

Minutes of a meeting of Quakers in Yorkshire

Held at Oxford Place Methodist Centre Leeds on 20th January 2018

Representatives

Brighouse West Yorkshire

Helen Brockley, Anne Marshall, Jill Mollitt, Sylvia Sheard

Central Yorkshire Area Meeting

David Bunney, Denise Stimson

Craven & Keighley Area Meeting

Sylvia Boyes, Pam Elstub, David Olver, Chris Petrie, Evelyn Shire

Leeds Area Meeting

Audrey Acton, Ann Castle, Su George, Pat Gerwat, Robert Keeble, Margaret Meara, Veronica O'Mara, Una Parker, Barbara Parry, David Robson, Susan Robson, Brian Senior, Edward Starkie, Barby Witt, John Witt

Pickering & Hull Area Meeting

Martin Dickinson, Susan Dickinson, Janice Every, Chris Newsam, Diana Sandy

Sheffield & Balby Area Meeting

Sue Goodson

York Area Meeting

Ruth Corry, Hilary Evens, Nicholas Evens, Barbara Penny, Alison Ralph, Graham Ralph, Ruth Rymer, Brenda Tyler

QiY 18/01/01 Reading

In our opening worship we have heard a reading of paragraph 20.20 of *Quaker Faith & Practice*.

QiY 18/01/02 Testimony

We have heard a testimony to the Grace of God in the Life of our Friend Edna Woodhouse, of Brighouse West Yorkshire Area Meeting. We thank our Friends for preparing the testimony and the Area Meeting for forwarding it to us.

QiY 18/01/03 Welcome

We have been given a very warm welcome to Oxford Place by Veronica O'Mara, Co-Clerk to Leeds Area Meeting.

QiY 18/01/04 Appointment of Elders

We thank Robert Keeble and Barbara Parry for their willingness to serve as Elders for today's meeting.

QiY 18/01/05 Under 19s Co-ordinating Group

'We have a lot to celebrate'. These were amongst the words used by Rosemary Daley during the course of her report on the Under 19s Coordinating Group. Additional members helping with Junior Holidays and the possibility of paid assistance this year, have contributed to overcoming the crisis the Junior Holidays Committee faced a year ago. Training has been a component part of the programme and has proved very valuable. A challenge is to try and stop Friends doing too much!

Both Yorkshire Friends Holiday School (YFHS) and Easter Settlement are doing well, although the latter needs more helpers. Rosemary thanked a number of people, including Nominations Committee, trustees, volunteers, trainers and the Safeguarding Coordinators whose contributions had all helped to make 2017 a more positive year.

Rosemary advised Friends of the exciting possibility of a youth project worker for 11-18 year olds being engaged for three years to work across the region. The post holder would be managed from London. An expression of interest was submitted in the autumn and the outcome will be known within a few days. This submission prompted the committee to try and find out how many children and young people there are who might be engaged and to think about their own ways of working.

We thank Rosemary and other members of the group for their report which will be circulated and put on the QiY website.

QiY 18/01/06 Junior Holidays

Bronwen Alty, Clare Wigzell, Hayley, a teenage helper, and Natasha, a participant, gave us a most engaging and enthusiastic report about the two Junior Holidays in 2017. The committee now has six members, and a number of other volunteers who help with practical matters but do not wish to be on the committee.

The holidays, Barmoor in June and Fanwood in October, had been very popular - the first attracting 18 children and the second 21.

Bronwen appreciated very much the staff training and then summarised the learning from the holidays, such as that nest groups work really well, because they encourage children to mix together; and that they need to be flexible as well as to incorporate some structure. At the Fanwood holiday the theme of friendship was chosen, and in the course of the weekend a banner was made which we have on display today and which we invite Friends to look at. This theme really encouraged spirituality during the sessions.

We learned about the role and contributions of teenage volunteer helpers, aged between 13 and 16, of whom there were three on the holidays. They help bridge the gap between the adults and teenagers. They assist with planning, devise activities which do not need adults present and generally support the participants, who really appreciate their involvement.

This presentation ended with some photos, some of which will be put on the QiY

website, along with the written reports. We thank Bronwen, Hayley, Clare and Natasha for their presentations, which reinforced our understanding of the importance of holidays such as these for young Quakers.

QiY 18/01/07 Easter Settlement 2017

Chris Petrie and Pauline Leonard have told us about the variety of activities the 61 Settlers and six day-visitors enjoyed at Easter Settlement 2017. We have seen a number of photos taken throughout the time. There were eleven children and some Friends came to the weekend for the first time. The broad theme was education. Sessions by Paul Parker and Jeff Beatty were complemented by the Journeyman Theatre's play 'Over the Top' and the opportunity to visit local meetings. We have also heard of the plans for the 2018 Easter Settlement including amendments to the payment system. The theme will be 'In Turbulent Times Be a Quaker', facilitated by Maud Grainger and Michael Eccles of Woodbrooke on the Road.

With the centenary of Cober Hill in 2020, there are plans to publish a history. Yorkshire Quakers have the distinction of being the longest continuous customers, having visited since 1926. We are invited to send contributions to Chris or to Michael Sturge of Acomb Meeting for incorporation in the history. We urge Friends in Yorkshire to respond to this invitation.

We record our thanks to Pauline and Chris for their report which will be circulated and put on the QiY website.

QiY 18/01/08 Outreach Projects Committee

As Annabel May was prevented from being with us today, Janice Every presented Annabel's report on the work of the Outreach Projects Committee (OPC). A copy of 'Spreading the Word' which identifies all grants given in 2017, has been distributed.

Grants awarded in 2017 to six projects amounted to £4,104 ranging from £345 to £1,250. Fewer applications were received for small amounts and it is hoped these are being funded from elsewhere. Friends are urged to be aware of this significant source of funding, even for small amounts.

Two Friends then advised us how OPC funding had helped their projects/meetings and a third about activities that had been undertaken, that they wished to repeat and for which they would seek funding in 2018.

Ann Banks of The Kindlers spoke about the Outreach Projects Committee's support for The Kindlers. The OPC has funded workshops in the north, new tea shirts and publicity material. She gave us the background to The Kindlers. There are a number of active Kindlers in Yorkshire who had devised a new logo, funded by the OPC. There are workshops taking place in the north, in the south and an 'on the road' series.

Hebden Bridge's White Poppy Project was funded by the OPC. Ann gave some anecdotes from their experiences distributing white poppies and talked of the appreciation from some people in the town that white poppies are available.

Chris Newsam brought greetings from Malton Local Meeting which had been the recipient of grants on consecutive years from the Outreach Projects Committee. In 2017 they were funded to arrange two public talks. One was held in the largest meeting place in Malton (not the meeting house), gave information about Quaker involvement in the town and was very well attended. This prompted lots of interest.

The second talk at the meeting house focused on peace but was not so well attended.

The third element of funding was for publicity material for house-to-house leafleting. It had been a learning experience each year.

Robert Keeble from Leeds spoke about a range of events (not funded by the OPC) which had taken place and for which they would seek OPC funding in 2018. These have included promoting Fair Trade Fortnight by distributing bananas, involvement in the Clean Air Campaign, Quaker Quest sessions, the Campaign against the Arms Trade and a Scarecrow Festival in Gildersome.

These reports will be distributed and will be available on the QiY website. We thank Annabel and Janice, and all the committee members for their contributions to supporting Quaker witness in Yorkshire.

QiY 18/01/08 Testimony

We have heard part of a testimony to the Grace of God in the Life of our Friend Bronte Bedford-Payne. This was accepted by Craven and Keighley Area Meeting on 9th December 2017. We endorse the testimony and thank the Friends involved in preparing it.

QiY 18/01/09 Thanks

We thank all those Friends who have offered service to Quakers in Yorkshire in various ways and have come to the end of their terms of appointment in 2017.

QiY 18/01/10 Releases and Appointments

RELEASES

Outreach Projects Committee

Kevin Sell has asked to be released as a committee member this month, as he is leaving Yorkshire. We agree to this and thank Kevin for his work.

APPOINTMENTS

Nominations for appointment are brought to us as follows,

From Area Meetings

QiY Trustees

From York AM: John Baily (Thirsk) to serve a first term from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020.

QiY Outreach Projects Committee

From Sheffield and Balby AM: Kathleen Wallace (Sheffield Central) to serve a second term from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020.

From QiY Nominations Committee

The Mount School Committee

Julian Pattison (Friargate) to serve on The Mount School Committee from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2021.

Junior Holidays

Marian McNichol (Settle) to serve on Junior Holidays Committee from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020.

Arrangements Committee

Keith Robson (Wakefield) to serve on Arrangements Committee from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020.

Yorkshire Friends Holiday School

For the year 2018, we note the names of Mark Rymer as Applications Secretary and Ruth Clark as Treasurer. A number of other volunteers, whose names have been notified to the co clerks, serve on the committee.

These names being acceptable our Friends are duly appointed. We thank these Friends for their willingness to serve.

QiY 18/01/11 Memorandum of Understanding

The present relationship between Quakers in Yorkshire (QiY) and the York schools schools is contained in a Memorandum of Understanding which was agreed by representatives of all three parties (QiY Trustees, Bootham and The Mount) in September 2017 and later confirmed by QiY Trustees and the Schools' governing bodies. This new Memorandum is dated 17th November 2017 and replaces the Instrument of Government dated 29th September 1990.

We thank our Trustees for dealing with this matter.

QiY 18/01/12 Yorkshire Friends Holiday School (YFHS)

We have heard an interesting and stimulating account from a small group of Holiday Scholars about YFHS. Introduced by Mark Rymer (in place of Guy Milner, who is prevented), we have been reminded that YFHS is a week-long summer school held with about 80 young people, and their gatherings are currently held at Bootham School. Each Holiday School is based on a theme, which last year was Media Power. During our session, Friends have been asked to share with each other their thoughts on the question: How has the media changed in recent years? We have been asked to consider how much we engage with social media, and how we respond to the current problem of 'fake' news. We have been reminded about the importance of verifying the accuracy of news items.

Our visitors have shared with us some of the experiences of the 2017 school, and the topics they engaged with. This event included input from Keith Reeves about the EAPPI programme in Israel/Palestine, who was arrested during his stay, but was able to undertake an alternative tour of Israel. The gathering welcomed a speaker from Veterans for Peace who demonstrated the way in which youngsters are being inculcated with pro-military propaganda, in which the Government currently invests heavily.

During the week the School held a peace vigil which was well received by the public in York.

The days begin and end in worship, usually finishing with an epilogue a means of adding a spiritual dimension. We watched a short video of Holiday School at work and play, enjoying a wide range of activities: dance, and lessons in country dancing, music, water slides, gymnastics, cold water challenges, and many very silly things involving water and getting dizzy.

The presentation ended with the reading of the School's 2017 Epistle. For our young people, the event has become an extended family gathering where all participants experience a sense of belonging.

The Epistle will be circulated with today's minutes and will also be available on the QiY website. We thank Mark for his work in organising the young people's presentation and sharing with us the filmed account of the week.

QiY 18/01/13 North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education

Martin Dickinson has represented us on this body for three years but this is the first time he has had the opportunity to report to us on his experiences of working with the Council.

The Councils operate, and since 1988 have been required to do so, within LEAs throughout the country. Martin has encouraged us to continue our support of SACREs, which exist in many other education authorities throughout Yorkshire. Where Friends are invited to participate we should accept the invitation. Martin has responded to a number of questions from the floor. With recent changes to education the number of schools outside local authority control has increased. It may be that in future all schools could come under SACRE. Further discussion followed, in which concerns about military presence in schools were raised and the ways in SACREs were involved.

We much appreciate the time and effort Martin has given to this work and thank him for it. Martin has provided a written report on his work which will be available to read on the QiY website.

QiY 18/01/14 Closing Minute

We thank Leeds Area Meeting Friends for their warm welcome and hospitality today. It has been a pleasure for us to be joined by young people during the day. We also thank

Oxford Place for their continuing hospitality and ask our clerks to communicate this to their staff.

We part to meet again at Hull Friends Meeting House, on Saturday 21 April 2018, God willing.

Chris Love, Arthur Pritchard

Co-Clerks, Quakers in Yorkshire