



Young Friends General Meeting Liverpool 29 April- 2 May 2016 Minutes

Those Present:

Holly Alcock, Jenny Baines, Sam Barnett-Cormack, Jessica Beck, Lynda Berry, Freya Blyth, Olivia Brabazon, Liam Brighton, Hannah Brock, Devi Cardero, Toni Carmichael-Harris, Aidan Childs, Stephen Clement, Tas Cooper, Alice Crawford, Teala Dearden, Peter Doubtfire, Kim Edwards, Ellen Elliott, Rachel Evans, T Freeman, Becky Garnault, Rajit Gholap, Cáit Gould, Naomi Haigh, Laurence Hall, Thomas Hancock, May Harrison, Rachael Harrison, Naomi Hooke, Selina Larsen, Francesca Loise, Johanna Longmore, Iwona Luszowicz, Hannah Marsh, Rici Marshall, Gabriel Martel, Eliza Martin, María Martínez García-Armero, Jenny McCarthy, Andrew Rendle, Angharad Rhys, Becky Riddell, Tim Rouse, Abigail Rowse, Saskia, Anne Seilly, Beatrice Shelley, Kristin Skarsholt, Huw Still, Brigid Stoney, Christopher Tedd, Vicky Tedder, Kellie Turner, Nick Watts, Alice Woodhead

Total: 56

Co-Clerks	Brigid Stoney & Peter Doubtfire
Trustees	Peter Doubtfire, Cáit Gould, Jenny McCarthy, Brigid Stoney, Kellie Turner
Coordinator	Iwona Luszowicz



2016.12 Planning Weekend Newcomers Report

We have heard from Johanna Longmore, Eliza Martin and Vicky Tedder about their experiences as Planning Weekend Newcomers at Bradford on Avon. We thank them for their report highlighting the work that goes on to plan YFGM.

2016.13 QLGF Report

Naomi Haigh has given us a report about the Quaker LGBT+ Fellowship and 'Knowing Ourselves' conference. Naomi highlighted the nature of QLGF is changing to a more informal structure in which Friends do not need to be QLGF members to get involved, and with a greater focus on gender. We thank Naomi for her report.

2016.14 Demystifying Trustees

Kellie Turner has spoken to us about the role of trustees within the YFGM charity. Trustees' meetings are confidential, but it is important for trustees to be accountable to members of YFGM. We thank Kellie for her report and invite questions on the role of trustees, which will be answered by Kellie via The Young Quaker.

2016.15 Northern Friends Peace Board Representative Report

We have heard from Laurence Hall about his experiences with Northern Friends Peace Board (NFPB). Laurence reminded us that the work of NFPB is relevant to all our lives and encouraged YFGM to take part and contribute to their campaigns, especially at a grassroots level. A further report is attached to these minutes. We thank Laurence for his continuing work.

2016.16 Living Witness Representative Report

We have heard from Ellen Elliott about the work of Living Witness in promoting and supporting Quakers in a commitment to sustainability. Ellen spoke to us about the challenges of committing to making changes at a personal, local and national level. She also reminded us that the issue of sustainability should be integrated into our Quaker testimonies of peace and truth. We thank Ellen for her continuing work.

2016.17 2015 Accounts

Finance Committee have brought the accounts for 2015 before the meeting for approval.

While the meeting is confident that the total amounts for receipts and payments are accurate, there is concern over a lack of clarity for individual lines of receipts.

YFGM does not feel able to approve these accounts in their current form and we ask Finance Committee to review the presentation of the accounts in order to increase the clarity of receipts and payments. Making the accounts clearer will be beneficial both to members and to future funding applications.



We trust Finance Committee and Trustees to consider whether changes to the presentation of accounts are substantive. If changes are substantive we ask that the accounts be brought before the meeting at YFGM in October 2016. If changes are not substantive, we ask YFGM Trustees to approve these accounts to be submitted to the Charity Commission.

We thank Finance Committee for their work.

2016.18 Special Interest Groups

This weekend we have had the following Special Interest Groups:

Special Interest Group	Led by
Quakers and Europe	Ian Beeson and Laurence Hall
Christian Aid Collective	Olivia Brabazon
Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs	Helena Chambers
Showing of the film 'War Book'	Iwona Luszowicz
Speaking truth to power	Mental Wellbeing Working Group



2016.19 Nominations Returns

Role	Released	Appointed	Until
Co-clerk	Brigid Stoney	Jenny McCarthy	May 2019
Overseer	Jessica Beck Cait Gould	Naomi Haigh Eliza Martin	May 2018
Planning Weekend Newcomers	Johanna Longmore Eliza Martin Vicky Tedder	Devi Cardero Becky Garnault María Martínez García- Armero	October 2016
Speakers & SIGs Coordinator	Nick Watts	<i>Term extended till October 2016</i>	May 2018
Rep to 'Paradise in the City' event	-	Freya Blyth Tas Cooper	October 2016
Nominations Committee	Dori Shahaj	Johanna Longmore Tim Rouse	May 2019 May 2018
Quinty	Rajit Gholap	<i>Carried forward</i>	

We thank those released for their service.



2016.20 Appointment of Co-clerk

YFGM asks Trustees to be mindful of the workload and responsibility of Jenny, serving as both co-clerk and management trustee until October 2016 with a handover until February 2017. We ask that Trustees actively support Jenny in these roles, including looking to the wider YFGM community for help during the period that we have no coordinator and in supporting the newly appointed coordinator from September 2016.

2016.21 Catering

We thank Naomi Haigh and Eliza Martin for their work as caterers this weekend.

2016.22 Co-opted members of committees

We thank Aidan Childs for helping Overseers during the weekend.

2016.23 Clerks' Offering

We have gathered in Liverpool for a long weekend of community, creativity, conviction and correct financial procedure. Through prologues, epilogues and spirituality sessions, Quintessential have helped us explore our faith in creative ways. Using visual arts, music, drama, dance, walks and worship sharing has allowed us to connect deeply as a community and 'know each other in the things that are eternal' a little better.

Jon Courtney presented us with a more pragmatic view, giving an introduction to Ethical Altruism. We found that our assumptions about how effective well-intentioned projects are at actually helping people may not always be accurate, and using evidence could help us to do more good. But our discussions also affirmed our commitment to keep 'that of God in everyone' and human relationships at the heart of our efforts to make the world a better place.

Laurie Michaelis and Saskia Kuhlmann led a session on sustainability in which we were asked to consider what we can do to contribute to the Quaker commitment to sustainability on a personal, local, national and international level. We realised the challenge of changing our own lives, while discovering many of us have already taken steps towards a more sustainable life.

Following a session led by Conscience at YFGM in February, we continued to remember conscientious objectors during the First World War through a play, 'For Conscience Sake', performed by Arthur Pritchard and Mike Casey from Plain Quakers. The play led us to remember the bravery of those who refused to take up arms one hundred years ago, as well as considering militarisation in society today and how we ourselves can work towards a more peaceful society.



Young Friends General Meeting

YOUNG ADULT QUAKERS IN BRITAIN



We have also had time to relax and to enjoy the company of friends, whether roaming Liverpool for photos, enjoying the extensive talents of Young Friends in the cabaret, or simply having a cup of tea and a chat.

This long weekend has provided a space to deepen friendships and make new connections, a space where we can be ourselves but also be challenged by other perspectives. We are thankful for the welcome we have received in Liverpool and look forward to meeting again in Lancaster for October YFGM.

Peter Doubtfire & Brigid Stoney, Co-clerks

Attachment I

Northern Friends Peace Board Representative Report

Laurence Hall reports on his work as YFGM's Rep to Northern Friends Peace Board (NFPB).

Introduction

At the YFGM meeting in May 2015 at Leicester Meeting House, I was selected as the YFGM representative to the Northern Friends Peace Board. My activities in this role since my appointment have been to attend four members' board meetings: two in Scotland, at Glasgow and Perth Meetings, and two in England, at Lancaster and Nottingham Meetings. Full reports on all these members' meetings are below. Apart from the members' meetings I have done two broad activities as NFPB representative: meetings for worship at Faslane and organising coordination between YFGM and NFPB.

I want to appeal to those Friends in YFGM in Scotland, Northern England and North Wales. I will do my best to actively promote NFPB's work as your representative but as someone based in London I can only do so much. The life blood of any activist group is the energy and efforts of its grassroots members, so if you feel that our peace testimony means more than a simple abstraction or mere rhetorical device but is at the heart of what it means to be a Quaker then please get involved in NFPB, in its regional gatherings, in its projects for peace, in its campaigns against all forms of militarism and take the first step to create a Quakerly society. For more information please look at www.nfpb.org.uk, email NFPB directly at nfpb@gn.apc.org or email your YFGM rep to NFPB, which is me, Laurence, at redloz@gmail.com.

NFPB at Faslane

I have been twice to the meeting for worship outside of Faslane base, which is home to the nuclear-armed Trident submarines.

In conjunction with the June NFPB meeting in Glasgow, we had a meeting for worship outside the main entrance to the base. My biggest concern at the start was not the great evil of WMDs a few hundred metres away behind rows of barbed wire, nor the constant flow of police cars trying to intimidate us, but the hundreds of midges looking for their next meal. Yet the power of the meeting meant I overcame this to contemplate how the power of peace can overcome the power of evil of this base. Then a few of us were given an enlightening tour of the outside of the two bases at Faslane, in which the huge scale needed to produce this evil was shown. We drove from site to site and were offered hill-top views of the bases along with an informative talk and we saw a Trident submarine in for repairs. We were constantly hassled by the police, who I am told were even more jumpy. We found some powerful light in this great darkness when we visited a small forest established by peace activists just a few hundred metres from the entrance to the bigger second base.

In conjunction with the September NFPB meeting in Perth, we had our second meeting for worship outside Faslane. This meeting was defined by powerful ministries about the need for a peaceful alternative to the evil of nuclear weapons, with an added bonus of being midge-free and with less police harassment.

Connecting YFGM & NFPB

My central tasks as NFPB representative for YFGM are to keep you informed on NFPB activities and enable coordination between YFGM & NFPB. In the promotion of both their aims, I have written articles on the NFPB in YFGM's paper, 'The Young Quaker', and on the YFGM blog. I have organised NFPB activists to take part in a main session and a special interest group at October 2015 YFGM in York on the strategy for practical actions against Trident, along with QPSW & YFGM's Trident concern group. Hopefully both the articles and the YFGM sessions will start establishing firm connections between YFGM and NFPB in the struggle for Peace. If you want to be part of this joint struggle then you can get involved in a joint session that YFGM, QPSW and NFPB are organising at this year's Yearly Meeting. The session will be a workshop on anti-Trident conversations and activism. I would love for you to help out on the day at Friends House in London, but if you can't then give me your ideas! What unique aspects can YFGM offer people in the workshop on Trident that the experienced activists of NFPB or QPSW can't? What new insights and skills do you think Young Friends have to offer to older Friends on stopping Trident? I want to know as I don't just want to reproduce an old workshop, but create something new that has YFGM's unique fingerprints all over. So please tell me what you think.

Official Report to YFGM on June 2015 NFPB members meeting

Introduction

My first NFPB members meeting was held on 13th June 2015 at Glasgow Meeting House.

After our opening worship, we were quickly introduced to each other before we got to work.

The nominations committee reported a new name for the NFPB executive, which was accepted. Members were encouraged to complete questionnaires to see what skills and knowledge all could bring to NFPB's work.

Finances and future plans

We looked at the NFPB's finances in both 2014 and Jan-May 2015, with pensions being addressed as well as the need to gain more contributions. Also, we discussed the exciting plans of NFPB for the near future. The key bit of information that you need to know is that NFPB is organising regional peace gatherings to bring together friends to coordinate and support Quaker peace-building on a regional level. To make this a success it needs the help of local young Friends.

Reports on NFPB's active projects

Sustainable Security is a project focusing on challenging the social roots of war through working with numerous Quaker and non-Quaker groups in creating the social structures needed for a sustainable peace. As part of this work, NFPB is organising a conference on alternative approaches to media work and peace campaigning, in which various workshops for speakers, trainers and facilitators will be organised for early 2016.

Building Peace in Diverse Britain is a project seeking to overcome communal divisions in the UK through activist and educational activities. The latest part of this work has been organising workshops that bring together young people from diverse communities in the North West to encourage dialogue and understanding within a Quaker-driven context. NFPB want to extend this project to cover a wider range of locations and groups and involve more friends within the project.

Members Forum

Members offered news on peace activities happening in the area they represent, which ranged from exhibitions on Quaker peace work during World War I to nonviolent direct action protests against militarism. We heard news on QPSW activities in the next few months, including the QPSW conference in October, followed by a Quaker activist conference November 2015. And of course I reported YFGM's own activities around our concern on Trident.

Members offered their reflections on the recent general election result and the new opportunities and restrictions that the results offer for the promotion of peace.

Q & A with Scottish Quaker Parliamentary Engagement Officer, Mairi Campbell Jack

Mairi told us that her work mainly focuses on militarism and education. Due to the powers devolved to the Scottish parliament, it doesn't include defence. Mairi's summary is below:

"I am currently working on a petition to The Scottish Parliament, with Forces Watch, on armed forces visits to state schools in Scotland. The current information about visits is patchy. This means a lot of current work is focused on research and making sure we have as up-to-date a picture of what is happening in Scottish state schools as possible. We don't have all the information yet, but I can confirm that it includes visits from Navy Careers Advisors to Primary Schools. Once we have all the information we will formulate our request to The Scottish Parliament. The petition will be submitted to the Public Petitions Committee. First of all it will collect electronic signatures, after which it will go to the Committee. They will take evidence on the petition and make a decision about how it will move forward. We hope it will be referred to the Education Committee.

Young friends can help in several ways. Firstly when a petition is open for signature on The Scottish Parliament website it isn't restricted to having just Scots or those living in Scotland sign it. Anyone, anywhere in the world can lend their support. While the

amount of signatures does not affect if the petition goes to the Public Petitions Committee, a large amount of signatures will make MSPs take notice. In signing the petition you can help alter the balance in Scotland. If change is effected here that can be used as an example by others calling for similar change elsewhere in the UK. I hope to get as many Quakers around the world, and others who are sympathetic with our aims to sign the petition.

Secondly, to accompany the data I'd love to get stories from young Quakers who went to school in Scotland about their experience of army visits, or any lack of balance you persevered in teaching about war or the military. While data can be really helpful, stories from young people, told in their own words can be equally as powerful. These can be told anonymously. Please contact mairc@quaker.org.uk or 07419991246."

Mairi also works with Scottish teachers and MSPs on the subject of Militarism in Schools. Furthermore, she works with Scottish parliament's committees on Human Rights and Nuclear Arms.

Challenging Militarism -QPSW/NFPB campaign on Militarism in Education

We heard a talk from Tim Wallis from QPSW on the media campaign against militarism in education. We viewed two videos that QPSW have made on the subject:

1. Narrated by Geoffrey Durham, a video on the MoD's 'British Armed Forces in Education' teaching booklet and its place in the wider government effort to promote militarism in Schools.
2. The Unseen March- This was really interesting short film on the military and government's militarisation of education. The film and more resources can be found at www.unseenmarch.org.uk.

We then had a discussion on the videos and the way forward for the campaign against the militarism in our schools.

Nuclear Weapons

News on Trident

It was good news politically in Scotland, with the rise of anti-nuclear SNP and wider protest movement, and also good news internationally, with the Austrian-led anti-nuclear global campaign and the Marshall Island case against UK's Nuclear weapons in the International *Court* of Justice. Yet this was seriously tempered by the result of the UK election.

We heard about the various local and national actions against Trident happening in the next few months, with a broad return to grassroots activism following the general election result. The national highlights were the possible revival by the CND of the famous Aldermaston march, along with ICAN organising a meeting in early July about the way ahead, as well as anti-Trident campaigning on International Peace Day.

Hiroshima 70th Anniversary

6th August 2015 was the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, and Quakers marked this important date with events throughout the country, with help from QPSW. Friends House held a large interfaith service of commemoration and commitment for a nuclear-free world along with a day of activities in London with workshops, exhibitions and films.

Official Report to YFGM on September 2015 NFPB members meeting

Introduction

My second NFPB members meeting was held on 26th September at Perth Meeting House.

After our opening worship, we were introduced to each other once again before we got to work.

Executive report and Finances

The report showed the exciting projects that NFPB is organising, such as setting up Regional NFPB gathering, work with QPSW's Turning the Tide and even doing some exciting stuff with a Quaker body called YFGM.

We discussed the best methods to boost NFPB finances as well as strategies to help the nominations committee.

Members Forum

Members were encouraged to offer their news and reflections on promotion of peace.

There was lots of news from members on the huge range of peace activities and events happening within their meetings. Plays, lobbying, demos, lectures, conferences, action groups, donation drives, peace projects and many more were reported. We heard from QPSW on the diverse range of literature that they have published around peace and about projects like "fly kites, not drones" and the white poppies campaign. We also heard news from QPSW's Scottish parliamentary liaison officer who has been busy sending white poppies to all MSPs, organising a conscientious objector event at Scottish parliament, organising a petition to that same parliament on militarisation in schools, and giving a talk on the same subject at the Just festival.

I reported on the activities of the YFGM Trident concern group and that at the next YFGM in York, NFPB would be part of a main session and SIG on how best to stop Trident, along with YFGM Trident concern and QPSW.

Members also expressed great hope for the cause of peace and justice generated by the election of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader.

'Building Peace in Diverse Britain' Report

We had a report on a long-term NFPB project that seeks to overcome communal divisions in the UK through activist and educational activities. This was a series of conferences between 2005 and 2009 to challenge prejudice and promote peaceful relations. In 2010, Rowntree trust funding led a series of one day events organised with other organisations to build connections and promote dialogue between and within communities. This was followed in 2014-2015 with a series of workshops that have brought together young people from diverse communities in the North West to encourage dialogue and understanding within a Quaker-driven context. NFPB want to extend this project to cover a wider range of locations and groups and involve more Friends within the project.

Peace Papers

We discussed how to use the remaining funds of the Peace Papers project, which is a collection of articles on the different expressions of peace testimony. It was agreed to digitalise the original papers and add some new ones in a small booklet in the future.

Amerdown Invitation- Rethinking Security

We then watched a video on Diana Francis' 2015 Swarthmore Lecture, after which we collectively reflected on the Ammerdown Invitation to create sustainable security as the beginning of an official NFPB response. We all agreed that sustainable security starts with the active promotion of Quaker values of peace, social justice and cooperation in our personal and social relationships that will be the foundation of a more secure world.

Official Report to YFGM on November 2015 NFPB members meeting

My third NFPB members' meeting was held on 28th November at Lancaster Meeting House.

After our opening worship, we were introduced to each other once again before we got to work.

National campaigns driven by local meetings within NFPB

Lancaster Meeting's Living Wage Campaign

In November 2014, in response to a Quaker conference in Birmingham showing the horror of inequality and poverty, Friends at Lancaster Meeting started a Real Living Wage campaign.

This began by local successful public engagement along with lobbying local companies and politicians to support the Living Wage. This was support by local MP Cat Smith, now in the shadow cabinet as minister for equalities.

This expanded to a national campaign within Quakerism, with the promotion of the Living Wage through Quaker Equality week and resource packs being sent to meetings.

If you want to get involved then contact Ellie Roberts at QPSW.

Brigflatts Meeting's Not in Our Name Declarations

This emerged from a summer camp of families from Southern Marches & Mid Wales Quakers and beyond.

In between the fun and games of camping, the participants held discussions which turned to the terrible harm done to all by the destruction of the welfare state. In particular there was great concern that these attacks on the welfare state were harming and even killing the dis-empowered members of society, including disabled people and those with mental health problems.

This was seen as completely against the Quaker idea that God is in every person and they are of equal value in themselves, not simply for the sake of profit.

Therefore they created the Not in My Name declarations to speak truth to power and raise awareness of the harm done through the destruction of the welfare state. This is done through declarations of Not in My Name against the destruction of welfare state, drawn up by Quakers of all ages. For example, Not in My Name will shame my unemployed brother, or Not in My Name will sanction my sister as economically worthless.

This will be done through Not in My Name ribbons and badges of declarations, along with bank card-sized inequalities as a result of welfare cuts.

NFPB executive report

The executive board had two residentials at Swarthmoor Hall to reflect on the work of the executive and other boards. They looked at the autonomous and experimental nature of NFPB as well the long-term future of northern Friends in terms of numbers, finances and levels of engagement.

NFPB Budget

There has been a drop in contributions from area meetings, and therefore we need increased contributions per member from each area meeting. The residential meeting was costly, but was needed as there had been no executive development day for 6 years. Also, pension contributions have gone up but it is expensive to buy out and we need to stand by staff. We need more project grants and help from BYM.

FWCC-EMES- Peace & Service consultation for Friends committee for Europe & Middle East

Jette Howard told us about the peace conference in Brussels with members from 23 different Quaker peace bodies, based on the theme 'Who is my neighbour?' They talked about actions needed to help refugees and challenged public discourse on war and division. They drew up a public statement on the EMEF website.

Quaker responses to Terrorism

We had worship sharing on Friends' responses to terrorism. Contributions covered a wide range of actions Friends need to do. From visibly and actively challenging and lobbying politicians to more and greater peace activism, to engaging more with the Muslim community and having a deeper understanding of the causes of terrorism, and the urgent need to actively campaign against the bombing of Syria.

Members Forum

The members forum has always given inspired examples of Quaker Peace witness but this forum had a particular focus on the work of Barrow Meeting and its engagement with local defence workers who could be working on Trident in the near future. The local meeting with the support of NFPB is combining visible activism against Trident with engaging with local defence workers to persuade them of the case against Trident. They are working with former Barrow workers, local trade unions, and peace and political parties to put the case for socially useful alternatives to arms production and connect anti-Trident messages with the wider anti-austerity agenda. In this they were fully supported by NFPB and given support and advice on research, tactics and methods of engagement.

I reported on YFGM's anti-Trident activities with our main speaker session and workshop at October YFGM and our open letter against Trident with other youth groups.

Edinburgh Peace & Justice Centre's report on Anti-Trident movement in Scotland by Brian Larkin

Scotland leads the way in UK anti-Trident movement on an activist and political level.

The Scrap Trident coalition has been a success. It has united radical and conventional tactics that have gained support and media attention. It organised big protests and direct action at Faslane. It has connected the Trident issue with the wider anti-austerity movement. An anti-Trident position has become the norm in Scottish politics as parties like the SNP, Greens and now potentially Labour under Corbyn are turning to an anti-Trident message. This is helped by international pressure like the successful Austrian initiative of 122 nations against nuclear weapons and the Marshall Islands legal case.

The centre is organising workshops and events on conscientious objection for the 100th anniversary this year.

Richard Institute at Lancaster University

Jim Paris told us of the work of the institute which is a centre for peace studies. It offers a peace studies masters and critical thinking workshops and gatherings. It also does research on peace education and the arms industry and has been involved in the Medact conference and the Don't Bank on the Bomb campaign, which encourages disinvestment from nuclear arms.

QPSW report

Two main focuses of anti-Trident and anti-militarism work:

1. QPSW is working to maintain the anti-Trident stand of the Greens and SNP but its main focus is ensuring the Labour party become an anti-Trident party. Therefore we need to pressure Labour party at all levels and support Corbyn. We might lose the main gate vote but there is real possibility of stopping Trident. QPSW is one of main organisers of the big anti-Trident demo in London in February, is supporting local actions by meetings and Tim Wallis is giving workshops to Quakers throughout 2016.
2. QPSW has released the Unseen March video and a new militarisation report to show military involvement in education. It has done workshops throughout the country on militarism. It has also worked on conscription, given the 100th anniversary of the military service act.

Nominations

We appointed a new clerk as the old one stepped down. We also appointed a representative to Turning the Tide and a new project leader to the Diversity in Britain project.

Official Report to YFGM on March 2016 NFPB members meeting

My fourth NFPB members' meeting was held on 5th March in Nottingham Meeting House

1. Intro Exercises- We were introduced to each other and worked in small groups to share our personal peace witness.
2. Overview of NFPB's Aims and Structures- The aim of NFPB is to build a strong community of Friends in Scotland, Northern England and North Wales to promote Peace in all its width and breadth. NFPB representatives are expected to communicate activities of NFPB to other Quaker meetings and inform NFPB of local Quaker peace activities. This is done through digital, hard copy and face to face communications. NFPB trustees' role is to fulfil legal charity obligations and provide strategic decision making.
3. Robert Keeble - Family history and conscientious objection

Robert gave a brilliant talk on his four great-grandfathers' involvement in the First World War.

One was a front-line vicar in the trenches during the war and suffered post-traumatic breakdown after the war.

Another was Hebert Peer, a Quaker and an absolutist conscientious objector, who served on the Friends Service Committee, which was the central Quaker body to campaign against the war and help conscientious objectors. He helped stop the torture and death sentence of 50 conscientious objectors in France in 1916 but he himself was imprisoned and faced the brutal prison regime for absolutist conscientious objectors for the rest of war and even after.

Yet another great-grandfather was George Ewan, also an absolutist Quaker conscientious objector. His job in a cooperative meant he could have got exemption from service and his junior would have been sent, but he instead claimed absolute exemption and was rejected and imprisoned for the rest of the war and resisted the prison regime throughout like Hubert Peer.

Finally, Robert's other great-grandfather, Walter Keeble, was not a Quaker and was killed in 1914, leaving his wife and children. One of his sons, Stanley Walter, was deeply affected by his father's death and became a peace campaigner, WWII conscientious objector and Quaker. He was excluded from employment and was forced to become self-sufficient, but also had a low income so as not to pay tax that could be spent on the military. He saw Peace tax conscientious objection as the best response to modern warfare and was one of the leading forces in enabling 55 Quaker meetings to set up Conscience, which campaigns for support and campaign for Peace tax conscientious objection. At the moment, Conscience is campaigning to pass a peace tax bill through parliament to allow Peace tax conscientious objectors to divert their taxes away from the military toward non-violent conflict resolution.

4. NFPB & Trident Update

NFPB has set up a joint session with YFGM and QPSW at Yearly Meeting on Trident. Also it is setting up an anti-Trident network across the North.

QPSW is lobbying political parties, particularly the Labour party, with a defence review. Tim Wallis is releasing a book called 'The Truth about Trident' and doing workshops across the country on talking about Trident. QPSW organised a big Quaker turn-out at the anti-Trident demo in London in late February 2016.

YFGM- I reported on YFGM's open youth letter on Trident, our banner and involvement in the big anti-Trident demo and the rest of our Trident concern's activities.

Local Reps- They have organised local talks and actions against Trident, with the most interesting being the meetings in towns that produce nuclear weapons: they are planning workshops, doing research and building connections to have constructive

conversations with local arms production workers and the local community to construct an alternative plan to Trident production.

5. Nominations report- We need to have friends to support and get involved in the clerking team and executive board.
6. Members Forum- We heard of the great plurality of peace activities that local and area meetings throughout the NFPB area are doing, with a particular focus on helping refugees, remembering Quaker resistance to conscription and activism for peace. I reported on the collective action of YFGM in the Trident concern thorough our open letter and anti-Trident demo, the conscientious objection session at the February YFGM gathering and 'The Young Quaker' Peace issue. I also reported on the individual actions of YFGM members for peace, such as campaigning and helping refugees, protests against cuts, anti-arms trade activism, anti-Trident activism, political party activism and more.
7. Finance Report- Appeal for area meetings to contribute more funds, as these have dropped from 2014, and to pass on information on fundraising to NFPB HQ.
8. Trustees report- Achieved its objectives last year of spreading information as well as engaging and supporting peace activism of Northern Friends in many different forms.
9. Flash Peace Witness- During our lunch hour some board members (including me) did a flash peace witness in the centre of Nottingham in which we held peace banners in silent witness for 10/15 mins.
10. QPSW report- three broad areas of news from QPSW:

Peace education - released a new peace education pack, along with promoting Fly Kites Not Drones events and a conference entitled Learning through Peace.

Refugees- MsW and QPSW central committee are organising activities on supporting refugees and are finding funds to have a QPSW worker on the issue.

Challenging Militarism- Organising workshops across the country to construct resources to support anti-militarist activities and outreach. Looking for local meetings carrying out activities against militarism to act as case studies. Education & Disarm newsletter released. Working closely with Veterans for Peace.

11. NFPB Looking to the Future- An interesting discussion in which the meeting discussed the way forward in the next year, including its peace projects like Building Peace for Diverse Britain. Subjects raised included the EU referendum, the struggle against racism and corporate power and the need to show positive alternatives at all levels of life through Quaker values.

For more information on NFPB please look at their website on www.nfpb.org.uk or email NFPB directly at nfpb@gn.apc.org