

Tayside Quaker

Vol 44 No 3 August 2020



Quaker Lady iris (See page 3)

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Closing date for the next edition is Saturday 24 October 2020

Please send copy to the editor, Felicity Bryers

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East Scotland Area Meeting

Scottish charity number SC0020698

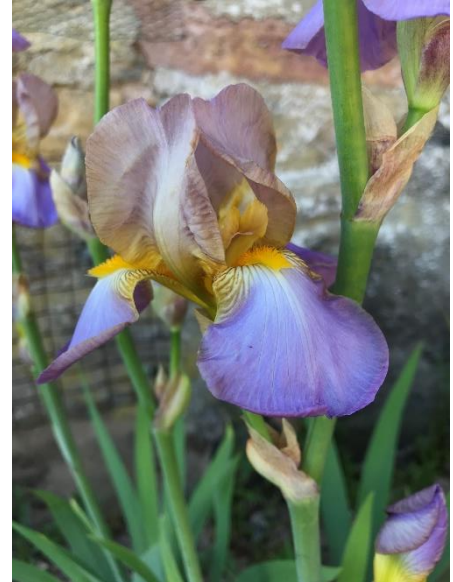
All opinions in Tayside Quaker are those of the individual writers and not necessarily of The Religious Society of Friends.

The Quaker Lady iris

Sheena Goulty has sent us our cover picture of a Quaker Lady iris which flowered in her garden this year.

Sheena writes:

Iris Quaker Lady dates from 1909 and was bred by Pennsylvanian nurseryman, Bertrand Farr. I imagine that the name was chosen because of the colouring; Farr must have been well acquainted with Quakers in Pennsylvania. I shouldn't think he was a Quaker himself because he came from Iowa and was educated at a seminary in Rochester.



The standards are almost grey, and the other colours are very gentle so I can see why the name should have suggested itself. I have been delighted by it and it stands next to the iris 'Alcazar' (with dark purple falls) which makes a pleasing and amusing combination.

A quote from Bernard Farr "Blessed is he who has a hobby and can make it his business" rings true.

The Historic Iris Preservation Society comment:

"Many of the irises named by Bertrand Farr, the hybridiser, had an early American theme to them, such as Indian names (Apache, Seminole) or the iris, James Boyd, an American revolutionary war novelist, so it seems to fit with his naming conventions."

Editor's note: There is also a hosta with golden yellow leaves called Quaker Lady.

Nan Stewart



Our dear Friend, Nan Stewart, died at her home on the 20th July at the great age of 101.

She was such a central part of the life of St Andrews Quaker Meeting and even when she left to live near her daughter, Sheila, in North Berwick we were regularly in touch and several Friends visited her there. She came back to our meeting to celebrate her 100th birthday in 2018 shown in the photo.

Just eight days before she died Isobel (Taylor) just 99 and Nan had a chat by Zoom which they both enjoyed, sharing news of how they were doing and what they enjoyed reading.

Here are the words of her daughter Sheila to me, describing her last days.

Since our lovely Zoom call a week past Sunday she has been peacefully letting go of life. We went back to her lifetime

approach of no medications but rest and boiled water and she rested on the settee or her chair in the window, recognising and responding to family and carers who visited. After 101 and three-quarter years to end life with only a week of carers is pretty amazing. Yesterday morning she and I sat quietly on the settee, her sipping water, listening to Mozart (at least I was). Then the District Nurses swept in and settled her in bed where she died a short time later with Neil, (one of Nan's sons) his wife, Mabel, and myself close by.

Family members were heading in our direction from all quarters, so we soon had a traditional wake going on. Family sitting around Mum chatting and much laughter over the shared family stories.

It was a good end to her life, peacefully and in her own very Quakerly way. She sat on the settee and chair and was there in the way she was at Meeting.

Nan's funeral will be on the 14th August outside in a woodland burial place which Nan chose some time ago.

I know many will have memories of Nan (and Alf) which they will want to share - the way they lived their life; their contribution to Quaker service; the kindness and care they gave others in the meeting; their Quaker example.

We will think of ways we can come together to share these memories and celebrate Nan's life.

Nan came to walk cheerfully over the world answering that of God in everyone and she died as she lived, simply and in peace.

Joyce Taylor

East Scotland Area Meeting, 22 August 2020

'Come with heart and mind prepared...'

Advices 2.24

Dear Friends,

We would like to welcome you to our next Area Meeting:

Date: Saturday 22nd August

Time: 10.45am for 11am start

Duration: approximately 60 minutes

Method: Zoom

E- Host: Norman Alm

Norman has kindly agreed to e-host our meeting and will send out a link nearer the time.

This is our second Area Meeting (AM) held by Zoom and you will see from Carolyn Burch's report within Tayside Quaker that we have learnt quite a lot from our last experience and in spite of our regrets about not being able to meet face to face, there have been some real positives and certainly as far as business meetings go, we seem to have received a general thumbs up.

As restrictions on public gatherings gradually ease, we will continue to review the best way forward and it is likely in the future that we will have a mixture of both face to face and online meetings; we may even explore the idea of 'blended meetings' with some Friends gathered together and others on Zoom. Meanwhile we have benefited from the support of our AM planning group, consisting of the clerks from our three local meetings and our treasurer. It has provided guidance and support, particularly with the agenda planning and has enabled us, we hope, to stay relevant and to respond to local needs, we hope to continue with this. We are also looking forward to inviting speakers and your suggestions for speakers are always welcome.

Our agenda will include updates from: the Parliamentary Engagement Working

Group; our treasurer on Britain Yearly Meeting finances; the Local Development Worker; Dundee Meeting House and much more!

All are welcome, members and attenders, please do join us!

In friendship

Pam Apted

Area Meeting Clerk

East Scotland Area Meeting, 9 May 2020

Because of the Covid-19 restrictions we were unable to meet face-to-face for East Scotland Area Meeting (ESAM), so ESAM was held for the first time by videoconference (Zoom). The Clerks were very grateful to our Friend Norman Alm from Dundee Meeting, for electronically 'hosting' this meeting, and to all 36(!) Friends who attended; we felt warmly supported in this first 'electronic' effort!

Strangely enough, of course, this experiment came at a time when Scottish Friends are already looking very seriously at our communications, with a report on this being prepared by a group for General Meeting (Friends will probably have seen the report by the time you read this). So, although the reasons for accelerating this trial of videoconferencing are very sad and serious, we can hope that it helps us to find ways forward that are more fully inclusive and revivifying for our future as a community.

Unfortunately, the pandemic prevented us from welcoming the guest speaker we had planned, Martin Mansell, who was going to talk to us about Friends' work preparing for the climate conference COP26; this work is of course on hold so we hope to hear from Martin at a future meeting. So, our ESAM agenda was relatively short and simple, which was a help in the circumstances. The main items related to finance and Trustees' work (Minutes of ESAM and the accounts have been circulated). We heard that The Trustees have considered safeguarding, finances and the proposal to merge the ESAM Trust and Dundee Friends Property Trust to form a single Trust; careful and

thoughtful consideration of these matters continues. We heard from our Treasurer that our 2019 accounts, now filed, showed income c£54,000, expenditure c£49,000, leaving a surplus of £4,805; donations of £11,000 had been given to each of Britain Yearly Meeting and Dundee Meeting House. Cash reserves at the end of 2019 financial year stand at c£42,000. With Woodbrooke having to cancel many courses or switch to online provision, we agreed not to seek refunds for the cancellation of Woodbrooke courses, but that our Treasurer would arrange for Woodbrooke to regard these as donations.

We also confirmed some Nominations and were glad to welcome into membership Andrew Williams (St Andrews). Dates for next year's Area Meetings were agreed: 13th February in St. Andrews; 8th May in Dundee; 21st August in Perth and 27th November in St Andrews. But at how many of these will we be meeting face to face? That is the question!

The General Meeting (GM) communications group had asked Area Meeting (AM) and Local Meeting (LM) Clerks to feed in their meetings' experience and thoughts on communications by mid-June. As AM Clerks we were therefore able to blend this feedback with specific responses after our Zoom Area Meeting. It seemed useful for this to be the focus of the ESAM report for Tayside Quaker. So here are three key questions and our responses, from the Communications group questionnaire.

What technology are you using? Does it require financing? How well is it working? Are there any issues?

Video conferencing (Zoom) and telephone conferencing.

Zoom does require financing if the meeting lasts more than 40 mins. Meetings have been technically 'hosted' by Friends who already have subscriptions for their work or personal use. We are considering whether the Area Meetings or LMs should have a subscription and how that would work; we would welcome advice on this. AM Meeting hosting could be recognised as a role, with a one-year appointment only, to spread the load and share the skills, and with the subscription cost being treated as an expense like any other in the service of meetings, such as course attendance/travel; like those costs, Friends who want

a subscription for their own use anyway may choose to waive the claim but it should be offered as standard.

Zoom works well, but having a host with technical knowledge really helps; our host offered training and support. It also has the important benefit of allowing clerks to focus on the clerking role. It would be good if others became more confident and able at hosting meetings to avoid just a few people becoming overburdened.

There were technical issues with poor internet connections, poor sound quality, poor equipment; not all Friends have computers with cameras, some have purchased separate web cams.

How do Friends feel about these new ways of communicating?

We asked Friends to give feedback on the use of Zoom for our last Area Meeting, we noted the following:

- Friends were generally positive as they recognised the role Zoom can play when we can't meet face to face.
- Although some Friends commented that the use of video conferencing for business meetings would not be their first choice, Friends appreciated the extraordinary circumstances that we were in and the need to develop new ways of working in a short time.
- Some Friends felt that making more use of videoconferencing is an inevitable and positive way forward, pointing out that for carbon emission reasons we should travel less for face-to-face meetings, and that we can be flexible in our mix of face-to-face and online. In the words of one Friend 'a hybrid arrangement in which we radically reduce long-distance travel while remaining true to the essential spirit of our faith'.
- Friends observed that it has been a steep learning curve but that they are all gaining confidence and are willing to explore the capabilities of technology further.
- Some Friends appreciated that our AM was just an hour, rather than the usual full day.

- Younger (40ish) Friends expressed the strong opinion that this way of working could finally allow them and their contemporaries to feel able to take part in AM, pointing out that in its current form of a whole Saturday, with much business to cover, AM is simply not practical or attractive for anyone who works or has a family.
- Friends found it helpful seeing faces with names, but noted that it was still important for people to say their names and which Local Meeting they are from, when they speak.
- Some Friends found that it was harder to feel engaged with the meeting; others said they felt fully engaged
- Some Friends raised the issue of the difficulty for those who had hearing loss trying to lip read when using zoom. One Friend has provided a very detailed and thoughtful feedback about using Zoom for those with severe hearing impairment (see below).
- Friends noted the exclusion of those without computers or with technical problems that made using Zoom difficult.
- Once social distancing is no longer required, there could be a system of 'computer buddying' whereby a Friend, who is not able to use Zoom, has a Friend living reasonably close who is happy using it and could be their computer buddy. The less computer-happy Friend can visit the computer buddy for the period of the meeting and sit with him/her, appearing on the same screen panel, and able to take part with their Friend's help. This could have a good social/oversight aspect too.

Have you any other comments about your use of remote communications?

- The advice on the Quaker website (Woodbrooke) was helpful; however a short online training session for a small group with a confident Friend also works very well.
- Coming new to Zoom, we found it helpful to have a planning group before AM, especially to consider the agenda, what needs to be circulated in advance, and general protocols during the meeting.

- The planning group's meeting also made it possible to draft Minutes more tightly which helped the Business to run smoothly. This was commented on positively by several Friends.
- It was really helpful to have a separate 'host' to welcome Friends, to give technical advice and also to let clerks know if people were wanting to speak. Those on phones only, would just have to unmute mic and speak. It worked well with host and clerks only having mics unmuted, the rest muted unless they wished to speak. The host reassured Friends not to worry if there were glitches; however, it was useful to remind people to silence house phones etc.
- The host also noted who was present and checked which ones were attenders afterwards. We didn't welcome attenders separately, but noted their presence in the minute; we would welcome discussion about this.
- Is this an opportunity to reconsider the practice of excluding attenders from reports by membership application visitors?
- Elders: Friends were asked to wave if they were an Elder.
- Friends indicated approval by giving a 'thumbs up' rather than the usual 'hope so'. Both the host and the clerks were able to do a visual check.
- Friends can be invited to join the meeting, 15 minutes before the start, with the host giving guidelines just before start.
- We noted that more people (36) joined AM than normal (20ish) and that these were more evenly spread across the 3 LMs. Some joined for the first time. It helped that Friends knew in advance that the meeting would only take an hour.
- Zoom doesn't easily allow for sensitive issues where people may be asked to leave the room, say for nominations, and clerks need to plan the agenda with this in mind. It would be helpful to have further discussion about this.
- One disadvantage is that clerks can't have a quiet word to each other

when writing the minute, we agreed just to speak to each other if required.

- We did not use 'Chat' and as clerks we felt it was not something we were comfortable with in a Meeting.
- We did not use breakout rooms, as we had a relatively simple agenda. This facility could be useful however if more complex matters were on the agenda.
- We had a reading at both the beginning and the end of the meeting; this worked well and allowed for a period of quiet worship.
- One hour seemed about right for the business bit, but we could allow a bit more time for silences/reading/ministry. Clerks have to watch the pace, so not too hurried or slow.
- We were aware of those who were unable to join online We ensured that the minute was posted to them promptly, and asked for feedback. It would be useful here to compare the number of people who could not join, with the extra number of people who came (15 or so).
- To avoid exclusion could we consider routes of funding to support Friends financially with the purchase, repair or maintenance of equipment?

[We also included with our response some very thoughtful and practical feedback from Pam Brunt (St Andrews) on the use of Zoom for those with a hearing impairment which we share below with her permission.]

Carolyn Burch

(Assistant Clerk)

Using Zoom for those with a hearing impairment

Perhaps now we will recognise that face to face has limitations as well - like the travel carbon foot print, travel time being high, transport not available, mobility not good enough for the journey - so I hope in future that we might

have a mixture of face to face and on line and perhaps the hybrid of some together physically with others participating on line. There is much to be explored. And as a result of this period I'm sure the technical side of things will improve. I'm hoping for voice recognition technology to be integrated as a basic function of the video conferencing platforms.

What I have found is that I am having to explain my particular needs as a lip reader to the various groups I've been participating in. Others will also have specific needs. So, I see that we will need to develop a good practice code for the host and the participants.

My particular needs: I have to use the gallery view to make the image large enough for me to lip read. If everyone has their mics on, then any noise - cough, laugh, paper rustling, dog barking and so on means that I miss whatever the speaker is saying at that point. So, my ideal is that everyone has their mics muted and only un-mutes when they wish to speak. The ease of that will depend on the participant's specific technology.

There is the chat function - and that can be used to either type a message to all, or to choose one of the participants privately. I have found that helpful if I need a point of clarification and it can be done by asking one of the participants privately without interrupting the discussion. But the main factor for anyone with hearing difficulties is that the chat can be used by someone to do a form of scribing - not word for word, just a precis, or a key word giving the topic.

The quality of the image on screen depends on the person's technology. If it's a laptop and someone holds it just on their knee and not on a firm surface, then the image wobbles. Anyone using an i-phone also means the lip synch is very jerky and impossible to lip-read. That's when the scribing function comes in handy for me.

We all need to make sure our faces are not in shadow and that the webcam is trained on the face - people move their heads about when talking and look down so one is looking at their hair. I haven't solved the lighting problem for myself yet.

Thought needs to be given to deciding on a specific way to indicate when one

wants to make a contribution and to wait until the Clerk calls one.

Nothing was particularly difficult at this recent Area Meeting. If we had a matter requiring considerable discernment, then I think that would be challenging. We may need to develop some new strategies. If there isn't a time pressure, then we could take it in stages with information, threshing and then discernment not necessarily at one session. Our Clerks are very much guided by Faith and Practice, but it is all written for face to face meetings so we may need a bit of extra guidance. A work in progress...

Pam Brunt

The Swarthmore lecture

'Openings to the Infinite Ocean: A Friendly Offering of Hope'

by Tom Shakespeare

will be live-streamed

on Saturday 1 August at 19:30

How do we face all the very real, terrible things that happen in our world and still have hope? How did Friends in the past have hope in dark times and how can we have it today? Tom will reflect on the nature of hope, our reasons to hope, and how we can preach hope through the way we live our lives.

You will find the link here:

<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/learn/about/swarthmore-lecture/>

Appeal for Women's Aid in Dundee

Friends may remember that because of the Covid19 pandemic we had to cancel the performance by Journeymen Theatre that was going to take place in Dundee on Thursday, 11 June. They were going to perform their play about domestic violence, 'Rock and a Hard Place' – this is their description of the play:

"Kayleigh is a talented teenager whose life should be full of promise. Instead, she finds herself in a cycle of domestic abuse from which there seems no escape until Auntie Jan helps her find a way out, after twenty long years of 'put up and shut up'. Based on a true story, together with the combined true life experiences shared by other women, the play explores the complex nature of domestic abuse, ranging from coercion in its many forms to women's deaths at the hands of abusive partners.

Rock and A Hard Place also reveals the impact of funding cuts on the refuge system and on support available for women like Kayleigh and is an appeal to all of us to both recognise and highlight this major human rights issue in our own communities."

We had arranged for a speaker from Women's Aid in Dundee (DWA) to speak to us before the play, and the plan was to raise donations for Women's Aid on the night. In the confining circumstances of Covid19 lockdown, there is likely to be all the more need for the work that Women's Aid does, as women may be more trapped than usual with their abusers. We encourage Friends therefore to make a donation to the charity, as they might have done if the performance had gone ahead.

Pam Brunt of St Andrews Meeting, a DWA trustee, says "Donations are used to provide direct help to women and children in refuge and in the community: for example, emergency supply packs when the women come into refuge, starting credit on the electricity meters, travel costs if they need to go to another town, even simple things like birthday cards."

Donations can be made here:

<https://www.goldengiving.com/charity/search?searchCriteria=dundee+women%27s+aid>

Or via their website, <http://www.dundeewomensaid.co.uk/supportus.php>

Carolyn Burch

Meeting for Sufferings, video conference, 6 June 2020

" The truth is one and the same always, and though ages and generations pass away, and one generation goes and another comes, yet the word and power and spirit of the living God endures for ever, and is the same and never changes."

Margaret Fell, Quaker Faith and Practice 19.61

Around 100 Friends gathered via Zoom for this most unusual Meeting for Sufferings and the reading of the passage by Margaret Fell set the hope that these exceptional circumstances could work to our advantage. Our Arrangements Group has prepared a greatly truncated agenda and the morning event was arranged in two sections.

Clear Clerking and collective discipline allowed us to quickly deal with appointments, membership and the Prison and Court Register.

The report from Trustees included finances and indicated Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) being in a strong financial position to help deal with the current Covid crisis. This was mainly due to a very large 2019 increase in legacy income. However, the shutdown of Friends House has had seen a significant fall in income and 80% of staff were on furlough. Financial support was however being given to staff on 80% wages to top up to 100%

There was lengthy discussion on a proposal to cut Sufferings meetings from five a year to four. Arrangements Group will consider concerns raised and report back in October.

Claire Scott Booth, Clerk to Yearly Meeting reported on the "sad decision" that Yearly Meeting Gathering would not now take place this year (the first time this has happened in 352 years). Instead, a virtual Yearly Meeting, lasting around two and a half hours, will be held on Sunday 15 November 2020. It is hoped that space will enable around 1000 to take part and booking information is to follow.

For the final half hour our Meeting for Sufferings broke into " breakout groups" and I enjoyed being in discussion with a small group from different parts of the UK. Our theme was ' how is the truth prospering in our Meetings?'. This allowed us to 'unmute' and share our thoughts and news in a more direct and natural way.

I was most impressed by how staff from Friends House prepared and organised the event, but it is clearly not the same as being with Friends for the day, listening and

contributing as well as eating and chatting together! I have begun to enjoy the Friends House experience and hope that the next few months will see some kind of normality resume.

Robert Thompson

Revising Quaker Faith and Practice

The Book of Discipline Revision Committee are exploring ways of drafting material through looking at topics such as eldership and oversight, marriage, and the structure of our church government sections. We continue to welcome suggestions for future content which you can share with us through our collection tool: <https://forms.quaker.org.uk/qfp-idea/>

The Committee have created a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document which can now be downloaded from the Britain Yearly Meeting website: <https://www.quaker.org.uk/resources/quaker-faith-and-practice/revising-quaker-faith-practice> (scroll down to 'Find out more' at the bottom). If you have questions which aren't covered, please contact us on social media or email qfp@quaker.org.uk (and be patient as our staff are on furlough and the committee won't meet again until October).

You are invited to be part of the shared journey of revising Quaker faith and practice by joining one of these meetings:

Joyfully revising Quaker faith and practice

Tuesday 11 August (14:30-16:00)

Creatively revising Quaker faith and practice

Tuesday 25 August (19:30-21:00)

Boldly revising Quaker faith and practice

Tuesday 8 September (14:30-16:00)

Further details can be found here:

<https://www.woodbrooke.org.uk/item/revising-quaker-faith-practice/>

Mary Woodward

Hiroshima 6 August 1945 Never Again

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

By the end of 1945, the bombing had killed an estimated one hundred and forty thousand people in Hiroshima, and a further seventy-four thousand in Nagasaki. Many of the survivors would face leukaemia, cancer, or other side effects from the radiation.

In August 2015 Pope Francis said:

“Hiroshima and Nagasaki became the symbol of boundless destructive power...it remains a permanent warning for humanity to reject war forever and to ban nuclear weapons and every weapon of mass destruction.”

The International Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons (www.icanw.org) has won a Nobel Peace Prize for work on the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. So far 39 countries have ratified the treaty (not the UK Government). The treaty will come into force if only another eleven countries ratify it.

Perth Quakers have arranged a vigil and an informal social event on 6 August. Details are on the next page. Please do join us if you can!

Peter Cheer

Hiroshima
6 August 1945



Never again



Hiroshima Day: 6 August



To mark the 75th anniversary of the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, Perth Quaker Meeting invites you to join us for a vigil in Perth High Street and an informal event at the Peace Pole in Rodney Gardens

When: Thursday 6 August 2020. 11.00 - 13.00

Where: At the junction of High Street and King Edward Street

We will have a banner and posters, and will be physically distanced in accordance with current guidelines. Everyone is welcome to join us for all or part of the time.

Informal social event: At 14.00, we will hold a witness for peace and social gathering by the Peace Pole in Rodney Gardens, for around an hour. All are welcome to join us. Bring along a poem, song or similar to share - and a seat if you need one.

For further information contact:

perthquakers@gmail.com or 01738 560250



May peace prevail on earth

A Hiroshima anniversary prayer

Creator God your world is precious but human folly threatens its very existence.

We pray for those whose lives have been destroyed by nuclear weapons and nuclear testing.

We pray for those denied the essentials of life when money is squandered on nuclear weapons production.

We pray that our Faiths will speak to the world with clarity and wisdom and work with world leaders to ban the development, possession and use of nuclear weapons.

We commit ourselves to work for a world without nuclear weapons.

We pray in hope for a world built on just relations and cooperation between people who wish to live in peaceful co-existence.

(Adapted from an original by Pax Christi)



Student dialogue in St Andrews

Barbara Davey as Quaker chaplain at St Andrews University has taken part in a student forum called TruThink. Members of the chaplaincy team were invited to respond with a reflection on a topic including

- What motivates compassion during the lockdown?
- Does forgiving mean forgetting?
- How can we engage in peaceful dialogue?

Barbara says: “It was exciting (and challenging!) to see what I could come up with, and I was grateful to a few Friends in Meeting whom I turned to for some initial input to get me started. I was keen to offer something ‘quakerly’ in this interfaith setting.”

Barbara’s reflection on compassion during lockdown is given below. You will find the others here <https://truthink.co.uk/dialogue/>

What motivates compassion during lockdown?

My first response when reading this question is a slight querying of the word ‘motivates’. We have certainly seen a great outpouring of altruistic behaviour over the past weeks, but characterised by a glorious spontaneity – kindnesses shown in chance encounters and people organising themselves from the bottom up in a spirit of co-operation, their endeavours more an expression of solidarity rather than charity in the traditional top-down sense of people ‘motivated’ to do good.

It has been a time of great and obvious need, and the ‘shame’ of asking for help has been removed. For many the pattern of their daily lives has been changed and this has prompted reflections on what is important to them. The experience of the lockdown has made us more aware of the interplay between our physical, mental and spiritual frameworks – what endangers the one unsettles the others – and has given us a common experience.

Alongside our personal vulnerability we have been made increasingly aware of the fragility of the world and the impact each individual can have: the small scale way we relate to each other in this interconnected pandemic and climate challenged world demonstrably has made a difference – “I pin my hopes to

quiet processes and small circles in which vital and transforming events take place". (Rufus Jones 1937 Quaker faith and practice 24.56)

The multitude and complexity of problems might have overwhelmed us in the past, but the pandemic has shown us that people matter. We all find different ways to express this. Quakers have an understanding of 'God in every one', each of us a 'precious child of God', in family relationship, one with another. I cannot separate myself from human contact, any more than I can separate myself from God.

Likewise, Quakers have long understood the impossibility of separating our faith from how we live our lives, each of us seeking to fulfil the loving purposes of God. Freed from clutter, the pandemic is opening me to new understandings, "to turn all the treasures we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives". (John Woolman 1763 Quaker faith and practice 23.14)

Barbara Davey

News from Local Meetings

Dundee

During the lockdown we have had regular mid-week Meeting for Worship on Zoom each Thursday from 11am - with Meeting lasting from 11:15 to 11:45. We have had a regular group of around twelve meeting.

We have also been having a virtual meeting on Sunday after which Friends/friends send Afterwords which are circulated by email. From Sunday 19th July we have also begun our hour-long Meeting for Worship using Zoom starting at 11am, with Afterwords.

Our Overseers have surveyed all Members and Attenders to ask about their wish / ability / willingness to return to Meeting in our refurbished Meeting House and / or holding outdoor meetings.

Several steps are required before we can move into the new Meeting House -

- we have to have the handover of the building from the contractor,
- we have to get the building warrant of completion and
- we need to carry out a risk assessment and make any consequential changes to be “Covid safe”.

This will take time and so we are not anticipating getting back into the Meeting House until probably October (earlier if it is possible).

We are also investigating the possibility of “blended” Meetings in the future and welcome any experience or suggestions people may have.

Our next Meeting for Business will be held on Zoom on 30th August when we will have a chance to discuss the results of the survey and some of the ideas that have been floated and the new procedures that may be required to allow Meeting for Worship post-lockdown.

Bill Edgar

St Andrews

Meetings for Worship

Our weekly Zoom sessions for Meeting for Worship have continued providing support and care for one another. Not all of us have joined on a regular basis but for those who do, feedback has been positive.... even if it is a virtual experience. Alongside, children and young people have had their own Meeting for Worship (report below). This is followed by an invitation to join a coffee sharing together which gives us the chance to talk and catch up. Our thanks to all who have contributed thoughts, readings, reflections and photos. These have given a lot of pleasure and a sense of connection. For those not having computer contact, paper copies of Sharing Together continue to be sent.

Zoom meetings have been held by Elders, Overseers and for our Meeting for Worship for Business. This too has proved very useful in keeping communication channels open allowing a semblance of 'normal' Quaker work to continue including thoughts about 'what next'. At this time there are no plans for opening the Meeting House. At our last Meeting for Worship for Business it was felt that Zoom or something similar would be of benefit to our

Meeting when normality once again returns. A monthly Zoom subscription has been set up and guidelines for participating in future meetings circulated. Guidelines for hosting a Zoom meeting are being prepared to enable all at St Andrews Quaker Meeting to use this new tool for Quaker work.

Buša Cochrane-Muir

Children and young people

St Andrews' children and young people have been meeting online for Worship on Sundays since May via Zoom. It has been a challenge for us in different ways... It is difficult to engage the younger children at times and some older people faced technical hurdles at first! However, there have been topics for sharing: exploring nature, utilising the Osprey webcams and screen sharing of other Internet resources. There has been learning about Quaker Lives, topical politics, seed-planting, silly jokes and storytime. And the part enjoyed by all ages has been the chance to share news of our activities from the previous week, especially being able to show things on screen that the children have made or drawn at home. St Andrews Friends often now hear about the Children's meeting as part of Meeting for Worship before Afterword, and everyone was really pleased to be able to continue through the school holidays, where we might normally take a break. A big thank you goes to all our adult helpers.

Genevieve Orr

Quaker Action St Andrews group QASTA

The opportunity to push for green recovery in the post lockdown economic recovery of the UK led members of St Andrews Quaker Meeting to join in a 'virtual lobby' session with our MP, Wendy Chamberlain, organized by the Climate Coalition. Seven members of St Andrews Meeting participated out of a total of 11 constituents.

After a short quiz hosted by Wendy regarding some statistics and interest in the climate crisis, we individually asked her questions about what she will do as a member of the Liberal Democrat Party to address the climate emergency. Questions included, 'What makes it difficult for you to make this a top issue for the upcoming election?' Wendy listed 6 top priorities of the Liberal Democrat

Party, and addressing the climate emergency was number 6. We urged her to support increased public transportation, cross-party working, renewable fuel sources. She stated that “climate change should be the lens through which all policies should be viewed”. We should hold her to this!

This was our first opportunity to directly ask questions of our Parliamentary representative, and Wendy is a first term MP in a minority party. We agreed to set a date for a Zoom meeting for the full St Andrews Meeting to drill down on our concerns and to elicit fuller answers to our questions.

On another issue, St Andrews Quaker Meeting sent a letter of concern and objection to the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary regarding the annexation of much of the West Bank of Palestine by the Israeli Government and the appointment of the far-right Israeli Ambassador to the UK.

Ellen Colingsworth

Perth

Perth Friends have been meeting using Zoom on the second and last Sundays of the month as usual, with about 15 people taking part each time. This has worked well, and we have appreciated worshipping together, and the discussion afterwards. We have also used Zoom for social coffee and chat at various times, much appreciated as a way of keeping in touch.

The Highland Perthshire group have used Zoom for their meetings. In their next meeting they will reflect on ‘The Pleasures of Life’. “During lockdown we may have discovered new things that we enjoy and bring pleasure to our lives, or rediscovered old things; we shall share the positives from our recent experiences.”

Another group who have used Zoom to meet are Elders and Overseers. They are considering when and how we can resume meeting face to face. At the moment, the Subud group who own the building where we meet are working on guidelines to meet the Covid 19 requirements; once these are in place, then we can make plans. Some Friends, particularly those who live at a distance

from Perth, have found the meetings using Zoom particularly helpful so we may continue with these in some form.

We particularly appreciate 'Perth Meeting News' compiled by Philip Bryers and sent out regularly to remind us of dates and activities, to share news and to communicate some of the information that comes our way from Quaker and other sources.

Our main activity coming up is the Hiroshima Day commemoration described on page 19. We hope that we shall be joined by people from other groups and churches in Perth.

Adwoa Bittle has moved house and is now living at 108a Glasgow Road, Perth PH2 0LU.

Our current special collection is for Palli Unnayan Seva Samiti (PUSS), India. PUSS is an Indian organisation that runs a pre-school called Balwadi, a primary school and Ramadevi High school in a large purpose-built school in the village of Naharkanta, Orissa - one of the poorest states in India. Philippa Baylis has worked with them for a number of years and is teaching English remotely to some of the children at present.

One advantage of using Zoom is that, provided you have an internet or phone connection, it doesn't matter where you are based. If anyone would like to take the opportunity to join us in Perth, please contact Philip Bryers for details.

Footnote: Barbara Davey has sent this picture of a plaque on a bench in St Andrews. It is part of a mental health and suicide prevention campaign called #ProjectTAG



A leaf

A leaf. Just a leaf.
Feel its texture or smoothness.
Smell it. Turn it over.
Twist it on its stem and watch it dance.
Notice its symmetry or asymmetry,
Its curves and points,
Its delicate stem securing it to something larger,
Firmer, rooted in a mysterious source.
Become lost in the wondrous.
Let everything else go.
Let even yourself go,
Your small and your big concerns.
Surrender to the beauty of a leaf.
Surrender to the beauty of something else,
Once a week. Daily is even better.
Give voice to your appreciation.
In some circles, they call that religion.

Susan Vreeland



Meetings for Worship

Please note that alternative arrangements are in operation at present.

Dundee: The Meeting House, 7 Whitehall Crescent, Dundee DD1 4AR

Sundays 11.00 am

Thursdays 12.30 – 1.00 pm

St Andrews Meeting House, 2 Howard Place, St Andrews KY16 9HL

Sundays 10.30 am

Children's Meeting - each Sunday during school terms

Enquiries: Genevieve Orr (01333 360396)

Midweek Meeting, Thursdays 1.15 – 1.45pm

Perth: The Subud Centre, 7 St Leonard's Bank, Perth PH2 8EB

Second and last Sundays of each month 11.00 am

Children's Meeting usually last Sunday of each month

Children's contact: Anneke Kraakman (07746 117 762)

East of Scotland Area Meeting

Saturday 22 August 2020, *online*

Saturday 21 November 2020, *Perth*

Saturday 13 February 2021, *St Andrews*

Saturday 8 May 2021, *Dundee*

Saturday 21 August 2021, *Perth*

Saturday 27 November 2021, *St Andrews*

General Meeting for Scotland

12 September 2020, *online using Zoom*

31 October 2020, *online using Zoom*

6 March 2021, *North Scotland*

12 June 2021, *East Scotland (Perth)*

11 September 2021, *West Scotland*

20 November 2021, *South East Scotland*

5 March 2022, *East Scotland*