



## Minutes of the Meeting held Saturday 22 February 2014 at Montgomery

### 2014.01 *Opening Worship and Welcome*

Quaker faith & practice 23.12 has been read in our opening worship. We are pleased to welcome 31 Friends here today, as listed on the attendance sheet.

The following Friends have been appointed by their Area Meetings to attend:

- Mid Wales: Tom Brown
- North Wales: Angela Arnold, Frank Brown, Catherine James, Rhian Parry (Angela Burton – prevented)
- South Wales: Carolyn Sansom (prevented) – Lynn Moseley to report
- Southern Marches: Peter Hussey

Liz Butler and Margaret Clarke are our Elders today.

### 2014.02 *Calon and The Friend*

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

### 2014.03 **Report: Quaker Life Representative Council**

Liz Butler has reported on the Quaker Life Rep. Council held 18–20 October 2013. The title for the weekend was **Membership and Belonging**. Friends explored various aspects of Membership and its meaning; also the different processes of applying for Membership and being accepted into Membership.

Simon Best gave a talk on the history of membership (see the January issue of Quaker Voices 2014). He noted that in the early days of Quakerism anyone who attended meetings was considered a member, and therefore liable to persecution.

A group spent the free time on Saturday knitting part of a huge pink scarf. On 9 August 2014 it is to stretch between atomic weapons sites at Aldermaston and Burghfield, Berkshire, where nuclear weapons are stored. We thank Liz for this report.

### 2014.04 **Kindlers and Sufferings/AMs**

The Kindlers will present two workshops in the first half of this year – the first is in Llandrindod FMH (Saturday April 5<sup>th</sup>) for Friends from South Wales and Southern Marches. The topic for this event is **Laboratories of the Spirit: At home: In the meeting**. Speakers for this meeting will be Brian Holley, Emma Roberts and Alec Davison.

The second event will be held in the Ganllwyd Village Hall near Dolgellau (Saturday June 21<sup>st</sup>) for Friends from North Wales and Mid Wales AMs. The topic this time is **Fruits of the Spirit**. Speakers are David Bowgett and one other. Flyers will be sent out soon for the April event.

In the second half of 2014 there will be two **Sufferings Regional Gatherings** as part of the move to build links between AMs and Sufferings throughout BYM. They're aimed at anyone who wants to understand how Quakerism works. One event will be in North/Mid Wales on 18 October (venue still to be decided); the event in South Wales, serving SMAM and SWAM, will be on 22 November in Cardiff FMH.

### 2014.05 **Meeting for Sufferings**

Meeting for Sufferings on 7 December 2013 and 1 February 2014 considered a number of pressing issues, including the future of Swarthmoor Hall, education – a new concern from West Cumbria AM and Devon

AM, Meeting for Sufferings Regional Gatherings and Welfare Benefit Cuts. A minute was received from Sheffield & Balby AM concerning communication within meetings. The Advocacy Group was laid down and a report will be circulated to AMs. The new Parliamentary Liaison Officer explained the nature of her work and encourages Friends to contact her on political issues.

The **Possible revision of the Book of Discipline** was also discussed – the consultation period has now closed. This discussion was initiated by minutes from North Wales and Norfolk and Waveney AMs. The consultation was launched in June 2013 and closed on 30<sup>th</sup> November. A large number of meetings responded and it is clear that the question has been taken seriously. Four possible ways forward have been suggested.

- MfS feels the time is right for revision;
- MfS feels that a time of preparation is needed;
- MfS defers the decision;
- MfS feels no revision is needed at this time.

**Friends attending Yearly Meeting Gathering will need to come prepared for this as it is Yearly Meeting's decision whether or not to start a review.** AMs need to discuss this in some way before August.

Much of the discussion centred around the second half of Quaker faith & practice (Qf&p) – the social and testimonial aspect. It was felt that we, as a society, need to keep up-to-date with the moving on of our theology as we live it.

If Yearly Meeting agreed to revise Qf&p we hope that the process of revision will recognise the different voices of Quakerism throughout Britain. Welsh needs to be included in multiculturalism.

At our June meeting the main topic will now be the possible revision, which may lead to a minute being sent to Meeting for Sufferings. We thank David Butler for his report.

#### **2014.06 Israel/Palestine and Quakers in Wales**

Further to Minutes 2013.10, 2013.30 and 2013.44 we have heard from a few of the local meetings within Wales about their involvement with people working with groups and individuals in Israel/Palestine.

- As a result of a talk organised by Llanidloes Meeting and given by Jane Harries a group was set up which has grown into a very successful link between the Llanidloes and a village called As Sawiya.
- A meeting with Mark Michaels on the Israel-Palestine Question in Montgomery, with Jeff Beatty (Clerk) and Jan Arriens (Assistant Clerk), Southern Marches Area Quaker Meeting, was held on Thursday 15 August 2013. Area Meeting wanted to pursue any contacts that could be made with the Jewish Community in the area.
- John Butler of Porthmadoc Meeting provided more information about twinning websites: <http://www.twinningwithpalestine.net> and <http://www.camdenabudis.net/twinning.html>

At our last meeting Helen Porter spoke about the film *Two-Sided Story* and the newsletter from the **Bereaved Parents Forum**.

Donald Saunders reported on the work of the Conwy County Peace group and will send a full report which can be circulated.

Sue Shreeve has told us about the work of the Palestine Solidarity campaign and will send details.

Lynn Moseley, with a group of five others, visited the Reform Synagogue in Cardiff. She also gave us details of a book by **Shlomo Sand – *The Invention of the Jewish People***. Details for all these contributions to our discussion will be on the email to be circulated to everyone who signed up for this.

#### **2014.07 *Living the Quaker Way, Woodbrooke on the Road* – Gill Pennington, Swansea, 16:11:13**

'Being together in community' was the title of this final workshop in the Woodbrooke on the Road / Meeting of Friends in Wales collaboration. Gill drew upon the Myers-Brigg model of personality types or preferences, introducing the participants to four main dimensions – extraversion versus introversion, sensing v intuition, thinking v feeling and judging v perception.

The main lesson of the day was the need for mutual acceptance: different approaches are not right or wrong but complementary. Everybody enjoyed the day and thanked Gill warmly. We thank David Harries for this report.

**2014.08 QCEA Conference in Brussels on Economic Justice in Europe**

Peter Hussey has reported to us on the QCEA meeting in Brussels 15–17 November, 2013. Representatives from our area meetings, Angela Burton, Stevie Krayner and Peter Hussey attended this conference and their reports to their AMs are available.

Peter has described the modern economics of developed countries, including trade agreements. The entrenched edifice of the global structure is terrifying, but our Friends came away determined to bring about change.

We are encouraged to arrange a speaker from QCEA to address us at a future MFW, and to prepare ourselves via the QCEA briefings on their website in time for the European elections in May.

**2014.09 *Tua'r Tarddiad* and *Towards the Source* book launch**

Rhian Parry, Catherine James and Deborah Rowlands have introduced the two books being launched – *Tua'r Tarddiad* and *Towards the Source*. Creating the DVD and the two books has been a spiritual exercise; reading all the submitted pieces was a real privilege. There is so much variety in the book that everyone will find something. One copy of each book is on its way to each local meeting in Wales,

It is essential that we are able to worship in a language that is natural to us. Therefore the books share the voices of contemporary Friends in their own language. We also hear the voices of Friends from the early days of Quakerism. We think they would celebrate with us today.

We would like to bring this work to the attention of Friends at the Yearly Meeting Gathering in August and we authorise our clerk, together with the editors, to explore the means of doing this.

Deborah has reported on the financial aspects; the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust has provided sufficient finance to enable the books to be sent by post to every secondary school and every country library in Wales.

We thank everyone who has contributed to the production of these books, in particular the editors.

**2014.10 Jamie Wrench – Restorative Justice**

We considered why we have prisons, what they are for, and what ideally they could be for. The political assumption is that harsh punishment works. We felt that prison should provide education, training and treatment, aiming to change individuals. Rehabilitation and integration into society would be a good aim. Our thoughts shown below represent the ideas on what prisons are for and what they should be for.

<b>What is Prison for?</b>	<b>What should prison be for</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection of the public</li> <li>• Punishment – retribution / vengeance</li> <li>• Easy disposal</li> <li>• Social control</li> <li>• Deterrence</li> <li>• Cost-effective control</li> <li>• Fulfilment of law</li> <li>• Rehabilitation</li> <li>• Setting an example</li> <li>• Private enterprise – employment</li> <li>• Paying back</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education )</li> <li>• Reform ) change</li> <li>• Affirmative )</li> <li>• Short shock</li> <li>• Protection of public</li> <li>• Training for life</li> <li>• Treatment</li> <li>• Recognising Victims</li> </ul>

We have greatly appreciated this discussion and we thank Jamie.

## 2014.11 Trustees and Finance:

Our trustees have approved the 2013 annual report and the treasurer has presented the accounts to trustees.

During 2013 our day-to-day expenditure was higher than our income, producing a deficit of £1,568.32. Our general fund surplus was thus reduced to £8,143.78, which still conforms to financial regulations as it is greater than the grant from BYM. This takes into account our decision to transfer the Roberts legacy of £1,000 to the Digital Voices Restricted Fund, a further £1,000 from the Literature fund and £500 from the General Fund.

We note that trustees have agreed to lay down the John Roberts legacy fund, the designated bursary fund, a small restricted bursary fund and the restricted literature fund.

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The minute is to note the decision as the matter is within the Trustees' terms of reference.

The total balance of funds at year end was £23,639.79, the bulk of this being unspent funds accumulated in the JRCT funded books project (£10,073.70) and Digital Voices restricted fund (£5,020.00) The balance sheet shows a cash balance in the bank at year end of £21,370.79, an unpaid cheque of £531.00 and a debtor amount of £2,800.

## 2014 Budget

Current demands on the general fund mean that a tightly controlled break even budget is required. We will ask area meetings to increase their contributions by 5% this year as these have not changed since 2009.

The BYM grant has increased this year to £6,600. We hope to contain our expenditure to £8851.00.

To achieve this we recommend the following change in our current funding arrangements:

- We should restrict the number of membership books we pay for and distribute free to Friends. These should be restricted to essential users such as clerks and other office holders who are required to communicate across all Meeting in Wales as part of their work. If possible this decision should take effect immediately.
- Our contact list editors should advise meetings that personal books need to be paid for.

We hope MFW trustees will meet with AM trustees reasonably soon to discuss ways of funding the work of MFW. We ask our clerk of trustees to organise this meeting.

**Cheque signatories:** We authorise any two of Ros Morley, Lynn Moseley and Jenny Sen to sign cheques on behalf of Meeting of Friends in Wales.

## 2014.12 National Eisteddfod in Llanelli

Theresa Haine attended the initial Cytûn meeting in preparation for the Churches Tent at the National Eisteddfod in Llanelli 1–9 August 2014. The group are still looking for suggestions for a theme for the week. South Wales Area Meeting has appointed Carey Thomas and John Lewis, both of Swansea Local Meeting, as representatives to work with Cytûn in Llanelli this year.

## 2014.13 Minute from North Wales Area Meeting

We have received the following minute from North Wales Area Meeting:

**Minute 2014/13:** Frances Voelcker has reported on **Meeting for Sufferings** held 7<sup>th</sup> December. We thank Frances for her report which will be filed with these minutes and sent to all Meetings. We realise that we need to note the educational policies of the Welsh Assembly Government and their effects on Welsh children. We send this minute to Meeting of Friends in Wales.

This minute was forwarded to the Wales Focus Group for their consideration. Their reply is as follows:

“We have considered the minute from North Wales Area Meeting concerning educational policies in Wales and agree that Friends need to be vigilant concerning the educational policies of the Welsh Government. In this instance the minute from North Wales is general and makes it difficult for us to advise, other than that Meeting of Friends in Wales should respond where policies are at variance with our faith and practice.

December last year Sufferings considered a minute from West Cumbria Area Meeting on Values in Education which minuted their concerns as it related to England.

The discussion at Sufferings, and their minute, was not however restricted to policies in England and is applicable everywhere since what we as Quakers should do is to be supportive of the values underpinning our educational systems. We can and do unite with minute S/13/12/10 of Sufferings.”

At this time our sister Churches in Wales, through CYTUN, are not currently focusing on education as a matter of concern, but should this change then we as Friends should be ready to participate in any such discussions. We will send this minute to NWAM.

### **2014.14 Digital Voices Project**

We have received a flyer from the Digital Voices Project; local meetings will be receiving this shortly. The DVDs will be distributed to all schools in Wales in March this year. A BBC Radio Wales programme will be recorded in March – Donald Saunders and Catherine James have contributed to the DVD.

### **2014.15 Report from Cytûn Meeting 10 February 2014**

There were reports from the World Council of Churches meeting in Busan, Korea which focused on Justice and Peace, from Christians against Torture, and from Living room Cardiff which is doing pioneering work supporting people with addictions. Cathrin Daniel, from Christian Aid told the meeting about her recent trip to the Israel/Palestine. She also spoke about her engagement with the Welsh Government on the forthcoming Sustainable Development Bill and more broadly on Tax Justice issues. This coming year Christian Aid week's focus will be on War and Peace-building.

All churches are invited to make comments on the first draft of the Workplan for 2014–15; on this occasion the plan links activity with costs, showing how membership of Cytûn provides substantial cost benefits. Cytûn is working towards a balanced budget in 2015 – expenditure over the last few years has been substantially influenced by *the Gathering*, a bold initiative towards closer unity amongst the group of the Covenanted Churches in Wales, and by the change in funding arrangements between Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) and the National Instruments.

### **2014.16 Nominations and Appointments**

#### **Between Meetings appointments**

Jenny Sen to serve as assistant clerk to 31 December 2014

Christine Trevett to serve as our representative on the Cytûn Commission for Wales: A Moral Society?

Rohan Lewis and Millie Stein to attend the Cytûn Annual General Meeting on 11 June 2014 at the Priory Centre in Abergavenny.

#### **Nominations are sought for the next triennium**

Co-clerk from January 2015 to December 2017

**or** assistant clerk from January 2015 to December 2015

**Following Minute 2013.16:** Three or four Friends for the Project Board (possibly drawing from current members of Publications Committee and Poster Committee)

(a) to December 2015

(b) to December 2016

**Appointment sought:** Kate Binney will stand down from her post as CYPC Work Advocate Support person after she gives her report at Meeting of Friends in Wales on 28 June. This post is appointed by Children and Young People's Section in Friends House. We ask nominations committee to suggest a name to offer to CYPs.

*Ros Morley (clerk)*