



Minutes of the Meeting held Saturday 28 June 2014 at Abergavenny

2014.17 Opening Worship and Welcome

27.25 from Qf&p, by John Punshon, has been read in our opening worship. We are pleased to welcome 39 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: Catherine James, Catherine Farrel, Frances Voelcker
- South Wales: Carolyn Sansom
- Southern Marches: David and Kate Binney

Gill Branch and Hilary Beynon are our elders today.

2014.18 Calon and The Friend

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

2014.19 Report: Quaker Life Representative Council

We have heard Liz Butler's report from Quaker Life Representative Council 4th–6th April 2014. The topic was Developing Quaker Community. Participants were asked in advance to choose the workshops they wished to attend – Liz chose Worship and Ministry as her own meeting was usually silent apart from occasional *Advices & queries*. Others in that group were mostly from silent meetings although in one the ministry verged on discussion. Eldering is sometimes necessary and new Friends need to be aware of what is acceptable. Preparation for meeting is important.

Liz also chose Prayer and Spiritual Practice and Friends discussed what is meant by prayer and different ways of praying. Resources are available to help our spiritual practices, including *Deepening the Life of the Spirit* developed by Ginny Wall which introduces a variety of different practices.

Most importantly Friends shared their stories and listened to each other, giving each other support and ideas in a loving, vibrant, deeply spiritual and fun Quaker way. By sharing what works well we can grow in our communities.

One of the many publications discussed in the resources session was *Sharing our Meetings' Stories*, a report based on stories of a broad cross-section of Quaker Meetings in Britain, which gives an insight into the life of meetings today. They show the things that nourish our meetings and deepen and strengthen our communities.

Quaker Life Representative Council provides a link between our Area Meetings and Quaker Life Central Committee with an aim of developing and enriching our Quaker community. **We will send this report to all meetings as the resources are both helpful and interesting.** We thank Liz for sending this very inspiring report.

2014.20 Kindlers and Sufferings Regional Days

The Kindlers have presented two workshops in Wales this year – the first was in Llandrindod FMH (Saturday April 5th) for Friends from South Wales and Southern Marches. The topic for this event was **Laboratories of the Spirit: At home: In the meeting.** The speakers were Brian Holley, Emma Roberts and Alec Davison. Julia Lim's report has been read, and forwarded to the Kindlers.

The second event was held on Saturday June 21st in the Ganllwyd Village Hall near Dolgellau for Friends from North Wales and Mid Wales AMs. The topic this time was **Fruits of the Spirit.** Speakers were David Bowgett and Alec Davison. Jean Campbell Leith's report has been read.

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. The North/Mid Wales event is on 18 October in the Glantwymyn Community Hall (Cemmaes Road); the South/Southern Marches event will be on 22 November in Cardiff FMH. **Flyers will be sent out shortly.**

What next

Our treasurer has shared that these events do involve some costs. Woodbrooke-on-the-Road in particular was expensive, and the Kindlers in North/Mid Wales was expensive because of a high rent for the hall. We are reminded that prior to Woodbrooke-on-the-Road Meeting of Friends in Wales held residential weekends to provide spiritual nurture. Residential weekends are all-age events and therefore Young Friends are encouraged to attend other meetings. Perhaps it is time for a further residential event. Frances Voelcker, convenor of arrangements committee, will discuss with colleagues on the committee the possibility of a residential gathering. A theme could be sustainability. We ask arrangements committee to report back to our October meeting.

2014.21 Meeting for Sufferings

Meeting for Sufferings on 7 June 2014 considered a number of issues, including a draft plan from the Long Term Framework Group – Friends will be invited to participate in the consultation – Area Meetings are asked to consider the questions:

- a. What do Quakers hold in common?
- b. What principles and processes make our work "Quaker" to us and to others?
- c. What national structures would enable your meeting to flourish?
- d. What is your 5-year vision for your local meeting, and for Quakers in Britain and for the world?

Gloucester AM has sent a minute regarding the current situation in Ukraine. The Annual Meeting of Friends World Committee for Consultation – Europe and Middle East Section considered the situation in Eastern Europe and agreed to uphold and encourage the concern of Misha Roshchin of Moscow Monthly Meeting and Roland Rand of Tallin Worship Group to visit Eastern Ukraine. A support group has been formed. Friends are encouraged to support this concern, both prayerfully and financially.

Friends heard from Sarah Coote about the Quaker Council for European Affairs; the main areas of work are peace, the EU relationship with Israel and Palestine, human rights, criminal justice and sustainability. In particular Sarah spoke about the work QCEA is doing on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), and Friends are asked to familiarise themselves with this.

Minute 36 (Canterbury) Commitment Group lays down its work at Yearly Meeting this year. A strategy document has been produced, 'Recommendations for Action – becoming a low carbon sustainable community'. The group has identified the need for leadership and oversight, to ensure that Quakers in Britain continue, and build on, the progress already made and MFS gave its support to the next stage of the work.

Minutes were received from several AMs about fracking, moving forward on sustainability, assisted dying and end of life care, education, Quaker Concern for the Abolition of Torture and the recent statement on Economic Inequality.

Central nominations committee has asked for suggestions of ways in which Young Friends could be involved in the nominations process. Friends, we need to be adventurous in our thinking about nominations! We thank David Butler for his report.

2014.22 Israel/Palestine and Quakers in Wales

We have received the following minute from Colwyn Bay Meeting:

We ask Meeting of Friends in Wales to consider whether it would be helpful to set up a network of Quakers in Wales who would like to form links of friendship with Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and Gaza.

We feel it is important to improve support for Palestine and Jewish groups working for peace in Israel. This network could be in the form of emails and websites. Local meetings might consider setting up a group similar to that in Llanidloes. South Wales Area Meeting has several Ecumenical Accompaniers and we hope that more Friends could volunteer, and we remind Friends that the Ecumenical Accompaniers are happy to visit area/local meetings to speak of their experiences in the Occupied Territories.

We ask the clerk to include in this minute the list of Israeli Peace Groups.

2014.23 Children & Young Peoples Work Advocates' report

CYP Advocates are in place for all of our area meetings, working with local meetings to promote the inclusion of children and young people in our worship and witness at local and area meetings level.

In North Wales Angela has been active in developing Safeguarding in the area meeting and has been working with the co-ordinator to achieve this; they organised a training day in February. Colwyn Bay hosted a workshop in February helping Friends to be prepared for a young newcomer in meeting.

In Mid-Wales there are still few children in meetings. Veronica has organised Safeguarding training for all local meetings. The area meeting is involved with peace education works with Resolve Cymru in local schools which will promote conflict resolution. Plans are in place to show the film *Joyeux Noel* in schools as part of WW1 commemoration.

Claire has been successful in getting active, keen new members on to the Children and Young People's Committee in South Wales. All Age Worship was held at both Penarth and Cardiff and families from Swansea and Cardiff are meeting up at Penarth up this month. Cardiff meeting has just hosted a successful workshop on 'Being ready for children who come to meeting'. One young Friend attended the Tall Ship Event in April for a five night adventure ending in Liverpool.

Southern Marches Area Meeting held a residential weekend at The Pioneer Centre in February and for the first time it was all-age. The Young Friends played an important part in the spiritual life of the weekend and led an epilogue. Several meetings have well attended Children's Meetings and Young Friends now attend all our area meetings with their own activities. AM Camp continues to attract many families from a wide area. Sarah has been active in all these areas and the committee now want to update themselves on the recent changes in Safeguarding.

We thank our CYP Advocates and Safeguarding officers for their continued commitment to the task. We thank Kate Binney for this report and for the many years she has served as support person to the CYP's Work Advocates.

2014.24 *Tua'r Tarddiad/Towards the Source*

Catherine James has spoken to us about the progress of *Tua'r Cymru/Towards the Source*. Books are in libraries and secondary schools throughout Wales. Sales are moving well but the books are mainly read by Quakers. We need to think about outreach in order to widen our readership. There will be a workshop at Yearly Meeting Gathering in Bath and help would be appreciated. Please contact Catherine if you will be at Yearly Meeting and can help. Also Friends are asked if they can place copies in local bookshops – again please contact Catherine if you are able to do this.

2014.25 *NATO Summit in Wales*

Aled Edwards – of Cytûn has forwarded to Meeting of Friends in Wales a request from Adam Johannes, Secretary of Cardiff Stop the War Coalition and committee member of the No NATO Newport Group. The No NATO Newport Group hope that churches within Cytûn will put their names to the letter. This request was been sent to all meetings in Wales.

Aberystwyth meeting felt that this statement from Newport was rather diffuse and without clear direction, did not wish us to sign the letter but hope that *'a statement of protest will be forthcoming from Meeting of Friends in Wales'*. Mold Meeting could not endorse the statement either but did agree that war is the enemy of the poor, but suggested the statement should rather say that war is the enemy of all mankind, including those who instigate it. They feel that poverty in Britain has arisen from mismanagement of resources by financial institutions and they finish by saying *'We are mindful of the advice not to "allow the strength of your convictions to betray you into making statements or allegations that are unfair or untrue".'*

We are uncomfortable with the language of the statement, and decide against signing it. We ask our clerk to make our reasons known to Aled Edwards and Adam Johannes.

We need to make our own statements which say what Quakerism is for. We also should consider what our presence should be at this event. Quakers are for peace, and peace vigils are a good way of making our views known.

2014.26 *National Service of Commemoration 4 August / Vigil of Remembrance 12–13 September*

A number of Friends in Wales have received an invitation to attend the National Service of Commemoration in Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff on 4 August. We have heard different views about this matter. If we feel uncomfortable being there we shouldn't go – but perhaps we should go because we feel uncomfortable.

We feel it is right for us to have a presence at this this service. Maryse Newnham has offered to do this on our behalf and we thank her for this. **We hope that Maryse is supported by us all, and in particular by Bridgend Friends.**

Cymdeithas Y Cymod will hold a National Vigil of Remembrance (and repentance) on 12-13 September and invite as many people as possible. It will take place at Llanbedr Airfield near Harlech.

2014.27 *Treasurer's Matters*

We have heard a report from our Treasurer about the financial position at the end of the first six months of this year. The budget for the year was set very tightly as our reserves were reduced because of the transfer of funds to support the Voices of Conscience project.

The results for the first six months are satisfactory in that we have contained expenditure within budget so far. Moreover, the JRCT book project having come to an end, it is gratifying that expenditure is being contained within the original budget and that sales of the books are going well, producing an income of over £2,000 to date with further sales anticipated at Yearly Meeting Gathering in Bath and the National Eisteddfod in Llanelli in August. The contingency of £1,000 budgeted for this project has not yet been spent.

It has however become urgent to resolve a problem with our administrator's computer, which has reached the end of its useful life. This problem has delayed the upgrading of our bilingual website, which is linked to the outreach strategy of which the book publications are a part.

In the light of the fact that the sum allocated to the website remains unspent in the 2014 budget at half year and that additional funds are available from the books project, trustees have recommended an adjustment to the budget to provide for the replacement of the computer. We accept this recommendation.

2014.28 *Considering the possible revision of Qf&p – and what it means to be a Quaker in Wales today*

Frances Voelcker has led us through a journey discussing culture and place, following three readings from *Tua'r Cymru/Towards the Source*. What is important to us about living in Wales? We shared in groups – the outcome of our sharing is attached.

Should Yearly Meeting decide to revise the Books of Discipline we would hope that some of the qualities that have emerged in the preparation of *Tua'r Cymru/Towards the Source* should be included in *Quaker faith & practice*. This might also be the impetus for including contributions from other languages and groups.

2014.29 *The Royal Welsh Show 2014*

John and Bridget Senior will be at the Royal Welsh this year. It may be necessary to find help at short notice.

National Eisteddfod in Llanelli

Friends' presence at the 2014 Eisteddfod in Llanelli is being coordinated by John Lewis and Carey Thomas. Friends will have responsibility for the Quiet Corner. A peace meditation will be held on Sunday 3 August with readings from the Voices of Conscience project DVD. On Hiroshima day (Wednesday 6 August) there will be a debate on war and peace, coordinated by Emyr Gwyn Evans.

We agree to pay the sum of £95 for a second coordinator ticket.

Friends are encouraged to sign the volunteers' rota for the Churches Together tent and/or to contact John or Carey about willingness to help.

We are concerned that Yearly Meeting Gathering clashes with the Eisteddfod yet again. We will put this on our October agenda and from that meeting we will send a minute to Meeting for Sufferings.

2014.30 *Report from Cytûn Meeting AGM*

Our representatives Rohan Lewis and Millie Stein found the meeting very welcoming.

It was good to hear that Cardiff has now become a City of Sanctuary, and that a Faith Tourism Action Plan will look after the 3.5 million tourists who visit places of worship in Wales. It is also encouraging that 52 per cent of churches are now open to the public. Sadly both the Lightship in Cardiff Bay and Christians Against Torture are to close due to lack of funds.

Other business covered the success of the 'If' campaign, work in El Salvador, Columbia, South Sudan and Iraq, and help for the people made homeless following the November 2013 typhoon in the Philippines which killed 5000 people. Christian Aid week is the main source of income for this work. We thank Rohan for this report.

2014.31 Dates for 2015/2016

Bold = confirmed *Italics* = provisional

21 February 2015 in *Dolgellau* – Speaker **Ben Pink Dandelion**

27 June 2015 in *Lampeter*

24 October 2015 in *Welshpool*

27 February 2016 *Machynlleth*

25 June 2016 *Pales*

22 October 2016 *Llanidloes*

Possible future speakers – QCEA

We confirm the October 2014 meeting will be 25 October in Aberystwyth – Speaker Gerald Hewitson.

2014.32 Nominations and Appointments

Between Meetings appointments

Christine Trevett was appointed to attend the Annual Assembly of the Undeb Yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg at Bridgend on 26 June 2014.

Nominations are sought for the next triennium

Co-clerk to December 2016

One member of arrangements committee from January 2015 to December 2017

Calon editor from January 2015 to December 2017

To serve from January 2015 to December 2015

Assistant clerk

Following Minute 2013.16

Nominations committee have brought forward the names of the following Friends to serve on the Project Group

to December 2015: Roger Holloway, Ros Morley

to December 2016: Rhian Parry.

These names being acceptable, they are appointed.

Nominations Committee has brought forward the name of Chris Holmquist to serve as CYPC Work Advocate Support person. The clerk will send this name to the Children and Young People's Section in Friends House.

Ros Morley (clerk)

Jenny Sen (assistant clerk)