



Minutes of the Meeting held Saturday 25 June 2011 at The Pales Meeting House

2011.16 Opening Worship and Welcome

Quaker Faith and Practice 23.02 and 23.06 have been read in our opening worship. We are pleased to welcome 41 Friends here today, as listed on the attendance sheet. We also welcome Alistair Fuller, our speaker, and Heather Powell, a visitor. The following Friends have been appointed by their area meetings to attend:

North Wales: Frank Brown
Mid Wales: Dorothy Bell
South Wales: Lynn Moseley
Southern Marches: David Binney, Kate Binney

No Friends have been appointed to act as Elders for this meeting.

2011.17 *Calon and The Friend*

Ros Morley has agreed to write a report on this meeting for *The Friend* and to report for *Calon*.

2011.18 International Conscientious Objectors' Day

We have been contacted by an attender in Canada who asked us to recognise International Conscientious Objectors' Day (May 15th). He attached a poem he had written called 'White Feather'. We agree to note the date on our website and to draw the attention of Friends to the date at our February meeting. We will also note the date of 18th May on our website – this is the Urdd Day of Goodwill when young people send messages of goodwill across the world.

2011.19 Effects of government cuts to benefits and public services

1 John 4:18 (Revised English Bible)
In love there is no room for fear. In fact perfect love banishes fear.

We have held a discussion on evidence we have seen on the way cuts are affecting the public in Wales.

The Holtham Commission Report (2010) indicated that Wales is comparatively underfunded, and in the next four year period we expect a further twelve per cent in cuts.

We have heard examples of fear, anxiety and stress, caused partly by what is already happening and partly by fear of the unknown. In our concern for those affected, we must

remember the decision makers, who are probably stressed themselves and who have to make very difficult and impactful decisions.

Single parents, those in receipt of disability benefits, and those seeking to improve their lives by education are being particularly affected.

Job losses within the public sector will affect women in particular. Women are disproportionately affected in a variety of different ways.

Rural areas need to be regarded differently from urban areas, and Wales is mostly rural.

We have noted that engaging in wars is very expensive and we wish that the money expended on war could have been put to better use.

We also feel that the current economic problems are a probable indication of the future, in that the planet's resources are finite. Resources need to be shared more equally.

Friends have a strong history of social action in deprived areas, and historically, particularly, in Bryn Mawr and Trealaw in the Rhondda in the 1930's. We need to be ready to help again in a practical way, maybe as volunteers in drop-in centres for young people out of work, or in bringing back the equivalent of soup kitchens.

We ask our clerks to write a letter to Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, supporting the tenor of his article in the New Statesman, and to copy the letter to Cytûn (Churches Together in Wales).

We will return to this subject in a year's time.

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings, and we hope that Meeting for Sufferings will publicly express Friends' feelings about the way the cuts are being implemented.

2011. 20 Area Meeting Contact Lists

In our October meeting last year (minute 2010.36) we agreed to purchase lists of members and attenders from the four area meetings, and distribute them to Friends who need them for their work with MFW, and to Friends who requested them. No contact lists were available from South Wales Area Meeting, but the other lists were purchased and distributed as needed. We agree to repeat the process. We hope that South Wales Area Meeting will produce a list this year and will ask for help if necessary.

2011. 21 Meeting for Sufferings

Dave Butler has reported on the meetings held in April and June. Both reports will be filed with these minutes and put on the website. In April Meeting for Sufferings agreed to boycott goods from Israeli settlements in occupied Palestine. Many area meetings have sent minutes of support for the boycott. We ask Friends to contact local supermarkets to enquire where they source their goods, to write letters to the press, and to remember that *Calon* can be used to inform Friends of what meetings are doing. Friends are working with peace promoting groups in both Israel and the West Bank. We need to

remember that financial support for the Ecumenical Accompanier programme will help the situation.

2011.22 Testimony

We have heard part of the Testimony to the Grace of God as shown in the life of Malcolm Thomas.

2011.23 North Wales minute to Meeting for Sufferings on support for area meetings

In January 2011 North Wales Area Meeting sent a Minute (No. 28) to Meeting for Sufferings asking for more central support for area meetings. We know that Friends are seeking support in their spiritual lives and that membership taken seriously makes priests (or clergy) of all of us. Friends need to be reminded of the obligations of membership and to fulfil their ministry. Area Meetings need more central support.

We send this minute to Meeting for Sufferings.

2011.24 Children and Young People's Work Advocates Report

Kate Binney has reported to us. The Advocates in Wales met in July last year and in February this year. They were able to collate activities with children across Wales. A common problem is the difficulty of finding Friends with the time and energy to be involved with children and young people's work. The all-Wales meetings are a help in keeping focused and encouraging each other. It was helpful that two issues of *Calon* concentrated on Children and Young People.

2011.25 Cytûn

Catherine James has reported that Cytûn representation at the Urdd Eisteddfod worked well this year, and Catherine is going to be present at the Cytûn stand at the Royal Welsh Show. There is a rota of chaplains so that whenever there is a major event at the Royal Welsh grounds there will be a chaplain there. Catherine had represented us at the enthronement of the new Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cardiff.

2011.26 National Eisteddfod

Maria Haines has updated us on arrangements for Quaker attendance at the Cytûn tent. We are sorry that Yearly Meeting Gathering takes place on the same dates as the National Eisteddfod as this cuts the number of Friends available to represent us. This year there will be a quiet area in part of the Cytûn tent for which Quakers will be responsible. We thank Maria for the work she is doing on our behalf.

2011.27 Living the Quaker Way

The first of these meetings was held on 21st May at Bridgend on the theme of *Grounding the Quaker Way Spiritually*. It was a very good meeting but poorly attended. The next is on 16th July at Abergavenny, on the theme of *Living the Quaker Way as Community*. We thank Christine Trevett for reporting on the first meeting.

2011.28 Yearly Meeting Gathering

Yearly Meeting Gathering will be held in Canterbury July 30th to 6th August. The main theme will be Sustainability. A number of Friends from this meeting will be attending, and we will have a discussion of the event at our next meeting. We ask Pam Willson to report back to us.

2011. 29 Quaker Life Representative Council report

Liz Butler attended Quaker Life Representative Council in April. Friends were urged to visit Swarthmoor Hall and were given a new helpful booklet on visiting 1652 country. There is a booklet on Sharing our Journeys which could be a very useful tool in meetings.

2011.30 Celebrating the Quaker Way in Wales (minutes 2010.19, 2010.32 and 2011.05 refer)

On 24th June the Project Group met two representatives of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT) to discuss our application. The application will come before JRCT trustees on 9th July. If any Friend knows someone who understands the technical process of producing a DVD it would be helpful (please inform Deborah Rowlands (01570 480083 or Deborah.rowlands@btinternet.com). Friends are invited to send short pieces speaking from the heart about their spiritual journeys. These contributions should be sent to Rhian Parry, Tytandderwen, Pencefn, Dolgellau, LL40 2ER or barryg.allcott@btinternet.com.

2011. 31 Nominations and Appointments

- (i) At our last meeting Awel Jones was appointed to the book group working on Celebrating the Quaker Way. This was a mistake and she has been released from the appointment.
- (ii) We have been invited to send a representative to the Welcome Tea of the Undeb yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg, in Beaumaris on 1st July, and Gwyneth Hewitson has been appointed by between meetings decision.

- (iii) Our Nominations Committee bring forward the name of Deborah Rowlands to serve **as Cytûn Board member** from 1st November for three years. This name being acceptable, Deborah's name will be sent to the Cytûn Board..

(iv) **Nominations requested**

We note that the following appointments are vacant and we ask Nominations Committee to find Friends to serve.

Co-clerk (to end 2013)

Assistant clerk (to end 2014)

Cytûn International Affairs Committee - (to end 2013)

QCCIR – one vacancy (to end 2012)

Trustee – (to end 2014)

Editor of Calon – (to end 2014)

Cytûn Finance – (to end 2014)

One member Publications Committee – (to end 2014)

One member Arrangements Committee – (to end 2014)

2011.32 Gently and Generously, how we can share our Quaker story.

Alistair Fuller is the Quaker Life Outreach Development Officer and he has given us an inspiring talk on Outreach. Outreach is the possibility of allowing people the possibility of discovering Quakerism. We don't offer creeds, we offer a way of living. What draws someone into Quakerism? Usually it is from meeting Friends. Our great strength is that our lives are integrated, we live our faith.

Three useful questions are:

What drew me?

What held me?

What still holds me?

In the consideration of these questions we may be able to hold the door open long enough for people to find their way in.

We thank Alistair for giving his time so generously.

Julia Aspden
Clerk