaith Statement on the TPNW Meeting of States Parties/Fàilte: *exciting news*/Friends & the [1887] Jubilee/Ukraine: *a statement & a response*/Parliamentary Engagement: *Climate, Economic Justice, Peace*/Impressions of Yearly Meeting 2022/Volunteers for Venue 40/General Meeting/EMES Epistle/NFPB/May minutes/... & c.



Friends going into Yearly Meeting, 1860 – see page 43
For YM 2022, see page 22; the Epistle is on pages 3-5.

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 23 August**. The Editor reserves 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 Editor.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

South East Scotland Area Meeting will be on Saturday 25 June at Kelso Quaker Meeting House, Abbey Row, Kelso TD5 7JF. It will be both in-person and on Zoom. To allow for travel, the business meeting will start at 11.30 am, and we expect to complete it by 1.00 pm. The rest of the day will be a social opportunity to catch up with those we haven't seen for the past two years over lunch and with a ceilidh – weather permitting, in the lovely garden at the Meeting House.

Children and young people are welcome. There will be care for the younger children while business meeting is under way, and the rest of the day is for people of all ages. We expect to wind up around 4.00 pm: you are welcome, of course, to come to any part of the day.

This will be an in-person meeting, with a blended element: if you are unable to come in person, please log in at 11.30 am

DRAFT AGENDA

1. Worship and introductions
2. Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 10 May 2022
3. Matters arising from previous minutes
4. Decisions by between-meeting procedure
 1. *Amendments to the guidance on financial support for attendance at events, courses and conferences*
 2. *Appointment of visitor to applicant for membership*
5. Membership matters: reports on visits for membership applications
6. Matters from local meetings
 1. South Edinburgh: *proposed 'Meetings for Worship for Peace' alongside Faslane*
 2. Tweeddale: *plans for meeting for worship*
 3. Kelso: *death of Irene Brockbank*
7. Reports
 1. *Junior Yearly Meeting, 9-12 April 2022*

2. *Britain Yearly Meeting, 27-30 May 2022*

[See the Epistle, below, and page 22]

3. *General Meeting for Scotland, 11 June 2022*

[See page 31]

8. Presentation of annual accounts 2021

[See page 8]

9. Appointments

1. *From Nominations Committee*

2. *To attend Living Witness Sustainability Gathering, Woodbrooke,*

26-29 August

10. Closing minute

All are welcome at Area Meeting – you don't have to be a member of the Society of Friends.

We look forward to hearing about Junior Yearly Meeting: we minuted our intention in March to make our meetings more relevant to young people, and those who attended JYM are keen to share their experience.

We will also be receiving the accounts for 2021 – unsurprisingly, a difficult year. These have been circulated by email; we are asked to look at them in advance. (There is also a summary report on pages 8-11.) Any questions should go to our Treasurer, Jacqueline Noltingk, by **Friday 24 June** at the latest (email sesamtreasurer@gmail.com). That will allow her to prepare a proper response and thus aid clarity.

The ceilidh will be a participatory affair. If you can make a contribution – music, poetry, story, jokes or anything else – it will be most welcome. Max Marnau of Kelso meeting is organising the programme, so please send her an email indicating what you'll be doing.

We are asked to bring our own lunch. Kelso Friends will provide tea, coffee, biscuits and home baking, which will be on hand throughout the day (with doggy bags to deal with any surplus). We must remember that Covid is still with us, and be suitably cautious when socialising.

Alastair Cameron
Clerk

Epistle from Britain Yearly Meeting held in person and online from 27–30 May 2022

We send loving greetings to Friends everywhere.

Friends gathered for Yearly Meeting at Friends House in London, Hemel Hempstead and online. Faith in action meetings took place online in the previous week.

Amid the challenges of the climate emergency, wars in Europe and elsewhere in the world, a global pandemic, and a cost of living crisis, it has been important to address the interwoven strands of faith, community and

action. All three are necessary – we are challenged to explore how our faith connects us with one other and how we act in the world.

Ministry is rooted in our worship and faith. We have tried to listen in a generous and a hopeful way, open to new learning and trusting in the Spirit amongst us.

The sheer size of this Yearly Meeting was an indication of the possibilities of blended worship. The ‘All Together Worship’ on Sunday brought the face-to-face presence of over 200 Friends into one community with 78 meetings and 290 individuals online, and other Friends joining in spirit. We heard gratitude from those who were only able to be with us because of the online facility. Children 11 and under had programmes in Friends House whilst young people 11 and over met in Hemel Hempstead. Junior Yearly Meeting met earlier in the year.

We are all on a faith journey, sometimes lit up by transformational experiences, but we depend on quiet waiting on God for the nudges and shoves that lead us in new and urgent directions. We heard passionate calls to ‘let go’ and trust the Spirit to make clear where we will be led. We need to be ready to listen deeply and to live in the discomfort of not knowing but moving forward in faith.

In a healthy community there is always someone to help us up with a tender hand. Young adult Friends called for cross-generational conversations and accompaniment. We heard heart-warming accounts of community togetherness, including support for those with difficulties due to neuro-divergence or mental health problems. However, although we pride ourselves on being good at building peace for others, we sometimes find it hard to do this within our own communities.

Some have welcomed returning to meeting face to face. Others embrace online communication as enabling and inclusive; we are discovering new ways to build Quaker communities. We recognise that the life of our Meetings depends on reaching out into the world and searching for new insights. Are our Quaker communities models for what we want to see – places of openness, active listening, deep communication and connection? We cannot offer this vision to others without healing ourselves.

Many of us were saddened and ashamed to hear personal experiences of racism: descriptions of an event where none of the bystanders on the street supported the Friend, and another within the context of service on a Quaker central committee. A necessary first step against oppression is to believe one another’s accounts and experiences.

We were given powerful evidence of Quaker engagement in the transatlantic slave trade. It is important to understand and tell the truth about the past – it is even more important to recognise its enduring consequences: the trauma and impact on lives in the present.

We must start making changes now and for the future: “planting flowers

as well as pulling up weeds.” Britain Yearly Meeting resolves to build on our decision last year to be an anti-racist church, working with partners, including churches and faith groups, to look at ways to make meaningful reparations for our failings. We need to take urgent action as individuals, in our local, area and yearly meetings.

“What do love and justice require of us?”

Signed, in and on behalf of Britain Yearly Meeting,
Siobhán Haire, *Clerk*

The documents for Yearly Meeting, and other material, including video recordings of the session introductions, are on the BYM website at

www.quaker.org.uk/ym.

For more on Yearly Meeting see page 22.

Joint Interfaith Statement

Welcoming the First Meeting of the States Parties of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

AS FAITH COMMUNITIES FROM A DIVERSITY OF TRADITIONS and located all over the world, we join together with one voice to mark this first Meeting of States Parties (MSP) to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). We welcome this historic occasion and celebrate this milestone that moves us closer to a world without nuclear weapons.

We gather at a time when the threat of nuclear annihilation feels closer than before. So many more of us suffer from anxiety in response to the increasing threats by nuclear armed states. In the face of these urgent existential threats, we are more determined than ever to abolish nuclear weapons.

We are acutely aware of the threats facing humanity and our beloved planet. From the devastating impacts of a global pandemic to the rising threat of climate catastrophe, the stakes for life on earth have never felt higher. Nuclear weapons represent a tangible manifestation of the worst of these threats with the risk they pose to human health and environmental stability. The resources currently spent on the development and maintenance of these weapons should be directed towards supporting the most vulnerable people and protecting the planet through investing in food, education, health care and climate justice.

Our faith traditions call us to denounce this misuse of resources and to call for greater international cooperation to end nuclear weapons forever. Nuclear weapons are a tool of domination and violent coercion in a time when we urgently need to prioritize human security. Our religious and spiritual traditions uphold an ethos of mutual aid, care for the stranger and trust in the community.

Our faith traditions continue to nurture the belief in a better future. We are reminded of our shared vulnerability and our shared capacity to make compassionate, intelligent policy choices. We remain committed not only to our own security but to the security and well-being of one another. We understand the interrelationship between justice and peace and we continue to commit ourselves to working for a world in which no community has the power to annihilate another, where the security of some does not depend on the insecurity of others.

We urge the States Parties of the TPNW to heed the voices of the world's *hibakusha* and contribute to strengthening the treaty through fully including the voices of affected communities so that as the international community we can begin the work of healing the harms caused by nuclear weapons. We also urge all States to work for the universalization of the TPNW, and invite all countries that have yet to ratify the treaty to do so in a timely manner. And finally, we urge all nuclear-weapon states to act in accordance with their commitment to nuclear disarmament and take concrete measures towards reducing nuclear threats.

In a world that often seems bleak, we celebrate this first MSP as a glimmer of light and hope. Just as we come together to unite our voices and prayers beyond our own faith traditions, we applaud your commitment to multilateralism and diplomacy in a time of divisiveness and tensions. We stand with you to rid the world of nuclear weapons, and create a world where we can advance together for common security and mutual flourishing.

The statement has been endorsed by 143 organisations worldwide; the full list is at <https://sgi-peace.org/resources/faith-communities-concerned-about-nuclear-weapons-statements>

Our Friend Janet Fenton, who had planned to attend the Meeting of States Parties in Vienna, 21-23 June, was unable to do so; we hope nevertheless to have news of it in the next Sesame. Janet has an article in the June/July issue of Peace News: <https://peacenews.info/node/10256/we-dont-need-another-ban-nuclear-threats-we-already-have-one-tpnw>

Fàilte Edinburgh – June update

FÀILTE EDINBURGH are looking for volunteers to help welcome and support the refugee family **who have now been referred to us by the Home Office.**



If all goes well, therefore,

the family will be arriving later this summer.

Volunteering will involve such things as accompanying members of the family to appointments, to the shops or to a local park; conversational English; and organising social activities. Some training will be required.

If you, or anyone you know, might be interested in learning more or completing a volunteer form, please email csfailte@gmail.com and we will get back to you.

Community Sponsorship groups like ours are working to make a difference to the lives of refugees all over the UK. This is achieved through the UK Government-UNHCR Community Sponsorship Scheme:

<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/community-sponsorship-5f9825b34.html>

Community sponsorship is one of the very few safe and legal routes to the UK for people seeking sanctuary. With severe and increasing restrictions being imposed we are determined to do what we can to help.

The process is quite complex and has required months of planning and training to reach this point.

Members of Fàilte Edinburgh are drawn from Quakers, other organisations and interested individuals under the sponsorship of South East Scotland Area Meeting. Our aim is to support the refugee family to settle and live independently in Edinburgh, giving them hope for the future while in turn being enriched by our shared experiences.

A few outstanding items from our Inventory are still needed for the flat – if you can donate anything from the list below, please let us know.

Furnishings

Beanbag or pouffe, *preferably red or dark teal/blue.*

1 tie-on seat cushion (*medium/dark grey*)

Bedding

8 Pillows – *as new, must conform to modern fire safety standard*

2 single mattresses – *as new, ditto*

Cutlery

4 larger table knives

4 medium table forks

4 soup / dessert spoons

Other kitchen/dining items

1 tin-opener

1 bread bin

1-2 fridge storage containers

Various

1 wheeled shopping bag,

1 long-handled broom / brush,

2 waste paper baskets

1 sewing kit



We also welcome donations of money:

1) By Bank transfer

Donations can be made by direct bank transfer to:

Account name: Failte Edinburgh

Sort code: 08-92-99

Account number: 67237353

2) By monthly direct debit

A small monthly amount can go a long way to help. The bank details are above. You can cancel the direct debit at any time.

3) By cheque

You can send cheques made out to **FAILTE EDINBURGH** to the treasurer, Mark Bitel [*c/o Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House (as below)*]

If you wish us to claim GIFT AID on your donation(s), please contact Mark Bitel for a gift aid form: mark@evaluation.u-net.com

4) By CAF voucher

Please send your completed CAF voucher made out to **SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING** with a note indicating that funds are to be earmarked for Failte Edinburgh. Vouchers should be sent to: **Treasurer, SESAM, Central Edinburgh Quaker Meeting House, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL**

Financial report for 2021

to accompany the Report and Financial Statements for 2021

['The Report & Financial Statements' runs to 32 pages; too lengthy for inclusion here. Paper copies are available from the Trustees on request. References below in the form "pp. 16-17" refer to pages in that document, not to pages of Sesame.]

FRIENDS WILL NOT NEED REMINDING that 2021 was another difficult year for all of us individually, and for South East Scotland Area Meeting (SESAM). The accounts for 2021 show how the difficulties were expressed in our finances. In 2020 we predicted a much higher loss in 2021 than 2020, and that has proved to be the case.

SESAM's accounts incorporate the accounts of all our local meetings and committees as well as SESAM's own direct income and expenditure. They are prepared by our accountant, and are examined by an independent firm. Following the financial review on pp. 7-10, there is an overview of the year on pp. 16-17, and detail is given in the notes on pp. 22-32.

The tables below present information from the accounts in a more digestible way, giving references for those who wish to refer to the main document.

MEETING HOUSES (Edinburgh and Kelso)

As in 2020, we had few lettings in 2021 and, since these have traditionally provided an income stream from which we could pay salaries and basic up-

keep costs for the premises, there was a large gap between income and expenditure. Our Edinburgh meeting house managers continued to work, taking care of the building, dealing with enquiries, monitoring government guidance and continually revising risk assessments. We are grateful to them for all that they did under difficult circumstances. In normal years, there would be a regular stream of visitors into the building but last year the managers were on their own for most of the time. We were also able to retain our other staff, even when we had no work for them, by taking advantage of the UK Government's Job Retention Scheme until it ended in September. By then, fortunately, we had more work for the staff on fixed-hours contracts (some are on casual contracts). We received no government business support grants in 2021.

INCOME associated with 'Trading Activities' (Notes 5 & 7, pp. 22, 23). <i>For donations income, see below.</i>	2021 £	2020 £
Room lettings, Edinburgh and Kelso	11,419	19,386
Catering associated with lettings in Edinburgh	1,413	13,552
Quaker Centres Gathering, 2020; Festival, 2021; sales in the meeting house foyer	1,106	6,356
Government grants (business support & job retention)	24,347	55,566
TOTAL INCOME	38,285	94,860

EXPENDITURE (Note 10, p. 25; Note 8, p. 23.) <i>For expenditure on Quaker activities, see below</i>	2021 £	2020 £
Wages, salaries, pensions (before job retention grants – see income table above)	65,563	66,456
Building costs (Council Tax, utilities, maintenance, upgrades, architect fees, insurance, cleaning, purchases, training; excluding depreciation costs)	73,484	54,198
Professional support (accounting, audit, investment fees, computing)	12,152	12,575
Expenses associated with lettings (catering, Festival costs)	994	6,972
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	152,193	140,201

Work on our buildings, originally scheduled for 2020, took place in 2021, when we took advantage of the fact that the two meeting houses were not in use, and we drew on our reserves in order to finance it. Some work still needs to be done at Victoria Terrace.

DONATIONS

Aside from lettings, our income mainly comes from members and attenders, particularly through donations. We are grateful to those who have been able

to continue to give financial support through the Area Meeting. The figures below include sums earmarked by donors for local meetings or for passing on to the John Wigham Trust, to General Meeting for Scotland or to Britain Yearly Meeting. Given that there were few in-person Sunday Meetings for Worship in 2021, along with worries about handling cash, donations made to local meetings 'in the bowl' were diminished.

DONATIONS INCOME (Note 3, p. 22)	2021 £	2020 £
Donations for Area Meeting use (includes grants received from the Camfield Trust)	62,279	58,836
Donations and legacies for John Wigham (Enjoyment) Tr. and for Local Meetings	33,180	32,703
TOTAL	95,459	91,539

EXPENDITURE ON QUAKER WORK

As in 2020 and as a result of the continuance of the pandemic in 2021, there was less AM expenditure than normal on committee meetings, conferences and other Quaker activities.

We continued to make financial contributions to organisations beyond SESAM including the Northern Friends Peace Board, but the Northern Friends Youth Events Trust did not request its annual payment. During 2020 we kept most of these payments at normal levels. Our contribution to Britain Yearly Meeting amounted to £34,500 of which £25,000 was from SESAM funds (£5,000 less than in 2020) and the balance consisted of amounts earmarked by Friends. We made the second of two payments to Campaign Against Arms Trade using legacy funds.

EXPENDITURE (Note 9, p. 24)	2021 £	2020 £
Conferences, bursary help, committees, admin., newsletters, membership fees	4,939	7,343
LM activities and LM premises costs	5,403	4,121
Grants / Contributions paid		
Britain Yearly Meeting <i>of which £9,500 from restricted funds in 2021</i>	34,500	41,133
General Meeting for Scotland	3,665	7,101
Northern Friends Peace Board	2,115	2,250
Northern Friends Youth Events Trust (Shindig was online in 2020)	-	1,300
Campaign Against Arms Trade	5,000	5,000
Various other grants (less than £1,000 each)	8,788	10,934
TOTAL	64,410	79,182

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY (SOFA) (See p. 16)

We ended 2021 with an overall **loss of £58,581** (compared with a **loss of £10,662** in 2020). However, these figures may be misleading. There have been additions to our fixtures & fittings (*see Note 15, p. 27*), and changes to the valuation of our investments. As Friends know, we invested a proportion of the large 2018 legacy and that portfolio is revalued at the end of each year. The changes as a result of the revaluation amounted to £34,448 in 2021 as compared with £22,690 in 2020 (*see Note 16, p. 28 – the figure of £34,448 is the difference between the portfolio total in 2021 as compared with 2020*). As a result of these changes, the actual cash deficit in 2021 was considerably larger than indicated by the overall loss – see the decrease in the AM's 'net current assets' (*as shown in the Balance Sheet on p. 17*).

2022

The situation in 2022 remains difficult. Both meeting houses have reopened for our own use and for lettings, but in the case of Edinburgh those lettings are mostly to community groups for evenings and weekends which often mean bringing in additional staff; there are few day-time bookings when our staff are already in the meeting house. Income is lower than it was before the pandemic.

The management committee for Edinburgh continued its search for an improved audiovisual system for the meeting house and, although most work was completed by the end of 2021 some further adjustments were made in 2022. We are now able to hold blended meetings with some Friends present in person and more vulnerable Friends or those unable to travel joining from home or wherever they are. We can also offer better facilities to those hiring rooms.

While in the early stages of the pandemic our investments rose in value, towards the end of last year and early this year the situation has been very different. For instance, shares in fossil fuel companies have risen considerably in value but, in accordance with our concern for the environment, we do not invest in those companies. We have also had to draw on about a third of our investments in order to replenish our cash reserves.

THANKS

We reiterate our thanks to our Meeting House staff, and to Friends who have continued their financial support. Many of them, and other Friends, also contribute to the life of our meetings by their service, and as treasurers we are particularly grateful to local meeting and committee treasurers, our own extended treasury team, the management committee, those Friends in Kelso who take so much care over the meeting house there, and the trustees for all they do. We extend particular thanks to John Phillips for many, many years of work in connection with our financial affairs. His work and advice have been invaluable.

Jacqueline Noltingk, Treasurer, South East Scotland Area Meeting
with the assistance of
Philip Corrie-Hawes, Assistant Treasurer

Jubilee Fatigue (or not) – in 1887

THE PEN & PENCIL SOCIETY was a literary and artistic group formed by Friends at Hartshead Meeting in Sheffield in 1868; it was eventually wound up in 1908. Members of the Barber and Doncaster families were prominent in it, as in many local Quaker activities, notably the Adult School Movement. It met six to eight times a year to hear the poems and essays written by members, which were read anonymously and preserved in bound volumes, now in the Sheffield City Archives [Ref. LD2354].

In 1887 Queen Victoria celebrated her Golden Jubilee, and at the October meeting of the 'P.&P.S.' it was noted that

Amongst the many deputations to our Queen to present Congratulations on her Jubilee, none had such marked characteristics as that of the Society of Friends. In the first place she excused their wearing court dress at the luncheon & secondly at the Luncheon they were all water drinkers – 7 out of 10 actually wearing the Blue ribband!¹

It hardly seemed in keeping for the staid and sombre Society to bring itself in contact with pomp & grandeur & yet it served the purpose of shewing that Friends are matter of fact, practical people & not so "odd" as reported & loyal withal.

Loyalty was not universal, however. One member, Alfred R. Ecroyd, submitted a provocative essay on 'Jubilee Day' (sic – the second l is crossed out in the manuscript) in which having asserted that "most lady members of the P&P.S. would fill the throne to much better purpose than its present occupant" he ridiculed the notions that

owing to the great intellectual powers inherited from her illustrious grand-father George [the mad George III], and transmitted for the future benefit of Europe to her grandson William of Prussia [the 'Kaiser Bill' of World War I], she has covered her country with a network of railways, telegraphs & telephones ...

and

It would be disloyal if we did not say that we owe ... all the other advantages, rights and privileges that distinguish 1887 from 1837 not to the pluck and perseverance of the workingmen of England, not to the brainpower of our inventors, not to the patriotism and devotion of our Members of Parliament, not to the super-abundant wisdom of the House of Lords, not to our coal-fields, our iron, our copper & our tin, but to the accident that placed Victoria on the throne in 1837, and to the heredity longevity that kept her there for half a century.

He himself spent Jubilee Day, 21 June, on a long walk in Derbyshire to get away from the revelry in Sheffield; though he and his companions did see "more than 50 Beacon fires" after nightfall, on their way home. His irrever-

1. The blue ribband was the badge of total abstainers, imported from America in the 1870s; it was inspired by the Old Testament verses: "Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue: and it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them ..." (Numbers 15: 38-39, KJV)

ence drew four indignant responses at the next meeting, the first of which concluded:

With all its faults and national sins, England is a country of which we may yet be proud, and our English Queen is one whom along with all but one of our fellow countrymen, we may yet delight to honour without grudging, on one day at least in every 50 years !

The second went further:

... to those, to whom her pure and blameless life, surrounded as it is by all the thousand dangers & scares that beset all Court life, makes no appeal, we can only say that we pity them & trust that they form a decided minority in our Pen & Pencil Society ...

and the third, from the misspelt title, wrote of “*the member who could neither spend nor spell Jubilee*” adapting James Smith’s parody of Byron:

*Sated of home of wife of children tired
The restless soul is driven (by a party of blue ribbonists from Sheffield)
abroad to roam;
Sated abroad, all seen but nought admired,
The restless soul is driven to wander home*

– also comparing him to the Queen’s would-be assassin Edward Oxford, found to be insane and transported to Australia in 1840. The fourth wrote:

It was wisely remembered by one of old time [i.e. Rabelais] “It is agreeable with the nature of man to long after things forbidden & to desire what is denied us”. I therefore think it is evident that in passing a certain resolution at the first meeting of this session [against political controversy] we made a mistake. Let us rescind it & instead pass one to the effect that all members are requested to introduce into their papers at least one reference to party politics & one libel on the Queen. I venture to think if we do that we shall have heard the last of those subjects from our dear Radical and Republican friends.

A fifth rebuttal came at the following meeting, but also a counter-attack. Its writer hinted at knowing the irreverent one’s identity and to having some idea as to who his critics were; she reproved “*the poet of the quartette who studies his dictionary more than his Bible*” for not knowing ‘jubilee’ is jubile in Leviticus 25:11 (in the King James Version): her own preferred spelling.

The four brilliant (?) papers conclusively prove not only that the Jubile paper was opportune, but that the views therein enunciated are in the main correct. Don’t suppose that I am a republican or the daughter of one, nor should I advise any of the four writers, fond as some of them appear to be of that exercise, to jump to the conclusion that the writer of the present paper agrees with or approves of everything contained in the paper on Jubile day. ... I think nevertheless that the monarchy could and should be mended, but not ended, and I think the same of both the Lords and Commons. I do not remember reading anything in the obnoxious paper that would lead me to suppose the writer thinks otherwise.

She also contradicted other questionable claims by the four critics; thus the singing of the National Anthem by the crowds in Norfolk Park, which

the first had praised as "*enough to make our hearts glad and thankful*" she said had been "*noted atrocious by all unprejudiced listeners*".

However if disrespecting the Monarch raised hackles, there seems to have been no contradiction of this cry of exasperation at the extended festivities:

"Oh That Word!"

What word is that which makes me
start

As if a pin transfixed my heart –
And quickly out of earshot dart?

The Jubilee!

It cuts upon the ear like knife –
The mildest man would scold his wife
For mentioning in private life

The Jubilee!

Why is it that broadcast appears
This word which moves my soul to
tears –

On boots, beer, hairwash, soap (*not*
Pears¹) !

The Jubilee!

Why am I haunted night and day
By wights who for subscriptions pray,
And if one asks "What for" they say

The Jubilee!

What makes excursion trains so full
While we at home long faces pull
Because our trade's so parlous dull?

The Jubilee!

What caused the Laureate's muse to
fly

Away, & writhe in agony

When ordered to write poetry?²

The Jubilee!

What makes poor Fawkes with envy
turn

Within his grave, annoyed to learn
That not for him the bonfires burn!

The Jubilee!

Why has a Grand Old Man gone
wrong

Choosing the Marseillaise for song?³

Because no brain could stand for long

The Jubilee!

The hateful word is worse than Drink
No band of hope would drown – I
think

Its awful sound – nor millstone sink

The Jubilee!

Why do these Irish join in rout⁴
And throw police and things about?

Because they're maddened by the
shout

Of Jubilee.

To these the cry no purpose serves
Except to jar upon the nerves –
No Irishman the curse deserves!

The Jubilee!

Oh Eighty Eight – I wait in thee
Relief from all the misery

And thank my stars there ne'er will be
For us another

Jubilee!⁵

NOTES

1. Pears Soap was known for its innovative advertising, which did not, however, capitalise on the royal anniversary. 2. Tennyson's Jubilee Ode was unrhymed. (Alfred Ecroyd quotes the Presiding Officer as saying "most members of the P&P.S. could write better poetry than the Poet Laureate.") 3. W.E. Gladstone, as Leader of the Opposition, was urging the 'concert of Europe' over 'splendid isolation' in foreign affairs; this presumably alludes to some specific event, or comment relating to France. 4. In the 'Mitchelstown Affray' in Co. Cork in September, three people were killed by the Royal Irish Constabulary. 5. Not so: the Queen celebrated her Diamond Jubilee in 1897 – and visited Sheffield to open the new Town Hall.

[With thanks to Richard Hoare, Sheffield & Balby AM, for passing all this on. ED.]

Ukraine: Seeking Paths to Peace

The following statement was incorporated in a letter dated 13 May 2022 to the UK Foreign Secretary from the Northern Friends Peace Board:

QUAKERS ARE UNITED IN DISTRESS at the terrible toll that the continuing war in Ukraine is taking on human life. There can be no justification for military action such as that taken by Russia, however strongly grievances might be felt. As a community committed to peace, it pains us to recognise that the situation in which citizens of Ukraine find themselves is one in which armed resistance seems, to most, to be the only option.

We feel compelled, nonetheless, to urge our government to consider the longer-term, and to ask what actions are most likely to create pathways to peace and grounds for reconciliation. What seeds can be sown now that do not leave a legacy of further decades of enmity or create ever-greater tension and mistrust between nuclear powers?

We know that none of this will be easy, but we owe it to current and future generations to find a way forward that takes Europe and the world to a security based on common interest. At a time when we are all facing the real prospect of climate breakdown, this is urgent.

We urge our government to avoid words and actions that lead to an escalation of tensions. At some point, the fighting must stop; what can be done now to bring that point closer and to build a positive future for Ukrainians and Russians whose only desire is to live in peace?

A reply dated 17 May 2022 (of which the first paragraph is omitted) was received from the Correspondence Team in the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. Clearly a standard response (cf. the letters to our AM Clerk on TPNW in Sesame 234 and 235), and predictably self-congratulatory, it nevertheless says some things which we may find interesting:

RUSSIA'S ASSAULT on Ukraine is an unprovoked, premeditated and barbaric attack against a sovereign democratic state. The UK and our international partners stand united in condemning the Russian Government's reprehensible actions, which are an egregious violation of international law and the UN Charter. Ukraine has suffered horrific attacks and innocent people have lost their lives. It is a war crime to indiscriminately attack civilians, and Russia's crimes in Ukraine will not go unnoticed or unpunished.

Together with our allies we are making the Russian Government pay the price – and demonstrating the strength of opposition against Russian aggression. In lockstep with our G7 partners, we have imposed the largest and most severe set of economic sanctions ever imposed against a major economy.

Since Putin's invasion of Ukraine, we have sanctioned over 1000 Russian and Belarussian individuals and over 100 businesses at the heart of, or supporting, Putin's regime. This includes President Putin, Foreign Minister Sergey

Lavrov and Russia's leading oligarchs with a combined net worth of £100 bn. We took the lead in the removal of seven Russian banks from SWIFT on 12 March. New powers also enable us to ban Russian state and private companies from raising funds in the UK, banning dealing with their securities and making loans to them. We have frozen the assets of Russian banks, including Sberbank and Credit Bank of Moscow, with global assets of £500 billion. Over three million Russian companies are now barred from raising money on UK capital markets.

Our sanctions are already having an impact on Russia's economy: over \$350bn of Putin's war chest has been frozen; over 60% of the regime's \$604 billion foreign currency reserves are unavailable; the rouble remains volatile; and major Western companies continue to cut ties with Russia.

The UK's differences are with the aggressive policies of the Russian Government, not with the Russian people. The UK wants an improved bilateral relationship, but this depends on Russia de-escalating, withdrawing its troops from Ukraine and abiding by its international commitments.

The Prime Minister's address to the Ukrainian Parliament on 3 May, the first by any world leader, and his visit to Kyiv on 9 April are clear demonstrations of the UK's unwavering support for Ukraine and of solidarity with its people. The Prime Minister assured the Ukrainian Parliament that we in the UK will do everything we can to restore a free, sovereign and independent Ukraine.

The UK has pledged £220 million of humanitarian aid to Ukraine. In addition to our humanitarian funding, we have provided £74 million of fiscal support wrapped into \$723 million World Bank emergency funding, alongside £100 million in support for energy resilience and a \$1 billion lending guarantee to help strengthen Ukraine's economy. Thanks to the generosity from the UK public, the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal [*DEC = Disasters Emergency Committee: a group of 15 charities, including the British Red Cross, Christian Aid and Oxfam*] has already raised over £300 million. The UK Government has to date aid-matched £25 million – our largest ever aid-match contribution.

It is essential that donors and allies speak as one in warning Russia's Government of the humanitarian consequences of their aggression in Ukraine, and ensuring full humanitarian access, observance for International Humanitarian Law (including protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure), and respect for human rights at all times.

As a free and democratic country, Ukraine has the right to determine its own future. To ensure the security and defence of all our allies, we will continue to work together to make sure that Russia cannot further undermine European stability.

The UK and the international community stand against this naked aggression, and for freedom, democracy, and the sovereignty of nations around the world. We will continue to support the Government of Ukraine in the face of this assault on their sovereignty and territorial integrity. We have a clear mission: diplomatically, politically, economically – and eventually, militarily – this hideous and barbaric venture of Vladimir Putin must end in failure.

Parliamentary Engagement:

Current Priorities and Future Plans

General Meeting for Scotland has set three priorities for Quaker work at Holyrood. Under each heading is a bullet-point summary of what we would like to see, with brief details of what is currently being done by the GM Parliamentary Working Group (PEWG) and Andrew Tomlinson, our Parliamentary Engagement Officer.

1. The Climate Emergency

We would like to see:

- *An urgent plan of action to tackle the climate emergency domestically*
- *Support and funding for poorer nations in slowing and adapting to climate change*

What we are doing:

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

We are one of more than sixty civil society organisations involved in SCCS; see <https://www.stopclimatechaos.scot/>.

Consultation responses

Responses to public consultations by the Scottish Government and other bodies are submitted on behalf of Quakers in Scotland, and many of the subjects (such as NPF4 and the Rented Sector strategy – see below) relate to the climate crisis.

Heat in buildings and retrofit strategy

The Scottish Government's Heat in Buildings Strategy document was published in October 2021 – see

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/heat-buildings-strategy-achieving-net-zero-emissions-scotlands-buildings/>

– and although its scope is limited by the reservation to Westminster of various relevant issues (e.g. energy policy), there is still much that is possible to do within devolved competences.

Loss and Damage

Reparation for the harm caused to less developed countries by the climate crisis has been part of international discussions since COP18, in 2012; during COP26, the Scottish Government announced the establishment of its own Loss and Damage Fund, the first set up by a government in the Global North [see Sesame 238]. We are urging that this go beyond the symbolic.

[An analysis by the Heinrich Böll Foundation (affiliated to the German Green Party) of international Loss & Damage funding after COP26 is at:

<https://us.boell.org/en/2021/12/16/deferred-not-defeated-outcome-loss-and-damage-finance-cop26-and-next-steps#:~:text=In%20the%20early%20days%20of,funding%20specifically%20for%20that%20purpose.>]

Ecocide

Making deliberate or reckless environmental damage a crime in international law has begun to be debated in Europe, Asia and South America, and was described last year by the UN Secretary General as “highly desirable”. The International Criminal Court (Scotland) Act 2001 already incorporates into domestic law the offences under the jurisdiction of the ICC (*i.e.* war crimes), and it would seem feasible to do the same for ecocide.

See <https://www.stopecocide.earth/>

2. Economic Justice and Land Reform

We would like to see:

- *An economic system that values human wellbeing, fairness and sustainability above profit*
- *Wellbeing economy*
- *Redistribution*
- *Sustainability*

What we are doing:

Draft National Planning Framework; Draft Rented Sector Strategy

The Draft Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4) and the Draft Rented Sector Strategy were both opened to public consultation. Our submissions can be read, or downloaded in PDF format, at:

<https://www.quakerscotland.org/sites/quakerscotland.org/files/documents/Quakers%20in%20Scotland%20response%20to%20the%20fourth%20national%20planning%20framework%20consultation%20-%20final.pdf>

and

<https://www.quakerscotland.org/sites/quakerscotland.org/files/documents/Draft%20Rented%20Sector%20Strategy%20Consultation%20Response%20April%202022.pdf>

Doubling of the Scottish Child Payment

A ten-pound-a-week payment for each child under the age of six in low income households (*i.e.* in addition to Child Benefit, and means-tested benefits such as Universal Credit) was introduced by the Scottish Government in February 2021; Quakers were among those arguing for the amount to be increased. In November, it was announced that it would rise to £20/week from April 2022, with all children under the age of 16 in qualifying families to be receiving the payment by the end of 2022. See:

<https://www.gov.scot/news/doubling-the-scottish-child-payment/>

Cross-party Group on Poverty

The group was set up “as a forum for exploring the drivers of and solutions to poverty ... [and] to connect MSPs with organisations working to tackle poverty, as well as with people living on low incomes across Scotland, in order to better in-

form anti-poverty policy-making and contribute to the ending of poverty in Scotland."

It currently involves 11 MSPs and 54 organisations – see

<https://www.parliament.scot/get-involved/cross-party-groups/current-and-previous-cross-party-groups/2021/poverty>

Awaiting the next Land Reform bill coming before Parliament

The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 created the Scottish Land Commission, which has produced numerous papers since 2018, many on farming, and the rest which it divides into broad areas of "good practice", "ownership", "housing and development", and "tax and fiscal". It is likely that legislative proposals may arise from these, particularly on "ownership".

3. Peacebuilding

We would like to see:

- *A culture of peace promoted within Scotland*
- *The Curriculum for Excellence equipping all learners with the knowledge and skills needed for the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence*
- *Greater, guidance, balance and scrutiny of military visits to schools*

What we are doing:

Peace Institute

The Scottish Government announced last year that

"By the end of 2022 we will establish a Peace Institute, with a focus on human rights, that enables us to develop further our understanding of conflict resolution and peace. We will continue to argue for nuclear disarmament, mindful of the risks that Scotland faces as a result of housing the UK's nuclear deterrent."

From *A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2021-22*, published 7 September 2021

According to the website GovTracker.scot, there appears to have been no progress on this, as yet (although there was an article about it by Angus Robertson MSP in the *Edinburgh Evening News* at the start of the parliamentary session). We await developments with interest.

Raising concerns around military visits to schools

Together with ForcesWatch, Quakers in Scotland submitted a petition in 2016 calling for "greater scrutiny, guidance and consultation on armed forces visits to schools in Scotland"; the questions raised are still awaiting answers. [The petition and other evidence submitted can be read at

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/gettinginvolved/Petitions/armedforcesvisitschools>

the report of the Petitions Committee session at which it was discussed is at

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=10525&mode=pdf.>]

Peace Education

Peace at the heart: A relational approach to education in British schools is a new report from Quakers in Britain, launched on 11 May 2022; there is information about it at

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/put-peace-at-the-heart-of-education-quakers-say>

and the report itself (as a PDF) is at

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/peace-at-the-heart>

Friends are urged to share it widely, in particular with the local councillors elected, or re-elected, on 5 May.

The table opposite sets out what it is hoped to achieve: at the level of individual schools, in terms of practice; with local authorities, in securing their commitment; and with the Scottish Government, in gaining recognition of how peace education is central to the aims of the Curriculum for Excellence. The second column outlines how these things would be delivered; the third what *we* need to do to persuade the deliverers; and the fourth lists those we may look to as collaborators in this work. (The 'WCIA model' is the one devised by the Welsh Centre for International Affairs: 'Peace Schools' is "*a scheme which supports schools in developing peace as a cross-curricular theme, and as part of the school's everyday life – promoting positive ethos, critical thinking, creative skills and non-violent conflict resolution. The result is a school ethos based on cooperation, respect for difference and problem solving. Everyone feels safe, respected and valued.*" See

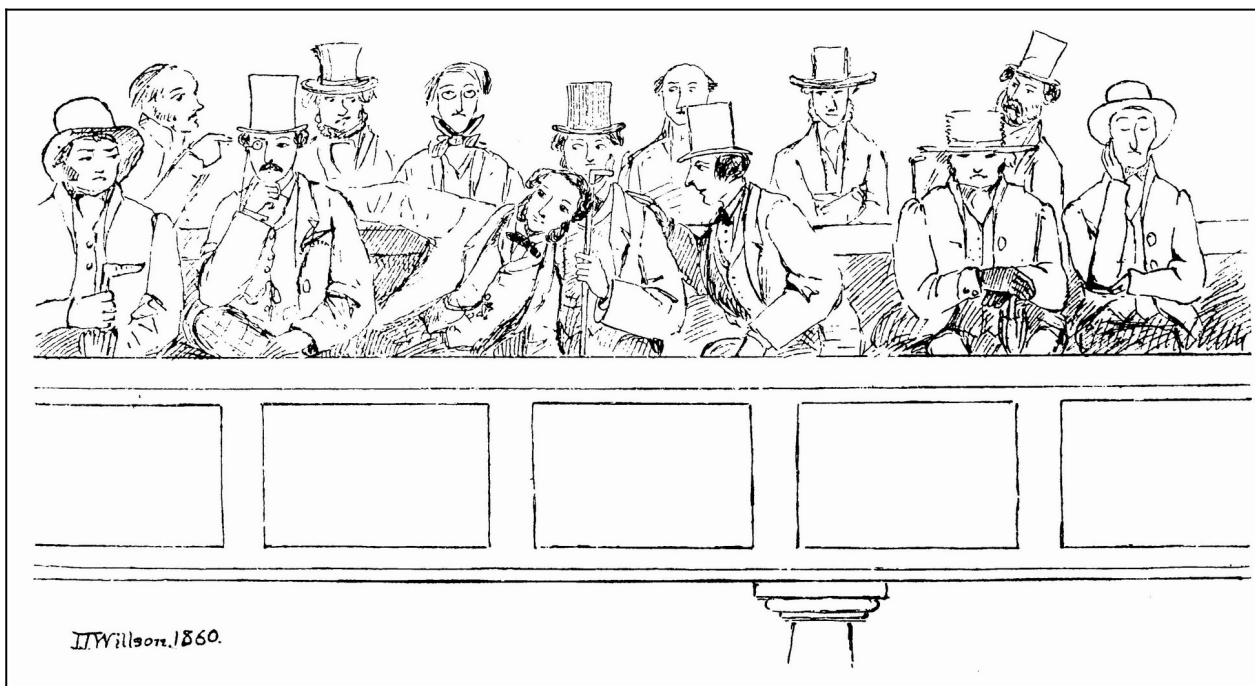
[https://www.wcia.org.uk/global-learning/peace-schools-in-wales/.](https://www.wcia.org.uk/global-learning/peace-schools-in-wales/))

[With thanks to Andrew Tomlinson, PEO (email: andrewt@quaker.org.uk), for providing information from his presentation to Area Meeting on 10 May. The joint convenors of the PEWG are **Carolyn Burch** and **Richard Raggett** (both of North Scotland AM); the representative for South East Scotland AM is **Carol Jennings**; contact details for all three are in the Book of Members. A review of priorities is currently being undertaken, to be presented to General Meeting in November. Comments and suggestions are welcomed – by the end of June, please.]

The structure of the society in which we live is not something fixed and immutable that determines our courses of action without choice in ourselves, it is the product of human activity in the past, a compound of both success and failure. Far from encouraging us to despair this should drive us rather to renew our efforts to use our own capacities to influence the future direction of the change that is continually taking place. To seek to withdraw ourselves from this struggle is to turn our backs on the responsibility our Christian discipleship demands of us.

From the minutes of the Conference on Industry and the Social Order,
1958

Whom do we need to influence?	What do we want them to do?	What do <i>they</i> need to convince/enable them?	What connections have we who can influence these groups?
Teachers/schools <i>(who deliver and design the curriculum)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers deliver and embed peace education practices Leaders adopt whole school approaches Commit to be Peace Schools (WCIA model) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training in peace education Resources for delivering peace education Research on the benefits of peace education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QPSW Peace & Justice Scotland Peace Education Scotland Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) [<i>Teachers' Union</i>] Scottish Mediation International Development Alliance Scotland (IDEAS)
Local Authorities <i>(who ensure statutory requirements are met and that schools are taking forward nationally agreed policies and guidelines)</i> <i>(Responsible for spending)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote peace education to schools in their jurisdiction, encouraging training Allocate funding or capacity where possible, e.g. for schools to pay for peer mediation training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A case that this is part of their statutory duties, or a way of taking forward nationally agreed policies A case that this is a good use of resources/spending 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church of Scotland Scottish Catholic Education Service (?) EIS Scottish Mediation IDEAS
Scottish Government <i>(who set policies, determine budgets, support and assess quality and improvement)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory mandate – Link peace education with children's rights Fund research Promote quality peace education nationally e.g. with guidance, peace schools scheme. Support schools to offer critical thinking about war/militarism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A case that Peace Education is an essential part of helping children to become <i>successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens & effective contributors</i> [= the 'four capacities' which the Curriculum for Excellence aims to instil]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opposition parties (?) IDEAS Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office (SCPO)



"The Men's side."
[The men's gallery at the Yearly Meeting, 1860.]

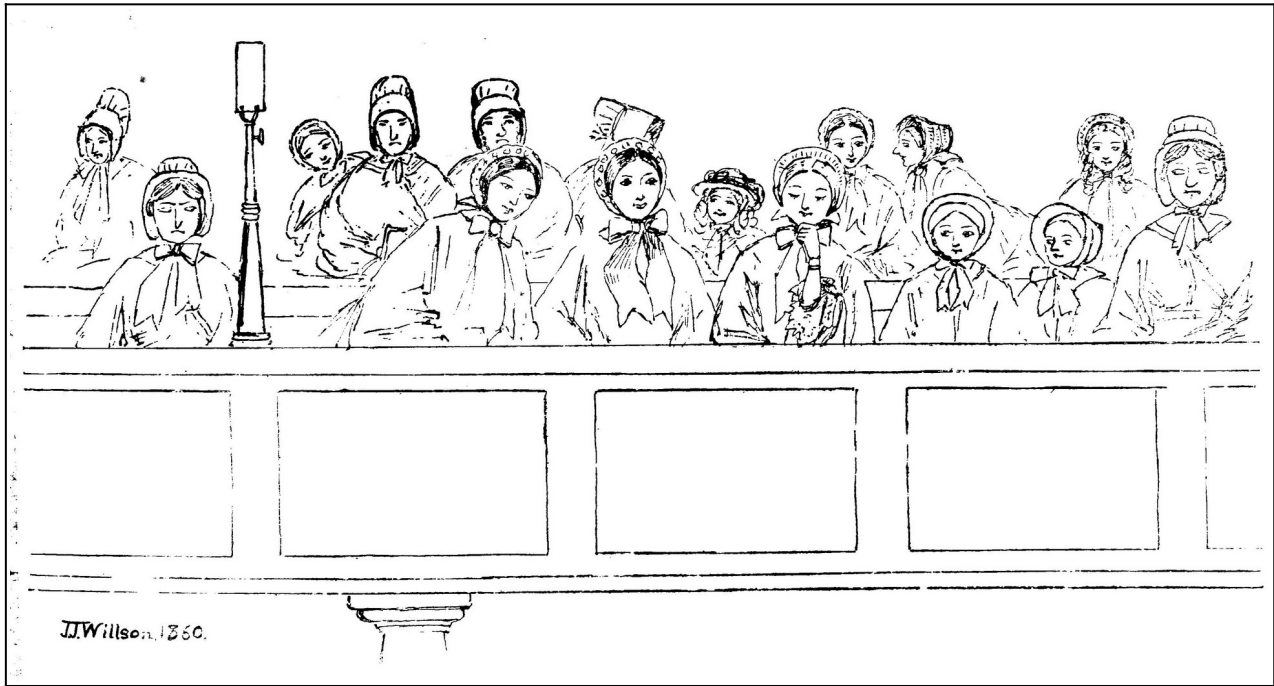
Impressions of Yearly Meeting 2022

Five Friends responded to the request to share their thoughts on having taken part in this year's blended Yearly Meeting; what follows is a collage of their reports, so that although there is some overlap there is not outright repetition. I am grateful to all of them for taking the trouble to write, and sorry not to have space to include their contributions in full. Ellipses indicating omissions (...) are mine. (EDITOR)

Martin Ward (himself a former Yearly Meeting Clerk) was on the Arrangements Committee for BYM 2022.

Over a thousand Friends took part in Britain Yearly Meeting, 27–30 May, online or in person. Preparation sessions and interest groups were held online during the week before. This was a bold experiment, and I thought many aspects worked well, thanks to excellent clerking and staff support. Happy to be back together in Friends House after three years, we heard powerful testimony from those who could join us only because the online option was available. Agenda Committee wisely avoided major items for resolution in this experimental year, adopting a broad theme of 'Faith, Community, Action'. What have we learned? That a hybrid YM is possible and meets Friends' needs in an inclusive way. I don't think we've proved yet that a blended YM can take difficult decisions but we can see more clearly some opportunities and pitfalls.

Our way of seeking the will of God for the community builds on human striving for collective wisdom, evolved over millennia. Groups of hunter-gatherers were more likely to thrive if their decisions used the insights of



"The women's side."

[These women could only watch; there was a separate Women's Yearly Meeting 1784-1907.]

all present; less likely if they just followed the loudest voice or lost time in endless discussion. We depend on subtle signals: a cocked ear inviting someone to speak up, a nod of agreement, a furrowed brow asking for clarification, a shuffle when a speaker has said what is needed, a glance at a watch (or the palæolithic equivalent) when it is time to agree and move on. Evolved around the camp fire these signals still help our discernment today. They may not work over Zoom. BYM this year heard helpful contributions online but I couldn't help wondering how we might deal with the electronic equivalent of a lone voice disagreeing at length from outside the doors of the gathered meeting?

Perhaps the most challenging issue we faced was research showing that Friends in Lancaster meeting were still engaged in the transatlantic slave trade long after London Yearly Meeting censured it in 1727. Members could be and were expelled for "marrying out", non-attendance, getting into debt, putting guns on their ships, and piracy; but not for buying and selling their fellow humans. Although there is no evidence yet that the *meeting* benefitted financially, we have all been encouraged by YM to look at the sources of the resources we hold in trust, and consider how we can move forward with "reparations for harms caused by the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism and economic exploitation". I have come to see that this is not about undoing all the wrongs of the last five hundred years (an impossible task?), but understanding and addressing the pervasive legacy of a system through which, as our Swarthmore Lecturer said, "During the transatlantic slave trade, 'skin colour became a crude way to decide who, in

those new colonies, had human rights and who did not”. That some Eighteenth Century Quakers prioritised their economic interests over others’ rights is less remarkable than the radical decision of Yearly Meeting in 1727 which they chose to ignore. As our clerks wrote this year with admirable realism: “Friends, these minutes alone are not enough to change the world! They alone are not even enough to change ourselves.”

But they can be an important start. So minutes for BYM 2022 are at

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/yearly-meeting-minutes-2022-substantive-final>.

Janet Grimwade, present in person at Friends House, was conscious that “Yearly Meeting this year was very different” through having begun online the week before, and because enabling the participation of many Friends on Zoom had required some changes to procedure. Nevertheless,

... it felt to me that Friends on Zoom I couldn’t see were as much part of the Meeting as those in the room

and also:

Some of the business in sessions was familiar. We considered nominations and heard various reports, including from Trustees. As would be expected, there was concern about finances with reduced income. There is now a smaller and more focused staff team but this can lead to concern about changes.

The elements of our main theme raised questions. Faith: *How do we experience worship, community and witness?* Community: *How can we build Quaker communities that respond to challenges and put faith into action?* Action: *How can we transform thinking and action in Quaker communities and wider society?* We considered these in three sessions over the weekend, and I found the discussion very thoughtful.

The importance of building community was highlighted and it was clear that some people over the past two years had found community through Meetings on Zoom when they had previously found it difficult to attend Meeting in person on a Sunday. This leads to a consideration of what Quaker community is ...

Two other highlights of the weekend were the Swarthmore Lecture, which was inspiring, and the All Together Worship on Sunday morning when we were joined virtually by Friends and Meetings all over the country. This felt a bit different, as an Elder called people to give ministry and occasionally there were problems with the technology.

I was really pleased to be able to be at YM in person. There was a good representation from Scotland and from our AM. I enjoyed being able to catch up with Friends that I hadn’t seen for three years and to have the opportunity to meet new people. Because the interest groups *etc.* had been held beforehand there were good breaks between sessions, leaving plenty time to enjoy the excellent and well-organised catering and to have

interesting discussions. Fortunately the weather was generally fine so socialising could take place outside and as there were fewer Friends present things felt less crowded and more relaxed.

We finished with the usual final session when we heard the minutes from the children's and young people's groups and the epistle was read. We then all dispersed to find our transport home. I returned feeling both stimulated and refreshed.

Mary Woodward was an online participant.

I was both glad and sorry not to be attending BYM in person this year: glad because I was tired, having spent the previous weekend at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on Friends' behalf, and also none too keen to go down to London in the present COVID climate; and really sad because I wasn't going to be in the company of Friends old and new, except *via* a screen.

Apart from the short session with the Yearly Meeting Clerks on Saturday morning, I hadn't been able to join in any of the pre-YM online events; I was able to attend the session on Friday evening and the two on the Saturday, as well as being impressed and challenged by the Swarthmore Lecture, delivered by Helen Minnis, whom I know from Glasgow Meeting. Prevented from joining either of the Sunday sessions, I attended most of Monday's, although with my camera switched off and for some of the time with divided attention – though I did stop and concentrate fully when the clerks asked to be upheld. By mid-afternoon, I had run out of steam and regretfully didn't rejoin after the shuffle break, which meant not hearing the minutes from all the junior strands of YM – something I greatly enjoy.

I have to say, I am mightily exercised about the whole issue of “being only partly present” at online Meetings for Worship, or for Worship with attention to business – but thought it was better to be present, however partially, than not at all. However, I can clearly see that if most of those attending online have their cameras off, it can be extremely disconcerting for everyone else, especially the clerks. And it would be all too easy to start regarding such meetings simply as something to watch, rather than a thing in which one needs to participate actively and fully.

While extremely grateful that I was able to attend Yearly Meeting online, it just isn't the same as being there in person – not because I felt in any way a second-class citizen, but because there is something extremely powerful in being physically present in a deeply gathered meeting. I also love the interaction with Friends whom I may not have seen for a very long time – and, I have to say, the luxury of having only one thing to concentrate on, namely Being At Yearly Meeting ...

And how much do I retain of what went on? My attention moved almost immediately to the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church, taking place 9–11 June, at which I was once again representing Scottish Quakers.

It and the General Assembly were opportunities to meet and make connections with members of the two churches, and with the ecumenical delegates to both. That, I think, is one of the great drawbacks of attending YM online: the opportunity to chat and get to know people, hear different opinions, feel part of a community is lacking – but on the plus side, health and mobility issues (and income, or lack of it) don't prevent one from joining in sessions and playing a full part in Yearly Meeting's deliberations.

I have every intention of attending next year's BYM in person!

Rachel Frith was also on Zoom.

When Friends met for Yearly Meeting in London in 1668, it was “to see one another's faces, and open our hearts one to another in the Truth of God once a year as formerly it used to be” (Q.F.&P. 6.02) Much of what ‘formerly used to be’, and which I particularly valued about being at Yearly Meeting, was either missing or else not caught on Zoom: the sudden spontaneous hush in the Large Meeting House at the start of a session; my own feeling of involvement through being a microphone steward. On the other hand, those of us joining on Zoom *could* see one another's faces – by clicking through the participants – instead of being confronted by a mosaic of indistinguishable tiny images on a big screen, which was all they had who were there at Friends House in person. Understandably but frustratingly, the chat facility was disabled except for sending messages to the technical staff, so there was no immediate scope for ‘opening of hearts’; but just to see and recognise Friends not seen for years was a great thing.

Another benefit offered by technology was the prospect of online preparatory sessions and ‘special interest’ meetings (now called something else – is “Faith in Action” really better?). I was booked to attend several in the week before Yearly Meeting proper, but did not get to all of them; the “Sched” system didn't always let me in. According to the helpful person I spoke to when I called Friends House, the staff too were having problems. Something to fix for future years.

Alison Burnley, who was present in person, was particularly interested in the performance of the Clerks:

The first time that Siobhán Haire was at the Table, she was, I felt, a bit too relaxed – however I now feel that she was right. The clerking team of Siobhán Haire, Adwoa Burnley and Fred Langridge kept us firmly moving forward: listening, discerning, making decisions, keeping us all the while in right ordering – but with a light touch. There was humour, there were smiles, even a giggle on occasion. It is encouraging and interesting that everyone I spoke to agreed that this style was much appreciated.

As a mother of one of the clerks – there were other mothers there, and we had a moment or two of being quietly proud of our offspring – it was also a bit breathtaking.

Other highlights were:

I appreciated the term 'prepared ministry' for the spoken introductions at the start of sessions.

Anne Morgan, from Lancaster AM, told us of research which had revealed how local Friends in the past had benefitted from the transatlantic slave trade – not a happy discovery. It has been suggested that all Area Meetings might now investigate such links. We need to face facts and be honest.

On the Friday I had the opportunity to speak with Paul Gray, the manager of the Quiet Company which does all the catering at Friends House, and, in 'normal' times, provides a healthy financial contribution as well as delicious sustenance. Paul had had a difficult two years, wondering if it could/would survive lockdown. Many of his staff had simply retired, while younger members had retrained to work in other sectors; the rest, and Paul himself, had sat it out, "hanging on by [their] fingernails". They were happy to be back at Friends House – though, for the moment, without a chef. I had tried to pay for my lunch with a card, and we were wondering why it wasn't working until I noticed it was my bus pass! – whoops – which is no use in London anyway. We had had a good laugh, and Paul too was amused.

It was a good weekend. It was good to be at Friends House. The modern technology was amazing – we were connected with Friends around Britain and the rest of the world, so it may have been 10 am for us, but for some Friends it was either a lot earlier or a lot later: fascinating. The people who were working the technology were amazing too. I am thankful to have been there.

The Salter Lecture, 2022

Salter Lectures, organised by the Quaker Socialist Society and named after the pioneering campaigners Ada Salter (1866-1842) and her husband Alfred (1873-1945), have been delivered at the time of Yearly Meeting in most years since 1996, when Tony Benn gave the first one. He was the lecturer again in 2011 (taking the title *No Time for Politics*); the text, and those of subsequent Salter Lectures can be read at:

<https://quakersocialists.org.uk/salter-lectures/>.

The 2022 Lecture, by Ruth Cadbury MP, was on *Truth and Integrity in Public Life*. It can be watched on YouTube; a link and other information are at:

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/news-and-events/news/ruth-cadbury-mp-delivers-this-year-s-salter-lecture>

Our Friend **Paul Oestreicher** was appointed an O.B.E. in the Jubilee Honours "for services to Peace, Human Rights and Reconciliation"; his own reaction to this is at:

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2022/27-may3-june/comment/opinion/platinum-jubilee-the-view-from-the-balcony>

The Swarthmore Lecture, 2022

Helen Minnis's Swarthmore Lecture, *Perceiving the temperature of the water*, is available to watch on YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkdxE2yvPOM>

and also on YouTube is a ten-minute conversation between Helen and the Recording Clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting, Paul Parker, on 'Glasgow, colonialism and Quakers' recorded in 2021 at the time of COP26:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdlkJ80nZVs>.

The Woodbrooke course of five follow-up sessions on Zoom started earlier this month; three of them are yet to happen. Places may be booked at <https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/product/exploring-the-swarthmore-lecture-2022/>; the sessions are all on Tuesdays, and run 7.00 – 8.30 pm.

28 June	'Addressing the imbalance'
5 July	'Seeing the water'
19 July	'Anti-racist action now'

The printed version of the lecture has not yet been published, but should be available later in the year.

Edinburgh Festival, August 2022

The Meeting House will become Fringe Venue 40 during the Festival, from Monday 8 to Saturday 27 August. We have a much reduced programme this year, with theatre and concerts in Week 1, and, it is hoped, talks with authors of books from the Luath Press in Week 3, as in previous years.

We will be having an exhibition of eighty of the *Loving Earth* panels which were created as a response to the climate crisis and were shown at COP26. But we have space for more, so we'd love it if local Friends might like to make additional panels for display! The website has an inspiring gallery of most of the 400 existing panels, and advice and information on 'getting started' and 'panel-making' (including printable instructions, hints & tips, and videos) – see <http://lovingearth-project.uk/>.

(You can also contact the Meeting House managers for more information.) We also hope there will be opportunities for visitors to the exhibition to take part in creating panels.

Festival committee is looking for volunteers to act as stewards for the exhibition, which will be open from 2-6 pm, Monday to Saturday, for all three weeks. Volunteers would be asked to cover a two-hour slot or perhaps the whole afternoon. Please let me know if you think you might be able to help during August. Those who were involved in the project and could chat to visitors about it would be particularly welcome.

Janet Grimwade

'From Crisis to Connection'

Epistle from the FWCC Europe & Middle East Section Annual Meeting held in person at L'Enclos Rey in Paris and online, 20 – 23 May 2022

Dear Friends, kjære venner, chers amis, liebe Freunde, lieve vrienden, queridos amigos, cari amici, kära vänner, kære venner, rakkaat ystäväit, kallid sõbrad, drazí přátelé, dārgie draugi, dragi prijatelji, Kedves Barátaim, drodzy przyjaciele, a chairde, Salamaat Asdiqa.

Loving greetings to Friends everywhere from the FWCC Europe and Middle East Section Annual Meeting 2022, meeting in Paris and online.

Our annual meeting this year saw 80 Friends gather together from the Europe and the Middle East Section and further afield. This was our first annual meeting together in person since the start of the coronavirus pandemic and also our first blended annual meeting, with attendees both in Paris and on Zoom. 40 of us met in Paris and 40 Friends participated through Zoom. For those of us in Paris it was joyful to be physically together for eating, walking and talking with each other after two long years of Covid-19 restrictions. It was the first time that many of us had travelled in a long time.

There were technological challenges to our new ways of hybrid Quaker working but we were nevertheless able to create a rich shared experience. Our staff worked hard and creatively to ensure the most gathered experience for us all, both online and in person. Cultivating joyful relationships enables us to do our work. If we are to sow and nurture the seeds of peace, we need fertile soil. We became a gathered community.

Our theme for the annual meeting spoke directly to us:

From Crisis to Connection: working creatively to heal our fractured world

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2 (NRSV)

We met in the long shadow of the war in Ukraine which has fallen over Europe and the rest of the world. We recognise the on-going suffering in other parts of the world which could be forgotten at this time. On Sunday morning we joined in Meeting for Worship with Quakers in Kiev. We heard first hand accounts of the work being done by Friends across Europe to support those affected by the war, notably in Georgia, Estonia, Czechia and Poland. We listened to the fears. Our prayers are with all those involved. We uphold the Quaker organisations who are working both through social activism and methods of quiet diplomacy to help end conflict and support those affected.

We were inspired and challenged by our speakers to create peace on earth, to dare to dream of turning weapons into spades, and to challenge the mistaken notion that the military option is the only option. We were reminded by Tim Gee, General Secretary of FWCC, that all our striving for peace and justice have roots in the faithful and joyful fellowship of the worldwide Quaker family. We were prompted by Bainito Wamalwa, clerk of FWCC Africa Sec-

tion, to remember that we have a prophetic task of personal and collective transformation in this age of global uncertainty and instability. We must work creatively and not be fooled by false or simplistic solutions. Karina Knight Spencer from Stop Fuelling War/*Cessez d'alimenter la guerre*, and speakers from QCEA reminded us to recognise the complexity of the situations we are facing. We need to listen, reflect and work on long-term solutions. We need to remember that we are on a journey towards the promised land which will not be achieved in the next two or three years.

Wrestling with huge global issues of peacebuilding and climate justice can lead us to question what we can do, or what EMES, as a networking organisation, can do to make a difference.

The words of Pierre Lacout were shared as ministry,

Words split apart. Silence unites. Words scatter. Silence gathers together.

Words stir up. Silence brings peace.

(Pierre Lacout, *God is Silence*).

The home groups helped us to know one another in that which is eternal. If we are to help heal a fractured world, we need to heal ourselves, our families and our communities. We can also be fractured and in conflict with one another. We are mirrors of what is happening in the world. Conflict can be transforming if we are willing to face it and work through it with courage and integrity. We were advised to 'breathe in the moment, to see and to smile'.

We leave the annual meeting feeling renewed and grateful to have been together. We are part of a precious global community of Quakers, with an important 'voice' – both spoken and silent in expression. Our fellowship and discernment supports our individual and collective work and helps us to re-imagine our world. In these troubled times, we are reminded of our Quaker history and practices. We need to be courageous and draw strength from our Quaker community if we are to act in response to the promptings of love and truth in our hearts.

In Friendship, i vennskap, i vänskap, i venskab, ystävydessä, en amitié, in Freundschaft, in Vriendschap, en amistad, in amicizia, v přátelství, u priјateljstvu, draudzība, a barátságban, sōpruses, w przyjaźni, le cairdeas, fi alsadaqa.

Signed

Ethel Livermore

Clerk, FWCC-EMES

Will Haire

Assistant Clerk, FWCC-EMES

FWCC = Friends World Committee for Consultation (founded 1937: based in London)

QCEA = Quaker Council for European Affairs (founded 1979: based in Brussels)

Bruce Kent, former general secretary of CND, died on 8 June. An obituary by Peter Stanford is at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jun/09/bruce-kent-obituary>.

General Meeting for Scotland, 11 June 2022

Friends met for a blended meeting, held in Glasgow at the Quaker Meeting House, 38 Elmbank Crescent. 64 members and four attenders were present, either in person or joining by Zoom, including the clerk and ten other members of the Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations (QCCIR), a standing committee of BYM which was meeting in Glasgow that weekend, and two other visitors.

Among various administrative matters, the dates for General Meeting in 2023/24, with the Area Meeting acting as host, were confirmed as:

11 March 2023	West (<i>already agreed</i>)
10 June 2023	South East
16 September 2023	North
11 November 2023	East
9 March 2024	South East

‘Options for Quakers in Scotland’ report – update on recommendations

The report presented to General Meeting in March had made seven recommendations, which had been considered by the clerks of the four Area Meetings together with the GM Clerk, at a Zoom meeting on 25 April. They had felt it was not for them to *initiate* such things as the formation of special interest groups or residential gatherings (as suggested by recommendations 2 and 5 respectively); rather to enable these when the “*interest and enthusiasm ... bubble up ... in Local Meetings.*” Recommendations 1, 3 and 7, encouraging collaboration between or across AMs, are being pursued or are the practice already; 4 – relating to the consideration of new ways for General Meeting to fulfil its roles in terms of *Q.F.&P.* 5.03a – comes under the remit of the newly-appointed ‘GMS Options Working Group 2’; and 6 – regarding the possible movement of an LM between AMs – has yet to arise. There is guidance on such transfers at *Q.F.&P.* 4.12.

Local Development Worker (LDW)

Zoe Prosser, the Local Development Worker for Scotland, has been in post for over a year; her wide remit, based on the BYM document *Our Vision for the Future*, includes work for Britain Yearly Meeting as well as supporting Quakers in Scotland. A mechanism for setting her annual priorities as our LDW was proposed, involving taking suggestions from Friends and meetings, and, through consultation between AM clerks and with the LDWs’ manager at Friends House, narrowing these down to two, to be discussed and agreed at GM’s November meeting as priorities for the following year. This was accepted, on the understanding it can be amended if necessary.

QCCIR

Eileen Green, clerk to the Committee, led a session introducing QCCIR and its work, and to explore Friends’ own experience of, and hopes for, ecumenical and interfaith relations in Scotland.

Two online events are being planned for later this year: in September, a joint meeting with Woodbrooke on how faiths and churches are responding to the climate crisis and how Quakers can work locally with people of other spiritual traditions to bring about positive change; and in November, a webinar on the subject of becoming an anti-racist church.

There is currently no Scottish Friend on the Committee, which the Meeting hoped can be rectified.

GM Annual Report and Accounts 2021

The GM Treasurer, Nigel Dower, presented the GM Annual Report and Accounts for 2021, and took questions.

Parliamentary Engagement Working Group (PEWG)

Carolyn Burch, its co-convenor, spoke to the report that had already been circulated, which covered the work of Andrew Tomlinson [see page 17] and of the Group itself; the latter had included meetings with Justin Kenrick (of Portobello & Musselburgh LM) about his advocacy work with Extinction Rebellion, and with our Friend Ruth Harvey, leader of the Iona Community, who is co-convenor of the Scottish Climate Citizens Assembly. As ever, Friends found it a stimulating report.

Scottish Quaker Community Justice Working Group

This was the first report from the Working Group established at the June GM last year to engage with the wider Scottish Quaker Community Justice Network (SQJN). It asked two questions:

- *How can we achieve justice that transforms lives and fosters peace and inclusion in society?*
- *Should Quakers in Scotland consider in the future adopting a minute like the Canadian one leading towards prison abolition?*

The second question refers to Minute 93 of Canadian Yearly Meeting 1981, that “prisons are a destructive and expensive failure as a response to crime”; the full text of the minute is at

<https://quakerservice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/CYM-Minute-on-Prison-Abolition.pdf>,

and there is more about it at:

<https://quakerservice.ca/our-work/penal-abolition-restorative-justice/#:~:text=In%201981%2C%20Canadian%20Quakers%20became,have%20been%20powerless%20and%20oppressed;>

and both questions relate to the group’s current consideration on how to hold the Scottish government to account on its welcome new and ambitious ‘Vision for Justice’, including its plans to offer restorative justice nationally. Members of SQJN have produced a booklet, *Breaking Chains and Building Change* – soon to be available on the Quakers in Scotland website (<https://www.quakerscotland.org/> – but not yet) – which it is hoped may assist Friends in their Local Meetings in considering these questions.

It was pointed out in discussion that a call for the *abolition* of prison might be misinterpreted, and we need to define our terms carefully. The meeting was aware of the prison system's being part of a wider problem of poverty, injustice and oppression. The minute read, in part:

We have the opportunity to reaffirm that the Light is in everyone and to unite with the worth of all. We are very grateful to the group for bringing these concerns before us. We affirm it.

Quaker Housing Trust (QHT)

Mark Bitel, clerk to the trustees, spoke of the work of QHT and about the issues it was set up to address. The Trust was established by YM in 1967, at a time when housing was a newsworthy issue; the crisis in 2022 is worse, however. QHT can make grants and interest-free loans to social housing projects. Of its 52 disbursements in the last five years, 15 were to projects in Scotland: the result of various factors, including lower land values than in the south of England, the abolition of tenants' 'right to buy', and stricter requirements in energy efficiency for new-built housing. A new QHT project is assisting Meetings and other Quaker bodies to transform under-used property into social housing. Mark challenged Friends as individuals to consider that in the past ten years the average home-owner will have gained £100,000 "just for sleeping there" – this unearned wealth, and how to dispose of it responsibly, should exercise us.

What might you do to put your faith into action on housing inequalities?

There is more on the work of the Quaker Housing Trust at

<https://www.qht.org.uk/>

Social Witness

General Meeting received reports on its involvement with five bodies concerned with various aspects of Social Witness, as follows:

Faith in Community Scotland

<https://www.faithincommunity.scot/>

is a Glasgow-based charity established in 2005, "*rooted in the shared commitment across diverse faith communities for a fairer and more just society*"; it can make grants of up to £500 to projects which meet set criteria. The current round of grants, 'Faithful Welcome', is a partnership with SFAR to support work with refugees and asylum seekers. Kate Arnot represents Friends.

Scottish Faith Action for Refugees

<https://www.sfar.org.uk/>

Our previous representative, Hilary Patrick, wrote on the work of SFAR in *Sesame* 235 last year; Lynne Barty, her successor, reported to GM on its current focus, welcoming Ukrainian refugees.

Scottish Interfaith Group on Domestic Abuse

<http://ifgoda.org.uk/>

General Meeting was thanked for its financial and other support.

Together Scotland (the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)

<https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/>

International Development Education Association of Scotland (IDEAS)

<https://www.ideas-forum.org.uk/>

Richard Raggett presented a report on work with both, in relation to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UK Government objected to its incorporation into Scots Law last year, despite the proposal's having unanimous support at Holyrood, and secured a Supreme Court judgment that it was outwith the competence of the Scottish Parliament. It is hoped that with amendments the Bill can be brought back and passed.

Correspondence and Notices

Heather Kiernan of Peace and Justice (formerly the Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre) had written to tell Friends that the recipient of this year's Geoffrey & Elizabeth Carnall Peace Award is Paul Rogers, Professor Emeritus of Peace Studies at Bradford University. An event to mark the award, provisionally entitled *Ukraine and Global Human Security* is planned for 21 September. GM agreed to donate £500 towards the costs.

The charity What a Wonderful World is organising a Climate Festival in Alnwick, 23-26 June. Details at: <https://whataww.org/festival-june-2022>.

General Meeting will meet next on 10 September 2022, "*if nothing occurs to prevent*".

[With thanks to Rachel Frith for help in preparing these notes – ED.]

Christian Aid Talking Climate Justice Tour (and other events)

The next decade will be critical for action on the climate crisis as it drives and exacerbates poverty. The church must call for climate justice now and into the future.

Every successful social movement started with a conversation. From debt cancellation to the ending of apartheid, conversations that stoked anger at injustice and a passion for change moved people into action!

This year, we want to see thousands of powerful conversations that stir up action for climate justice. Joins us on the Talking Climate Justice Tour.

Join our online launch on 4 July to find out:

- Why the next decade is critical for poverty and climate
- How you and your church can make a difference
- How conversations can build the power for transformative change
- How you can get involved in the Talking Climate Justice Tour
- Where you can find all the resources you need to talk climate justice with your church

To find out more about the Talking Climate Justice Tour visit:

caid.org.uk/climatejusticetour

To register to attend the launch – 19:00–20:30 BST on Monday 4 July 2022 – go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/launch-talking-climate-justice-tour-registration-332612461827>

Resources to run a Talking Climate Justice Tour event can be downloaded at:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/get-involved/talking-climate-justice-tour-diy-toolkit>

A five-minute film on ‘Climate and Racial Justice’, with Robert Beckford and contributors from the global south who were attending COP26, is at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjPt4gEV7A0>.

Other current Christian Aid projects include:

- a petition calling on Boris Johnson to fully back the creation of an international loss and damage fund as a matter of urgency, and to push for other governments to back this too; see <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/loss-and-damage-petition> [and also page 17 for work at the Scottish Parliament on Loss & Damage];
- work in Hungary, Poland and Romania with Ukrainian refugees, and in Ukraine itself with internally displaced persons; see <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/emergencies/ukraine-crisis-appeal>
- ‘Letters for Creation’ – an invitation to children and young people to share their views on climate change, so that “[their] prophetic voices ... can be heard and engaged with by the wider community”; see <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/schools/letters-creation>

Christian Aid is also encouraging participation in the Kiltwalk 2022, which is taking place in Edinburgh on Sunday 18 September, and over the weekend 7-9 October as a virtual event – see <https://www.thekiltwalk.co.uk/>, or contact the Community Fundraising & Events Officer Lauren Petherbridge on 0131 240 1525 or by email at lpetherbridge@christian-aid.org.

[With thanks to Elisabeth Allen for passing this on.]

“To see oursels as others see us ...”

[Scarborough] has abundance of Quakers in it ... I was at a Quakers Meeting in the town where 4 men and 2 women spoke, one after another had done, but it seem'd such a confusion and so incoherent that it very much moved my compassion and pitty to see their delusion and ignorance, and no less excited my thankfullness for the Grace of God that upheld others from such Errors; I observed their prayers were all made on the first person and single, tho before the body of people it seems they allow not of ones being the mouth of the rest in prayer to God tho' it be [so] in the publick meetings.

From The Journeys of **Celia Fiennes** (1662-1741): 1697

Northern Friends Peace Board, 18 June 2022

The Board was at Carlton Hill Meeting House in Leeds for its second meeting of the year, with 15 members present in person and 17 on Zoom (with other Friends joining us for part of the time – including our three guests in the afternoon: all Yorkshire-based, ironically, but one of them was recovering from COVID, and the other two were juggling their day's engagements). During the silent worship before we began our business we heard read these words of Anthony de Mello (1931-87):

These things will destroy the human race: politics without principle, progress without compassion, wealth without work, learning without silence, religion without fearlessness, and worship without awareness.

The writer was an Indian Jesuit who tried to give "Eastern form" to Christian principles, for which he was posthumously condemned by the Vatican authorities, who held that his books are "*incompatible with the Catholic faith and can cause grave harm*"; nevertheless, this extract appeared acceptable to Friends, and prompted a second reading, from *Advices & Queries*, 33-34.

Ukraine – Quaker responses

Our coordinator Philip Austin reported on what has been done on the Board's behalf, including the statement/letter on page 15, and a regularly-updated webpage of links and resources (https://nfpb.org.uk/ukraine_2022/), As well as supporting Friends (Board members and others) in their discussions and reflection, NFPB has contributed to discussions in the wider peace movement through its links with other organisations.

He also outlined the actions taken in response to the invasion by the [US] Friends Committee on National Legislation, QUNO (the Quaker United Nations Offices, in New York and Geneva) and the European & Middle East Section of Friends World Committee for Consultation. FCNL is urging American Friends to lobby the Administration and their elected representatives to move away from military responses and towards building peace. See (e.g.):

<https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2022-04/investing-durable-peace-ukraine>

and

<https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2022-04/six-nonviolent-ways-congress-can-help-ukraine>

QUNO approaches was the subject of a joint paper by the directors of the Geneva and New York offices in March:

<https://quno.org/timeline/2022/3/crisis-ukraine-brief-un-overview>,

and of this information note:

https://quno.org/sites/default/files/timeline/files/2022/UN%20Overview_Ukraine.pdf

FWCC-EMES was already running a monthly online 'Peace and Service Consultation' which has given time to focus on Ukraine at some of its meetings since the invasion. At the last of these, it heard from a Georgian

Friend about taking medical supplies into Ukraine. Weekly Meetings for Worship to pray for peace in Ukraine, also on Zoom, have been instituted, with Friends from across Europe participating. (Meetings take place on Tuesdays, 13:30–14:00 BST; see <https://fwccemes.org/calendar/ukraine-worship>) There has also been fundraising for, and coordination between, Quakers in Eastern and Central Europe supporting refugees and others affected by the war. See <https://fwccemes.org/news/quaker-support-for-ukraine>.

Oliver Robertson, head of Worship & Witness for Quakers in Britain, joined us online to describe what is being done centrally in the name of British Friends. With Quaker Peace & Social Witness in the midst of restructuring, a ‘Ukraine Cluster’ was set up to bring Friends together to inform and give some guidance to activity arising from the war. The two main strands of work arising from this have been the ‘hard questions’ sessions on the Peace Testimony, which ran in April/May, and the ‘citizen diplomacy’ initiative, encouraging letter-writing to people in Russia. These, along with other resources, suggestions for action, and BYM statements, are covered here:

<https://quaker.org.uk/our-work/peace/ukraine#heading-1>

The members’ discussion was wide-ranging. We were reminded that no human conflict is a straightforward battle between Good and Evil and that the very one-sided picture in the British news media is not the whole truth. (Personally, I felt the Friend making this point somewhat overstated his case: that Ukraine has its own problems with corruption and oligarchs has *not* been entirely forgotten, and while some of its actions may honestly have been seen in Russia as provocative, that is not to say they were unjustified or that the reaction was proportionate.) Mostly, Friends were concerned with our own practical responses, however. Work with Ukrainian migrants is happening in several places, often in the context of existing Quaker action to support refugees and asylum seekers; a vacant warden’s flat has been used to accommodate a family. Vigils have stressed solidarity with war resisters and the victims of conflict, including refugees.

There was more to talk about than there was time available, and so Philip Austin and trustees are to look into arranging an event to focus on some of the issues raised.

Members’ forum

As ever, we heard about a variety of meetings, exhibitions, gatherings and protests, across North Wales, Northern England and Scotland.

Trustees’ report and financial statement

Peter Spiers, clerk to Trustees, introduced their report, and, in the absence of our Treasurer, Geoff Fielding gave us an update on our finances.

Menwith Hill

Barbara Penny, of Harrogate Local Meeting, told us of peace activities at nearby Menwith Hill – nominally an RAF station, the site is controlled and run by the US National Security Agency, and in 2007 was described as the

largest electronic monitoring station in the world. Barbara herself has been involved in protests for forty years; the Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign (see <https://www.themhac.uk/>) exists to publicise its various roles other than its stated purpose of providing advanced warning of missile attack.

Brighouse West Yorkshire Swords into Ploughshares

Geoff Tansey, of Hebden Bridge Local Meeting, joined us to speak about a concern of Friends in West Yorkshire to promote alternative ways forward for the world, investing in non-military approaches to global security. (This was the subject of minutes forwarded to Meeting for Sufferings by Brighouse West Yorkshire AM in 2020 – see **MfS 2020 10 13b**, in the papers at <https://www.quaker.org.uk/documents/mfs-2020-10-agendapapersv2-1>.)

Friends are keen that organisations and thinktanks that see themselves as ‘mainstream’ – others might call them ‘Establishment’ – should be paying proper attention to issues such as the climate crisis, and so using their influence to effect policy-change by governments. Plans to persuade them are developing – but are not yet, unfortunately, ready to be disclosed.

Woodbrooke

Tracey Martin, who coordinates Woodbrooke’s courses on peace, social justice and the climate crisis, introduced their recent and planned activities in these areas. As with Christian Aid [see page 34], ‘Faith and Climate Justice’ is a major theme. Online sessions – on 26 July, 13 September, and thereafter monthly – will consider our corporate commitment to faith-based climate justice: the first, with speakers from QUNO and FWCC, will look at the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), with which Quakers are the *only* faith-based organisation to be engaged, and which is due to issue its sixth Assessment Report later this year or early in 2023 (see <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-cycle/>); the second session with input from QCCIR [*Quaker Committee on Christian & Interfaith Relations* – see page 31] is to look at working with other faiths and churches. A year-long course on *Exploring Faith and Climate Justice: a journey of discovery and prophecy* will begin in July, with a mix of online and in-person sessions. Details of these and other courses and retreats can be found at:

https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/our-courses/?_sft_product_cat=climate-crisis.

Tracey also mentioned topics under consideration for future events or courses but not yet on the website. These include ‘Quakers, Racism and Colonialism’ – a subject that many may feel led to explore after Anne Morgan’s presentation at YM – and, also with renewed relevance, ‘The Peace Testimony in Time of War’ and ‘Truth, Misinformation and War’.

Looking forward

Our final agenda item was a period of worship sharing, on leadings and openings in this difficult time.

We closed in worship and hope to meet again on 24 September.

Alan Frith

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND AREA MEETING

**Minutes of Area Meeting held on Tuesday 10 May 2022
at 7 Victoria Terrace Edinburgh and by remote videoconferencing**

2022/05/01 Worship and introductions

During worship, we have heard read *Quaker Faith & Practice* 19.20: Edward Burroughs recounts early Quakers' experience of the pouring down of the spirit.

We ask Mariot Dallas and Gareth Rae to serve as Elders for this meeting.

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

2022/05/02 Minutes of Meeting of Saturday 26 March 2022

The minutes of our meeting held on 26 March 2022 at Greenbank Community Centre, Polmont, have been signed and entered in the minute book.

[The full minutes are included in both the print edition of Sesame, and in the PDF emailed to Members and Attenders on the circulation list, but are redacted in this publicly available version. – Editor]

[Redacted]

[*Redacted*]

[Redacted]

Local meeting attendance is indicated below:

Central Edinburgh 15	Central Fife 2	East Lothian 7	Kelso 1	Penicuik 1
Polmont 4	Portobello & Musselburgh 5	South Edinburgh 3	Tweeddale -	Visitor 1

We record our thanks to staff and volunteers at the Meeting House for facilitating this blended meeting.

We next meet on Saturday 25 June 2022 at 11.30 am at the Quaker Meeting House, Abbey Row, Kelso.

(Signed)
Alastair Cameron, Clerk
Cath Dyer, Assistant Clerk

Taizé Singing

For the moment, the revived group singing Taizé chants will meet four-weekly rather than weekly; and at a single venue, Crichton Collegiate Church, Pathhead EH37 5XA. Dates for the next three months (all Sundays, at 3.00 pm) are:

10 July

7 August

4 September

*New singers will be very welcome; anyone who might be interested is asked to contact **Rachel Frith**: contact details in the Book of Members.*

*Our cover shows one of a series of pen and ink sketches of London Yearly Meeting in 1860, by John Joseph Willson (1837-1903) of Leeds. His firm ran the Sheepscar Tannery from 1847-1901 – the largest in England in 1893. J.J. Willson was a keen amateur artist, whose watercolour, *The Last Gleam*, was in the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition of 1900, and he was also one of the founders of the Leeds Art Gallery. The scene is the courtyard at Devonshire House, where Yearly Meeting was held from 1794 to 1925; the two “ancient Friends” in the foreground are the Bratt brothers, Charles (c. 1782-1862) and William (c. 1789-1871) “who continued to wear the old Quaker costume of their father’s day, and were notable figures at Yearly Meetings”. In 1860, women were spectators; in practice, any man Friend could attend, but only after 1861 was it formally open to them. The drawings of the two galleries (pages 22-23) suggest both held some who were not taking the proceedings wholly seriously.*

Quaker Meetings for Worship in South East Scotland

Contact details of named Friends are in the Book of Members. 'QMH' = Quaker Meeting House

MEETING IN PERSON

Central Edinburgh – QMH, 7 Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2JL

Sundays at 11.00. No booking required. Tea & coffee provided; you can bring a packed lunch.

Wednesday, 12.30–1.00 pm. Tea & coffee, etc., as on Sundays

Contact the office, centraledinburgh@quaker.org.uk or 0131 225 4825, for updates; see also <https://www.quakerscotland.org/central-edinburgh/covid-guidance>.

Central Fife – The Old Kirk, Kirk Wynd, Kirkcaldy KY1 1EH

On the 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays at 10.30 am. Meetings on 1st Sundays in Dunfermline – contact **Laurie Naumann** for venue details.

East Lothian – Dunbar Town House, 79 High Street, Dunbar, EH42 1ER

On the 2nd & last Sundays of the month at 11.00 am. Please contact **Di Simcock** if you plan to attend, and for updates.

Kelso – QMH, Abbey Row, Kelso TD5 7JF

Sundays at 10.30 am. Contact **Marianne Butler** for updates.

North Edinburgh worship group – St Mary's Church, 12 Bellevue Cres., EH3 6NE

4th Sunday in the month at 7.00 pm. – contact **Tony Gross** for updates.

Penicuik – Venue to be confirmed: contact penicuikquakers@blueyonder.co.uk

1st Sundays at 11.00 am – contact **Mark Hutcheson** for updates and further information.

Polmont – Greenpark Community Centre, Greenpark Drive, Polmont FK2 0PZ

Sundays at 10.45: contact **Marriot Dallas** for updates, and if bringing children.

Portobello & Musselburgh – Bellfield, 16B Bellfield Street, Portobello EH15 2BP

On the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 11.00 am.

1st Sundays: Evening meeting at 7.30 pm. Children's meetings at morning AND evening mtg. Please contact **Mary Jane Elton**, if you plan to attend at either time.

South Edinburgh – The Open Door, 420 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 5HY

Sundays at 10.30 am. Contact **Rici Marshall Cross** for information/updates.

Tweeddale – No meetings in person at present. Contact **Anna Lawrence** for updates.

MEETING BY ZOOM

Central Edinburgh – for login details contact centraledinburgh@quaker.org.uk

Every Sunday at 9.30 am (Zoom only); and at 11.00 am (blended with the meeting in person).

Central Fife – for login details contact **Laurie Naumann**

On the 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays at 10.30 am, blended with the meeting in person.

East Lothian – for login details contact **Di Simcock** or **Phil Lucas**

Tuesdays at 7.30 pm; NO meeting on the 1st Tuesday in the month.

Kelso – for login details contact **Marianne Butler**; blended with mtgs in person, as above.

Penicuik – for login details contact **Mark Hutcheson**

Polmont – for login details contact **Mariot Dallas**

Also Wednesdays at 8.00 pm (online only).

South Edinburgh – for login details contact **Rici Marshall Cross**

Sundays at 10.30 am, blended with meetings in person.

1st Thursdays at 8.00 pm (online only). Meeting for worship (30 mins) followed by chat.