



**Minutes of the Meeting held Saturday 24th October 2009
At Jubilee Hall, Llanelwedd**

09.26. Opening worship & Welcome

We are pleased to welcome 21 Friends here today, as listed on the attendance sheet. We are sorry to hear that our assistant clerk, Lynn Moseley, is unwell at present and send our good wishes for a speedy recovery.

The following Friends have been appointed by their area meetings to attend: North Wales: Jane Beaton (prevented) and Frank Brown; South Wales: Erica Hailstone and Malcolm Thomas; Mid-Wales: Dorothy Bell, Southern Marches: no representative appointed but Joyce Gee has agreed to report.

Part of the closing minute of Yearly Meeting Gathering 2009 has been read during our opening worship.

09.27. Calon and the Friend.

We appoint Rhian Parry (NW) to report on this meeting for "*The Friend*" and for "*Calon*".

09. 28 Matters arising from the last meeting

(i) We are but witnesses

We note the decision of yearly meeting concerning same sex marriage, which we discussed at our last meeting. We commend the booklet '*We are but witnesses*' which explains the decision.

(ii) Welsh Peace Institute

Wilma Walker and Jane Harries (SW) attended the meeting about setting up a Welsh Peace Institute/Academy. They inform us that a petition has been widely circulated in meetings in Wales by Welsh peace organisations (Cynefin and CND Wales). In addition, we have received a minute from Cardiff Local Meeting asking that MFW support this initiative. We ask the clerks to write giving our support. Jane and Wilma are prevented today but have agreed to keep us informed of developments

(iii) Air Training Corps Chaplaincy

The clerk wrote to the ATC chaplain as requested. He felt that further involvement in the chaplaincy was not appropriate in the circumstances

09.29 Arrangements 2010

Dates for 2010:

February 27: Glantwymyn (Cemmaes Road)

June 26: Activity Centre, Montgomery

October 30: Aberystwyth Meeting House

Arrangements Committee suggests that we have *Sustainability* as the main theme for the year, to be addressed in a variety of ways. We agree to this suggestion.

We would like to have a residential event in the south of Wales in 2010 if possible and ask for volunteers to organise this.

09.30 Outreach and Publications

(i) Outreach week

Jules Montgomery, our administrator, has reported that she has had a steady stream of requests for material for outreach this year and her stocks are running down. Meetings have used both of the current exhibitions. She has also been able to help meetings by suggesting that they contact other meetings nearby who have suitable material, which can be shared. Most meetings are requesting material that can be easily assembled and is eye catching rather than an exhibition that relies on the written word too heavily. She suggests that in these circumstances, it would be better to cancel the planned pull-up stands for now, and to re assess all that is available, what can be borrowed or obtained free from Friends House and to decide afresh what would help meetings, and how our financial resources can be used to support them. The situation is very different from what it was two years ago when the decision to have pull-up stands was made. The emphasis should be on having small, easily handled material. The money originally earmarked for the new boards could well be used to produce new bilingual materials. We ask nominations committee to bring the names of 2-3 Friends who can support Jules in this task, working with the co-clerk Deborah Rowlands and ask Deborah to draw up clear terms of reference for what they are asked to do, including the timescale for appointment.

(ii) Walk to York

Catherine James completed her walk to York to Yearly Meeting Gathering and was pleased to have Quaker company for part of the way. £600 has been collected and sent to the Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture.

(iii) Big Outreach conference

We hope to appoint someone to represent us at this conference, 22-24 January 2010. It would be helpful if this person could assist Jules Montgomery with the work on resources

(iv) Publications

Two new leaflets prepared by Publications Committee were ready for the National Eisteddfod this year: a new bilingual enquirers leaflet and a more substantial bilingual pamphlet on Quakers in Meirionnydd.

Publications Committee have brought a suggestion that the Quakers in Wales website should include a Quaker History section. We welcome this suggestion and ask Jules Montgomery, the administrator to work on this.

(v) Eisteddfod 2009

This year's National Eisteddfod was held in Bala and there was a Quaker presence in the tent all week. The two new leaflets and Advices and Queries were taken by a number of visitors, and there were interested enquiries from some of them, including discussion of the decision of Britain Yearly Meeting to celebrate same sex partnerships as marriage. Cytûn was present at the Urdd National Eisteddfod and at the Royal Welsh Show, and we had some literature there.

We have received a minute from Porthmadog Local Meeting suggesting that we think about extending our witness to other venues within the Eisteddfod, such as the Peace tent, so that more

people become aware of Quakers. The Quaker witness within the Cytûn Tent emphasises our work with other Christians. We ask our representatives to investigate how we might extend our outreach in other ways at the National Eisteddfod in the future. We could consider having a separate tent in the future. Holding a meeting for worship is a valuable form of outreach.

(vi) Eisteddfod 2010

The National Eisteddfod will be held on the old steel site at Ebbw Vale, 31st July – 7th August 2010. We ask Southern Marches, and/or South Wales Area Meeting to appoint someone to act as local coordinator. Ebbw Vale is close to both Abergavenny and Caerleon Meetings. Cytûn will also have a tent where we are represented at both the Urdd National Eisteddfod, to be held in Llanerchaeron, Ceredigion, 30th May – 5 June 2010 and at the Royal Welsh Show at Llanelwedd, July 19th – 22nd 2010. It is helpful to have Quakers there to answer questions raised by our literature, which will be there.

(vii) Website

The English language website is now almost completely operational and is being used as a resource for information for Friends as well as for Outreach. Jules Montgomery has now turned her attention to the Welsh language site and is developing it to complement the English language site.

09.31 Quaker Life Representative Council

We have considered a suggestion that it might be helpful to have an MFW representative on Quaker Life Representative Council. Quaker Life has responsibility for Outreach, which is one of the major parts of our remit. Liz Butler, who is the Quaker Life Representative from Mid Wales AM has offered to act as the joint representative for a trial period of one year and to report back on how useful this contact is. We ask Quaker Life to agree to this, and agree to pay half the costs of her attendance, including travel. We will review this at the end of 2010.

09.32. Cytûn matters

(i) Cytûn AGM

The South Korean Church has been accepted into category b membership of Cytûn, and the Cardiff Churches Together Bookshop and the Lightship in Cardiff have both become category c members of Cytûn.

Bob Fyffe, general secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, spoke of the financial situation, and the change of emphasis within CTBI. The result is a huge reduction, from 36 to 7.3, in central staff at CTBI. The offices have been given up, and the General Secretary works from home. There are now three strands of work, projects, networks and theology. Much work is done through the web.

(ii) Cytûn Financial arrangements

Cytûn will now be funded by direct contributions from individual churches. Britain Yearly Meeting will continue to provide our funding; the funding given to Cytûn and to ACTS is now a larger proportion of the total Quaker contribution to all the ecumenical bodies.

09.33 Memoranda of Understanding/Minute of agreement with area meetings in Wales, and the borders

Min 09.20 refers

The draft Minute of Agreement was sent to Mid Wales AM and to Southern Marches AM. We have not yet had any detailed comments from these area meetings themselves. However the whole document was discussed in detail by the meeting (held 22 September 2009) of clerks, and clerks of trustees, of all four area meetings which have local meetings within Wales, and a revised document was circulated.

We have received a minute from North Wales Trustees accepting the draft document but suggesting that it should be entitled: 'Guidelines for Interaction between Meeting of Friends in Wales, and Area Meetings'. We note this suggestion but feel that it does not convey sufficiently the clarity required in relationships between two charitable bodies with overlapping aims and responsibilities, like area meetings and Meeting of Friends in Wales.

We ask area meetings to endorse this current document, which we will send it out under its current title, and to work with it during 2010. Clerks of area meetings have asked to meet in autumn 2010. Area meetings should bring any suggested amendments to that meeting so that the document can guide our working together in 2011 and beyond.

09.34 Internal Organisational Changes

Further to minute 09.19 the clerks have drafted terms of reference for Meeting of Friends in Wales' committees and groups and sent them to those serving on current groups and committees. Comments and suggestions received have been carefully considered to produce revised documents, which have been before us today. We have had the opportunity to look at these and clarify any points

(i) General Principles

We agree with these principles to underpin our work together, with minor amendments. They are adapted from those which were agreed on setting up the subcommittee structure in November 2004.

(ii) Terms of reference for MFW subcommittees and groups

We agree the terms of reference of the following committees and groups

- Arrangements
- Nominations
- Publications
- Welsh Language Consultation Group

The first three are continuing groups.

(iii) Nominations. We ask nominations committee to bring names of Friends to serve on the Welsh Language Consultation Group, and to fill any gaps in the other three committees. We ask these committees and groups to begin their service in 2010 by considering, in consultation with the clerks, the general principles and their terms of reference carefully and bringing any suggested amendments to our February meeting.

09.35 Charitable registration and Trustees

We have recently received information from Quaker Stewardship Committee (QSC), which has been in touch with the Charity Commission about former General meetings and other Quaker bodies and their charitable status. It appears that MFW no longer falls within the criteria for excepted status and is required to register. Quaker Stewardship Committee has outlined the steps we will need to take before registration. These include adopting a governing document and appointing trustees with terms of reference approved by the meeting. Drafts have been prepared

for both these documents. We agree to lay down our employment committee and finance support group and appoint shadow trustees to consider carefully the drafts which have been prepared and, after consultation with QSC, bring back revised documents to our February meeting.

09.36 Nominations and appointments

(i) Release

Dafydd Jones has asked to be released from service on the employment committee. We thank him for his service and agree to release him.

(ii) Appointments

Nominations committee bring forward the following names to serve :

1. **Co Clerk:**
2. **Treasurer:**
3. **Publications Committee** – Barbara Prys Williams (convenor) to end 2012 (Second triennium).
4. **Arrangements Committee** -(SW) to end 2011(1st Triennium) Jane Beaton (NW) (1st Triennium). To end 2012
5. **Trustees:** Gethin Evans MW + 3-4 others
6. **Outreach resources working party**

Nominations will continue to search to fill the gaps; these can be appointed by the between meetings procedure

(iii) Nominations committee

The small search group appointed by Minute 09.17 (i) of our last meeting have brought the name of Liz Butler (MW) and Ros Morley (NW) to serve on nominations committee from 01.01.2010 – 31.12.12. Liz Butler will serve as their convenor. We agree to appoint these Friends to serve

(iv) Nomination as Governor of the Retreat

(Meeting for Sufferings appointment) Nominations committee has brought forward the name of Ann Boot (SW) for nomination to serve as governor of *The Retreat* for a three year period from 1.1.2010. We agree to forward this name to Central Nominations Committee.

09.37. Finance

(i) Grant for administration

We have been informed that the Meeting will receive the same grant for administration in 2010 as in 2009 (no cost of living increase in line with Friends House salaries). The Britain Yearly Meeting Trustees grants group will assess the grant on a yearly basis.

(ii) Budget

We ask the Treasurer to bring a budget to the next meeting based upon expenditure in 2009. We note that we expect to have three issues of Calon next year, but that the mailing to meetings for these will be combined with the normal mailings of information prior to each meeting of MFW, resulting in a saving of expenditure. We thank Dave Butler for his work in distributing Calon over the past six years.

09. 38. A Framework for action.

We have received some comments on *A Framework for Action* from Mid Wales area meeting. We welcome further comments from other area meetings, or where appropriate, local meetings, so that we can discuss this on a future occasion.

09.39 Book of Meetings.

The clerks have written requesting that Meeting of Friends in Wales is properly listed and indexed in the 2010 Book of Meetings.

09.40 Children and Young people's Work Advocates Group

We have received the notes of the meeting of Children and Young People's work advocates in Wales held 4th August 2009. We are pleased to hear that this network continues to be useful to those involved, and that a new CYP work advocate (Rachel Culyer) has been appointed for Mid Wales area meeting.

09.40 Gospel Principles and Society

Geraint Hopkins, the Cytûn Policy Officer, has introduced the subject of 'Gospel Principles and Society' and the churches' witness to the world.

He spoke of the positive Quaker attitude to social issues, and their central place in Quaker life and work.

Cytûn is committed to maintaining links with churches and with the media world, so that when churches are willing to speak out together they have a strong voice.

Cytûn has a good relationship with the Welsh Assembly and is able to contribute in a positive way – unlike the usual negative way of protesting.

Cytûn is a place of conversation and discussion between churches, even though the churches parted company down the ages. It works also through committees such as the International Committee which has a heavy focus on the Middle East. Jill Evans, member of the European Parliament, came to speak to them about Gaza, and they will be sending a delegation to the middle east. They have written to Sri Lanka, to protest against the subjugation of religious minorities. The 25th anniversary of Dolen Cymru (the link with Lesotho) will be celebrated next year.

The Racial Justice Committee, amongst other things, encourages the celebration of Racial Justice Sunday to raise awareness of the issues.

Cytûn also works closely with the Interfaith Council for Wales, wishing to build a society where all faiths can live in harmony. The Christian witness of Cytûn is in holding out the hand of friendship to other faiths. We must make a conscious choice between fear and hate, and hope, joy, love and tolerance.

The churches sometimes run behind the secular world, which has at times made great strides in the face of fierce opposition from churches – e.g. on human sexuality.

We do not explore openly enough the things which divide us, but Cytûn tries to focus on areas of agreement rather than on disagreement. Those within the ecumenical body do not usually get bogged down by difference, although we have to be mindful of it. Differences of belief and form of worship can mean that a variety of churches answers the needs of different people, but we need to simplify to have real understanding between us. What is important is the love of God.

The discussion following Geraint's talk was lively and wide-ranging, from theological aspects of working together to the impact the churches have on social issues.

*Deborah Rowlands
Catherine James,
Co clerks*