



Minutes of the Meeting held on Saturday 27 June 2015 at Lampeter

2015.15 Opening worship and welcome

Qf&p 24.44 and the final section of 24.49 has been read in our opening worship. We have welcomed 28 Friends to this Meeting, as listed on the attendance sheet.

The following Friends were appointed by their Area Meetings to attend:

Mid Wales: Dorothy Bell

North Wales: Catherine James and Frances Voelcker

Southern Marches: Stevie Krayner

South Wales: Julia Lim

Our elders today are Catherine James and Liz McDermott

2015.16 *Calon and The Friend*

Hilary Beynon has agreed to write about this Meeting for *Calon*, and Christine Trevett has agreed to write for *The Friend*.

2015.17 MFW Residential weekend, at Ceinws, nr Machynlleth

We have received Mike Clark's report of the Residential Weekend at The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT), Ceinws from 27 February to 1 March 2015. The conference looked at the way in which the increasing waste of resources is causing increasing destruction of the land around us and exhaustion of irreplaceable resources. It asked how the current economic system is supporting this, what our vision is of a just and sustainable world and what steps could be taken to achieve this.

At the end of the conference Friends shared with a partner something they might do to lessen their impact of the environment. We hope that those attending might bring to our meeting next February how they feel they have kept to this commitment.

Friends here today discussed the use of fuel used in attending conferences and meetings. We can consider the use of trains, as well as the use of modern technology.

Martin Hughes has shared further comments of this residential weekend. We thank Martin and Mike for these reports.

2015.18 Reports from:

i) CYTÛN Report on Meeting June 2015

Deborah Rowlands reported on the CYTÛN Meeting on 4 June with the title: 'What you did for the least of my brethren, you did for me'. The plight of the destitute refugees in the Mediterranean was brought to the churches' attention. CYTÛN understands itself as a forum to share stories and theological views, thereby creating unity not only amongst Christian churches, but also as secretariat for the Interfaith Council of Wales. We thank Deborah for her report.

ii) Advocacy Meeting at Pales – 1 June 2015

In response to our engagement with CYTÛN and its concerns around the 2016 elections to the Wales Assembly and the policies which churches would like to advocate, Deborah, the clerks' team and MFW's Wales Focus Group, plus a representative from the arrangements group, met with Jane Dawson from Friends House to consider matters of advocacy and how Friends as a body deal with it. Deborah has reported on that meeting.

The new CYTÛN Policy Officer, Gethin Rhys, has set up regular meetings where the Social Policy Officers of churches and representatives of relevant other bodies can come together to exchange information about their active concerns and hear about imminent or forthcoming legislation.

We ask our nominations committee to find a Friend to represent us at Meetings of the Church Policy Officers.

We need a strategy which should be broad enough to define what is relevant to Wales and what isn't. ***We agreed to set up a workshop on 19 September, in Aberystwyth Meeting House for anyone who wants to attend.*** We have invited Gethin Rhys (CYTÛN) and Jessica Metherringham (BYM Parliamentary Engagement Officer) to support this event, along with Elizabeth Allen from the General Meeting for Scotland Parliamentary Function Group. The workshop could have the title: '**A Vision for Wales**'. Apart from making it a learning initiative about Assembly politics, it could try to compile something like a Manifesto for a Better Welsh Society, based on Quaker values, to help the Focus Group set its agenda for the next few years. We hope that all AMs and LMs will appoint Friends to attend this meeting.

We ask the Friends who were present at the Advocacy Meeting on 1 June to agree to be the organising group, along with the clerks.

2015.19 Minute to Yearly Meeting Gathering Agenda Committee

With increasing devolution to Scotland and to Wales, it is important that Britain Yearly Meeting is clear that it is not speaking for the whole of Great Britain when, inadvertently, publications, activities of centrally managed work, or statements ignore the reality in the devolved nations. We agree to send this minute to the agenda committee suggesting that an item at a future Yearly Meeting should discuss the effects of devolution on the Society of Friends.

We agree to send this minute to Agenda Committee.

2015.20 Outreach Matters

i. CYTŪN Quaker presence at the Royal Welsh Show, Llanelwedd, 2015

Gill Branch and Christine Lewis will be looking after the show at Llanelwedd 20–23 July. We look forward to hearing from them after the event.

ii. Quaker presence at the National Eisteddfod, Meifod, 2015

Our administrator has sent forms to local meetings inviting volunteers for the week's activities and is currently making arrangements for necessary resources to be delivered to the organisers.

Alan and Cynthia Rowland are hoping to receive more volunteers to help during the Eisteddfod week – we hope more Friends will make offers of help.

Dolobran Meeting House is close to the Eisteddfod field and a walk will be arranged from the CYTŪN tent to the Meeting House, where participants will be able to hear some of the Quaker history and hold a meeting for worship. Accommodation is possible near to the Meeting House at a cost of £20 per night. Times and directions will be put on the website about the walk and the accommodation.

2015.21 Report on Quaker Life Representative Council

We have heard Angela Ormond's report Quaker Life Representative Council, 17–19 April 2015, that looked at a 'spirit-led approach to conflict in our Quaker communities'. Izzy Cartright of QPSW gave an address about conflict in meetings, which will be distributed to all local meetings. The play '*Red Flag Over Bermondsey*' was performed, that told of the work of the Quaker Ada Salter in her community and family. We were made aware that the new resource 'Being Friends Together' is now available online which invites meetings to subscribe for an annual fee of £35, for which all members of that meeting can have access. We thank Angela for this report.

2015.22 Report on Meeting for Sufferings, March 2015

We have received Dave Butler's report on Meeting for Suffering held at Friends House 28 March 2015. Q-CAT is at present developing a workshop at Yearly Meeting to get Friends thinking about the abhorrence and illegality of torture. The destitution of Asylum Seekers was a grave concern. Quaker Asylum and Refugee Network will develop a public statement helping local Friends raise awareness about this issue. Examples were heard of how Friends locally are strengthening the bonds of friendship with Muslim communities to alleviate Islamophobia. We thank Dave for his report.

This was Dave's last Sufferings as our representative, although he continues as Alternate for Mid-Wales AM. We thank him for his service over the years.

2015.23 Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations report

We have received Martin Plant's report on the Quaker Committee for Christian and Interfaith Relations (QCCIR). This committee has worked mainly on the three themes of: Inter-faith work with our Muslim friends, World Council of Church's (WCC) paper 'The Church –Towards a Common Vision', and Theism and Non-Theism. The increasing need of cooperation with Muslims was emphasised, in the light of attempts to equate Islam with terrorism. The WCC paper invites us to grow in communion and to work together for peace and justice in the world. The committee sees its role in being a possible forum for Quakers to voice their honest beliefs and spiritual insights about a non-theistic approach.

This was Martin's last QCCIR meeting as our representative. We thank him for this report and for his service.

2015.24 C&YP Work Advocates – report of Support Friend

Chris Holmquist has offered a flavour of Friends' work in Wales with children and young people and he recommends that we take heart from it. From regular work with children and all-age worship in some meetings through hope to initiate in North Wales the 'Godly Play' technique of storytelling and reflection, to giving encouragement to Young Friends to participate in leadership programmes, he showed us what was happening in Wales. Resources and training are available for those who work with children and young people and the fact that DBS checks are getting faster and less burdensome should be encouragement to Friends to participate in this work. The whole meeting bears responsibility for the young. We thank Chris for this report.

2015.25 Trustees and Finance matters

Our Clerk of Trustees, Frank Brown, informs us that the Trustees Annual Return has been submitted to the Charity Commission, and the Annual Report is available on the MFW website, or for paper copies, from Jules Montgomery, our administrator. This is compliant with the requirements of charity legislation.

2015.26 Speaker – Alexandra Bosbeer – Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA)

Alexandra Bosbeer of QCEA shared with us what the Quaker voice in Brussels has been saying at European Union (EU) level. QCEA is not under the arm of any Yearly Meeting and has representatives from YMs across Europe.

She invited us to suggest what the EU should be doing for peace today and for human wellbeing. Through QCEA's 'Action Alerts', she reminded us, Friends can gain information and pointers to action they might want to participate in.

Staff at QCEA are always happy to help with any enquiries. We thank Alexandra for sharing with us today.

2015.27 Cymru'n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914–1918

Alan Armstrong has sent us his report of recent meetings. The focus of attention this year is on Gallipoli, a campaign in which the Welsh regiments were heavily involved.

We heard about the 'pals battalion' from the quarry town of Penmaenmawr, dubbed the 'Quarry Boys,' which went into action at Sulva on 10 August 1915 – an exhibition is being held at the Penmaenmawr Museum on 8 and 9 August, as well as a commemorative event. We thank Alan for his report.

2015.28 Wales and peace issues

Jane Harries has given us an update about the initiatives in Wales concerned about Peace. Wales for Peace is a coalition of nine partners, such as the universities of Cardiff and Aberystwyth, the National Museum, the Urdd and others who want to collect the hidden history of peace makers and inspire and engage people. This project is funded by the National Lottery, which is of concern to Friends.

2015.29 Meeting of Friends in Wales and Lottery Funded Projects

From time to time clerks are asked that MFW should show solidarity with, or be in partnership with, projects of various kinds. Sometimes it seems clear that these are causes with which Friends would have sympathy, indeed individual Friends may be involved with them. The Wales for Peace project is a recent example. They may also be lottery funded and other Friends might find that a stumbling block to aligning MFW with whatever project it might be. The fact is that so much of philanthropic, heritage and other work is now dependent on lottery funding.

We have found this a difficult discussion; we are reminded that much in our lives links to gambling in some way. Does the Lottery put our integrity into question? We are reminded of the importance of discernment and that we, as Friends, can campaign against gambling.

This meeting has agreed that the clerks should bring each issue forward on a case to case basis when there is time to do so, and should consult when time is short and report back to the next meeting.

2015.30 Future MFW Meetings

24 October 2015 Welshpool – *Naseer Arafat, Palestinian architect*

In 2016 meetings will be as follows:

27 February *Machynlleth*, Marilyn & Alan Thomas, City of Sanctuary

25 June at *Pales*, Sophie Gilliat-Ray, Muslims and Britain/Wales

22 October *Llanidloes*, Carolyn Sansom, Mental Health

We thank the arrangements committee for their planning.

2015.31 Nominations and Appointments

i. Appointments made between Meetings

- A Friend to serve on Nominations Committee, immediately and to and to 31/12/2016 – **Julia Lim**
- A Friend to represent Meeting of Friends in Wales on 2 July at the Undeb Yr Annibynwyr Cymraeg Annual Assembly Welcome Tea at Nant Gwrtheyrn – **Bethan Wyn**
- Two Friends to provide Quaker presence in ecumenical work at the Royal Welsh Show, Llanelwedd – **Gill Branch and Christine Lewis**

ii Nominations received

- Treasurer of MFW 01/01/2016–31/12/2018 – **Martin Hughes**
Our nomination committee has brought forward the name of Martin Hughes to serve as treasurer for three years from 01/01/2016. This name being acceptable, and the Friend willing to serve, he is appointed.

iii Nominations sought

- A Friend to serve on Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations, immediately and to 30 April 2018
- A Friend to attend the Joint Quaker Peace and Social Witness and Quaker Committee for Christian & Interfaith Relations, 26 September 2015
- A Friend to serve on Arrangements Committee, immediately and to 31/12/2017
- A Friend to serve on Arrangements Committee to 31/12/2018
- A Friend to serve on the Resources Group, immediately and to 31/12/2016
- A Young Friend to serve on Focus Group (see minute 2012.46) immediately and to 31/12/2017. We also ask Nominations Committee to suggest staggered dates for existing members of this committee
- 2 Friends to serve as Trustees of Meeting of Friends in Wales, from 01/01/2016–31/12/2018
- A Friend to serve as assistant clerk for one year from 01/01/2016
- A Friend to serve as co-clerk for three years from 01/01/2016
- Nominee for Nominations Committee to serve from 01/01/2016–31/12/2018 (Julia Aspden / Bryn D.Jones looking)