

West Scotland

Quaker News

January 2013

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The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of individuals. They do not necessarily represent the views of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

From the Editor.

Sadly, our excellent previous Clerk has not yet been replaced and consequently there is no Clerk's letter in this Newsletter. Also, because of a paucity of articles and other contributions, this edition is much shorter than usual. So please, if you value it as a venue for your Quaker thoughts and concerns, get those fingers busy on the keyboard, paint brush or camera button!



Photo: Bryan Bowes

The deadline for the next issue of West of Scotland Quaker News is 24th February. Copy should be sent to the editor Bryan Bowes preferably in word or plain text email to: botany64@waitrose.com or by post on paper or disc to: 3 West Chapelton Lane, Bearsden, Glasgow G61 2DF.

Silent Ministry in Dumfries



Photo: Bryan Bowes

Area Meeting by Telephone 4th December 2012

How good it is in dark, snowy December, not to have to travel for Area Meeting! And for us islanders, a real treat to "get to" AM without having to allocate a whole weekend to it.

Some 24 Friends gathered around kitchen tables and Meeting House phones and joined the gathered silence after a short automated chorus of "Here is....X" and "Here is....Y"! In spite of the early lack of a hearing aid and a number of doubts about whether the mute button had been pressed or not, we generally heard each other very well and the procedure worked smoothly.

After remembering with affection our Friend Ian Richardson of Glasgow Meeting, his tireless work for peace and his regular welcoming presence at Meeting, we moved to consideration of a major problem facing West Scotland AM at the moment - our inability to find anyone willing or able to serve as Clerk from the beginning of 2013. The matter is currently with trustees, but we spent a while holding the issue, and trustees, in the Light. A number of reflections came out of this period of worship, and these will be passed to trustees.

We received another application for membership, heard the report of Sarah Brown's and Malcolm Crosby's visit to Zem Moffat of Glasgow Meeting, and joyfully welcomed Zem into membership. We then, rather less joyfully, considered a list of some ten or so Friends, not seen for many years, of whom Overseers had not been able to find any trace. In fact, the publication of the list elicited useful information about possible connections five of them. This information will be followed up by Overseers, but since nothing further was known about Jacqueline Edwards, Peter Hardern, June Maxwell, Alan Spencer, Lisa Occleston or Andrew Muirhead, the decision was taken to terminate their memberships, with the understanding of course that if they return at some point in the future, their membership could be willingly restored.

We considered two possible budgets for 2013, one more generous than the other, though in fact both come to a total in excess of what we have currently given to AM in 2012. Friends, if we can, we need to give more, if we wish to do the work we want to do and to be able to send Friends to conferences and training weekends. We agreed to send an Elder and an Overseer to the Eldership and Oversight Conference in April, and our new deputy Registering Officer, Billy Johnstone, to the Conference of Registering Officers in March, both taking place at Woodbrooke. We are also pleased to be able to send three young people to Junior Yearly Meeting in April.

Reports from Margaret Munro on Quaker Life Representative Council and from Dumfries Meeting on their positive experience of "cluster gathering" had already been circulated, and we also heard the happy news that Glasgow Meeting have managed to raise the remaining £6000 to pay for the roof repairs. Finally we noted terms of service which are coming to an end and for which new names are needed, we released Jenny Faulkner, with our grateful appreciation, from her service as an Elder, and were pleased to appoint Janette Walkinshaw as Assistant Clerk and Lindesay Burton as Membership Administrator.

After the signing of the Minutes and a further few moments of silence we said our farewells and "departed", to another chorus of "X... and Y.... have left".

Bronwen Currie (*Argyll and Islay Meeting*)

Arran, Islay, Cowal and mainland Argyll Meeting for Worship



On a glorious autumn Sunday in October, Friends from Arran, Islay, Cowal and mainland Argyll (plus two dogs!) gathered in Skipness Village Hall for Meeting for Worship. There was time for a picnic lunch and a walk afterwards and we enjoyed a lovely time getting to know one another better. Thanks to Jane Mitchell for pulling it all together.

West Scotland Area Meeting and YOU

Unlike many churches, the Society of Friends has no paid ministers. This is one of the features that I think appeals to many of its members. We like our worshipping groups, our worship usually making a central feature of silence.

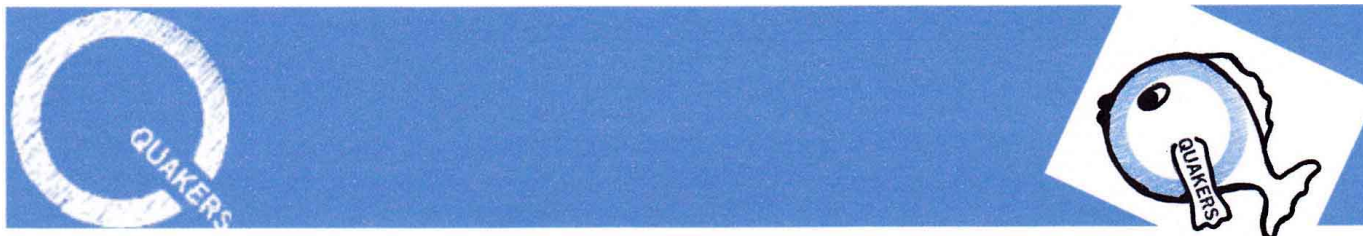
But the Society is more than its dispersed worshipping groups; parts of it provide training, work for peace, witness to our society, have a respected presence at the UN and the EU and hold a watching brief on the work of the Westminster and Holyrood parliaments. It liaises too with other churches. The Society has a structure, and the Area Meeting is a vital link in this. The Area Meeting needs people who are happy to hold office (for a limited period always) to keep everything in place. Expenses are paid. There is a lot that is of interest in the work that they do and some former office-holders have told me how spiritually enriching they have found the work.

As an old person (past three-score and ten) I wonder whether just now there enough young people and people in their prime serving the Meeting. I wonder who will come next. To help with this I think it's essential that we should make the AM friendly to those with family responsibilities.

Do you take part as often as you can in meetings for church affairs? Are you familiar enough with our church government to contribute to its disciplined processes? Do you consider difficult questions with an informed mind as well as a generous and

and loving spirit? Are you prepared to let your insights and personal wishes take their place alongside those of others or be set aside as the meeting seeks the right way forward? If you cannot attend, uphold the meeting prayerfully. Advices & Queries 15

Jane Mitchell (*Argyll & Islay Meeting*)



Saturday 26th January

Glasgow Quaker Meeting House 11a.m -4p.m.

Quaker get together ! More than an area meeting! Families welcome 12a.m.-4 p.m.

Following Area Meeting for Worship we have arranged time to meet more of our Quaker family and celebrate being together. Fun together, finding out more about our Quaker community and the work that members do to support that community are planned.

10.30 a.m.	Refreshments and activities available
11 a.m.	Area Meeting business (Business will be kept to one hour)
12 noon	Introductions and presentation suitable for all ages.
12.30 p.m.	Members share experiences of serving area meeting.
1.00 p.m.	Bring and Share lunch. An opportunity to chat and activities
2.00 p.m.	Friends describe what they do to support our community. Your chance to quiz the panel!
3.30 p.m.	Closing worship

Children's activities will be available 12.30 – 1pm and 2 – 3.30pm-please contact Mary Alice Mansel 01505 842380 mamansell69@gmail.com so we can arrange something fun and suitable for all children who come.

We hope you will come –even if you do not usually go to area meeting- look forward to seeing you !



Why this invitation ??

This invitation is for all Quakers in West of Scotland Area Meeting-probably you if you are reading this newsletter !

This different format of area meeting arises out of the consultation last year about the direction for area meeting and the difficulties in finding people to support area meeting. The report ends with the statement *The Area Meeting is the WHOLE spiritual community, and all Friends and Attenders can support not only their local meeting but the whole worshipping group*, which can easily be seen as the query *Are you working to bring about an active friendly worshipping area meeting community?*

So coming to this meeting is one way of responding positively to such a query. It is planned that the business will be condensed into one hour at the start and the rest of the day will be more of an exploration of how area meeting works with some all age sessions and some times when children will have their own activities. One of the plans for the children and young people is to visit the renewable energy exhibition near Central Station. It is full of interactive displays.

We hope that people will bring food to share at lunch as well as the soup which Glasgow Meeting will provide to make it more of a joint celebration of our Quaker community .

As most readers will know Area Meeting is the legal body which all our local meetings belong too, and it is the body which has direct connections with British Yearly Meeting which represents and supports Quakers in Britain in so many ways. Sometimes people feel their local meeting meets all their needs and takes all their energy so they do not feel a need for the wider area meeting community activities. We hope this event will enlighten and encourage more Friends to participate in Area Meeting as a whole community. For Glaswegians it's on your doorstep so come along and join with Friends from the wider community. For those of you further away Glasgow Meeting offers a bed and breakfast scheme and can provide hospitality to those who need to stay overnight. Please contact Mary Alice Mansell at the details above (under children's activities) if you need somewhere to stay. We understand that travel at this time of year is difficult and may prevent some Friends from attending so we are planning to repeat the event in the south west of the area later in the year, date to be decided!

When I look at *Advices and Queries*, as so often they almost all seem to be relevant in some way. I decided that parts of 18 and 20 seemed to speak to this day. What a relief though we are not asking now for money, merely to come and share in your community gathering. Hope to see you on the 26th in Glasgow...

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

20. "Do you give sufficient time to sharing with others in the meeting, both newcomers and long-time members, your understanding of worship, of service, and of commitment to the Society's witness? (Do you give a right proportion of your money to support Quaker work?)"

Kate Philbrick (*Glasgow Meeting*)

Wisdom is Calling You

"Life is not a problem that can be solved. It must be lived each day, and each day brings a bundle of choices that challenge our practical wisdom, our common sense, and our yearning for truth. Your choices in life are enormous. They come at you in battalions. You've been learning from the cradle that it is important to be good at something - maths, music, spelling, sports. Remember also to pay attention to the spirit's first command - to be good at life."

Robert Lawrence Smith: Extract from his publication *A Quaker Book of Wisdom*

Bill Bingham (*Glasgow Meeting*)

***This space is spare -
You could have filled it!***

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