

## **Minutes of a meeting of Quakers in Yorkshire**

Held at Bootham School, York, on 19 October 2019

### **Representatives**

#### **Brighouse West Yorkshire Area Meeting**

Richard Jarvis

#### **Central Yorkshire Area Meeting**

David Bunney            Ruth McTighe

#### **Craven & Keighley Area Meeting**

David Olver            Chris Petrie

#### **Leeds Area Meeting**

Gavin Burnell            Ann Castle            Una Parker (prevented)            Janet Naudin  
Barbara Parry            Edward Starkie            Robert Keeble            Pat Gerwat

#### **Pickering & Hull Area Meeting**

#### **Sheffield & Balby Area Meeting**

Rosie Roberts

#### **York Area Meeting**

Pat Easton            Hilary Evens            Meg Forrest            Ann Holt  
Jane Harvey            Eleanor Tew

#### **QiY 19/10/01 Reading**

In our opening worship we have heard a reading of paragraph 21.43 of *Quaker Faith & Practice*.

#### **QiY 19/10/02 Testimony (Joyce Tod)**

We have heard part of a testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Joyce Tod. This testimony was accepted by Pickering and Hull Area Meeting at Kirkbymoorside on 13 July 2019. We endorse the testimony and thank the Friends who prepared it.

#### **QiY 19/10/03 Welcome**

We have received a warm welcome to Bootham from Martyn Beer, Deputy Head of the School.

#### **QiY 19/10/04 Elders**

We appoint as our elders today David Olver and Hilary Evens.

#### **QiY 19/10/05 Students' Presentations**

Two students from Bootham reported on their trip to the 1652 country, and their various Quaker experiences. Their visit to the Quaker Tapestry made a profound impression which

inspired them to prepare their presentation in a range of tapestries. The Quaker Tapestry, they felt, identified the 'big picture' and the individual work in the panels reflected underlying values.

Panels included those demonstrating speaking truth to power, attending the climate change protest, hearing from an Extinction Rebellion activist and the LGBT Pride march – the latter of great importance to the students in its promotion of equality. They told us of their great concern to focus on sustainability and on recycling initiatives at school to minimise waste. The meeting heard about a range of charity work in which individuals are involved, including one who raises money for a charity in India. This year the school's choice of charity for support is Anti-Slavery International.

Social justice and peace issues are high on the Bootham students' agenda. In June, they celebrated National Refugee Week by providing a barbecue for refugees and asylum seekers. Bootham is striving towards becoming a School of Sanctuary.

Three students from The Mount focused on the ways in which students had sought to increase links and awareness of Quakerism and bring these to The Mount. The College leadership team continue their links although they are no longer meeting at Friargate during the week.

There are plans to incorporate ideas gleaned from attending Junior Yearly Meeting and a period at Woodbrooke had given them ideas which they are trying to incorporate. For example they have adopted the Quaker business method – which may take a little longer but people get the chance to be heard.

Charitable ventures are also important such as LearnBags which started some time ago. They have been inspired in particular by Betty Williams from Northern Ireland, who encouraged 'one small act of peace at a time'. PeaceJam continues, and this year there has been emphasis on Carecent for homeless people in York. The theme of Quaker Week, *Quaker Stories* provided opportunities for Friends from local meetings to visit and The Mount students' links with these local meetings continue.

Following these stimulating presentations Friends asked a number of questions which teased out more information about different types of meetings for worship (incorporating music, for example) and all the activities undertaken relating to what they regard as the urgent issue of climate change and sustainability.

Students responded spontaneously in a most informative, passionate and inspirational way, such that Friends generally must recognise the very significant challenges that they have presented to us.

We thank the students from the two schools for their presentations which have provided us with much to think about. Their slides and text will be put on the QiY website.

### **QiY 19/10/06 Reports from Bootham**

Stephen Sayers, Clerk to the Governors, has reported on another successful year. With a full school, the financial situation is healthy, despite rising costs. The first stage of the refurbishment has been completed, thereby offering students a congenial and welcoming

environment.

The heads and committee clerks of the two York schools have met and agreed to work together. In the spring, Bootham became a registered Quaker Body of Britain Yearly Meeting. Stephen cited a few examples to illustrate Bootham's contribution to the community. For example, Chris Jeffery, the Head, invites parents for a period of worship on Saturday mornings, when they have breakfast and lunch and are offered life skills courses - these courses will be extended in due course.

The York Independent State School Partnership (ISSP), which aims to enable schools to learn from each other and offer opportunities which no individual school can, is flourishing. Bootham Senior School offers a range of activities for members of the community including use of the swimming pool and a community choir. Bootham is a School of Sanctuary. The Junior School offers activities for babies, and various facilities and workshops during school holidays which have been attended by hundreds of children over the years. Junior School families have also donated a large number of books to Tang Hall Primary School. The Junior School intergenerational project enables young children to share activities with people with dementia. Among the local York charities with which the Senior School is involved are York Neighbours and Lamel Beeches and the Seniors raised £23,000 for SASH (for homeless young people). OXFAM, Toilet Twinning and the Bhopal Medical Appeal are amongst the overseas charities supported.

In conclusion, Stephen said that Bootham's most significant contribution is the annual dispersal of young people into the world who are imbued with Quaker values.

The meeting received greetings from the Head, Chris Jeffery in a pre-recorded video, apologising for his absence as he is in the United States to make links with a number of Quaker Schools.

He reflected on the recent sad death from cancer of Richard Burton a teacher at Bootham for many years. 2018 saw the biggest intake of students for around thirty years and this year the books were closed. Exam results were good, with 85% of students going to the university of their first or second choice. Dramatic performances this year have been very successful, and more are planned. All staff went to Pendle Hill, the purpose of which was to embed the Quaker ethos. Both Chris and Martyn Beer, Deputy Head, represent Bootham School on different bodies.

#### **QiY 19/10/07 Reports from The Mount**

Margaret Bryan, Clerk to The Mount School Governors informed the meeting of the committee changes between 2018 and 2019. She introduced to the meeting Julian Pattison, another Mount Governor.

The committee shares the staff's educational vision and their commitment to the Quaker ethos; managing money and property as well as monitoring compliance are priority concerns for the governors. On the latter, the school received ratings of excellent as a consequence of Educational Quality and Focused Compliance inspections in November 2018.

There are financial challenges. In addition to the general political and economic

uncertainties, the general decline in boarding has an impact on smaller schools such as The Mount. The sale of a piece of land was completed recently and the funds will be allocated to refurbishment. Fundraising will soon commence for the new Performing Arts Centre. Investing in the school's facilities will benefit local communities as well as students. At present state school groups and sports clubs use the swimming pool and other sports facilities at The Mount. Nor are cultural activities neglected: York Symphony Orchestra rehearse there, concerts and drama productions take place and rooms are offered for the annual Festival of Ideas and York Open Studios. The Mount is a key member of the Independent State School Partnership (ISSP) which provides educational opportunities for private and state schools in the York area. The Mount is also a Quaker recognized body.

The Principal, Adrienne Richmond, advised that The Mount no longer registers boys and is now the only Quaker all-girls school in the UK. It is at an exciting stage of development, with a curriculum tailored to the needs of girls from the age of two upwards. A strength lies in its being an All-through school with all facilities on the same grounds. The renewed focus means that the Senior Leadership Team can continue to develop a vibrant, inspiring curriculum with girls' education at its heart. This was reflected in a short video made as part of a marketing initiative which used the strap line 'We know girls can'. Over 60 new families were attracted to the school. The school has simplified its Aims and Ethos. Last year's exam results were excellent. Adrienne is a member of the 'Heads of Quaker Organisations' group which meets twice a year.

Rachel Capper, Head of the Junior School, quoted the School's new strap line and explained that the Junior School curriculum is structured to build confidence and stimulate creativity. They recognise the importance and promote the use of digital technology and a Robotics Club extends digital learning, while emphasising internet safety. All girls have the chance to take part in sports, and The Mount hosted different activities in which state schools participated. The girls participated in Quaker Week with the theme *Quaker Stories*, at the end of which parents were invited to a meeting for worship. They were active in Mental Health Awareness Week and in 'Go Green' week focused on 'Protecting the Ocean'.

Adrienne summarised by saying that the strategy set three years ago is now well under way; the new drama facility is coming. Six local schools use the swimming pool regularly including one school for children with special educational needs and the buildings and classrooms are used widely. Camp Xplode are providing programmes during school holidays which is a new development and resources are offered for public events such as York Festival of Ideas. Charity activities continue, but there is more emphasis these days on offering bursaries, rather than discounts and monetary scholarships.

We thank our speakers for their wide ranging and informative reports which give us some idea of the schools' significant achievements. The full reports will be on the QiY website.

#### **QiY 19/10/ 08 Testimony (Dena Hebditch)**

We have heard a testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life of our Friend Dena Hebditch. This testimony was accepted by Pickering and Hull Area Meeting on 14 September 2019. We endorse the testimony and thank the Friends who prepared it.

## **QiY 19/10/09 Releases and Appointments**

### **RELEASES**

From 31 December 2019

Gavin Burnell as QiY trustee owing to his appointment as Co Clerk of QiY.

Keith Robson and Kurt Strauss have requested release from the Arrangements Committee.

With immediate effect

Diana Sandy has asked to be released from Arrangements Committee and from QiY Nominations Committee.

Margaret Billing and Judith Campbell have asked to be released as Breckenbrough Governors, both for health reasons.

Nicholas Burton asks to be released from his appointment as a Bootham Governor; he left formally on 31 August 2019.

We agree to these requests and thank the Friends for the service they have given.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

Nominations for appointment are brought to us as follows.

From Area Meetings

Quakers in Yorkshire Nominations Committee

From Craven and Keighley AM: Gil Skidmore to serve a first term from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2022.

QiY Outreach Projects Committee

From Brighouse AM: Carol Hayward to serve a first term from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2022.

From QiY Nominations Committee

Retreat Nominations Committee

Sallie Ashe (Doncaster) to serve one year (2020) to fill a vacancy.

Arrangements Committee

Sam McNair (Kirkbymoorside) to serve a first term on Arrangements Committee from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2022.

Susan Clarkson (Bradford) to serve a first term on Arrangements Committee from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2022.

### Custodian of Yorkshire Quaker Archives

Ros Batchelor (Friargate) to serve a first term as a Custodian of the Yorkshire Quaker Archives from now to 31 December 2023.

These names being acceptable The Friends are appointed. We thank them for their willingness to serve. We also thank both AM and QiY nominations committees for their work on our behalf throughout the year.

### **QiY 19/10/10 Proposed amendments to the Governing Document**

QiY Trustees have scrutinised the Governing Document dated November 2010 and identified two areas where amendments are proposed which they bring to this meeting for agreement (paragraph 7.i)). The first relates to The Retreat where changed governance arrangements mean that point 5 (v) on making trustee appointments is no longer valid nor is the duty of appointment set out in the Schedules. Trustees recommend that these two references to The Retreat be deleted.

The second amendment is to incorporate into the Schedules reference to the Buildings Fund and its endowment. Trustees recommend that a reference to the Building Fund be included.

We agree to these recommendations and thank Trustees for dealing with these on our behalf.

### **QiY 19/10/11 Quaker Archives**

We have heard a presentation from Oliver Pickering and Richard High about the Yorkshire Quaker Archives held on Friends' behalf in Leeds University Library. Oliver (Ilkley Meeting) is an appointed custodian of the archives, and Richard is a member of staff of the Special Collections department in the library.

Oliver began by outlining the geographical scope and chronological range of the archives. Leeds University Library holds by far the largest collection of archival documents relating to Yorkshire Quakerism, stretching from the 1650s to the present day. In area meeting terms the collection covers the areas now represented by Brighouse, Craven and Keighley, Leeds, and York area meetings, but there are also the complete records of Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting, the body that has developed into present-day Quakers in Yorkshire. The archives occupy, in total, over 100 metres of shelving. In terms of content we heard that they largely relate to Quaker 'business' in the sense of minutes, property documents, financial papers, membership records, etc. Particularly important for family history is the complete set of the Quaker digest registers for the whole of Yorkshire, which record births, marriages, and burials from the beginnings up to 1837. In order to illustrate the huge range of material in the archives Oliver displayed and commented on images of fourteen items dating from 1670 to 1919.

Richard then explained how to find out about and make use of the archives, covering the Special Collections' web pages and the dedicated Quaker archives catalogues, along with procedures for visiting the library. He also spoke about how the archives are shelved and conserved, and placed them in the context of the many other important research collections held at Leeds University.

Following the circulation of a hand-out listing the considerable number of additions to the archives since 2014, the session finished by considering some of the practical issues to do with depositing

new material. These included the role of the custodians in encouraging meetings to deposit their records, which Oliver admitted met with varied success. Members of the audience were asked to consider what sort of materials they felt it would be most useful to archive in future, promoted by lists of the present contents of the archives relating to Halifax and Ilkley Meetings. Advice was given on the care of archives before deposit in Leeds, and on when Meetings should think of contacting the custodians about deposit.

**QiY 19/10/12 Closing Minute**

We thank our Friends at Bootham School for their warm welcome and hospitality today. We hope to meet again at St Aidan's Church, Leeds on Saturday 18th January 2020, God willing.

Chris Love, Arthur Pritchard  
Co-Clerks to Quakers in Yorkshire.