

**GIRLS FRIENDLY SOCIETY WORLD COUNCIL
ENGLAND
JULY 1996**

Minutes of the meeting of the 15th meeting of the World Council Business Meeting of the Girls' Friendly Society held from 22 to 30 July 1996.

Theme: "A Task with a Vision, Hope for the World"

The first business session of the World Council opened with prayers at 9.30am and was followed by general admin and information about the week.

Official Presents – Countries asked whether there was an "official present giving" session, some discussion was held.

It was decided that time would be set aside for anyone wanting a formal official presentation.

Grace - each country was allocated a meal before which they would do a grace of their choosing.

Chaplains - all chaplains present left with Bishop Bill Ind – World chaplain to discuss the services for the week.

Agenda – Joy Epton, World Chairman then talked through the Agenda outlining the topics for discussion.

After the official photo session and lunch everyone met in their country groups to discuss the forthcoming issues on the Agenda.

The 15th World Council of GFS was opened at 3.15pm on Wednesday 24 July 1996 with an official welcome to everyone from Mrs Joy Epton, the World Chairman.

Joy expressed her thanks to the committee in England and explained the committee to the Council.

Present: Members from Australia, Barbados, Cameroon, England, Gambia, Ghana, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, South Africa (Transkei), USA, Wales, Zambia (see Appendix 1)

Not present: Korea, Philippines.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the World Council held from 8-16 May 1993 were presented by Ms Joan Morgan to Mrs Alison Carter, World Secretary.

It was proposed and agreed that the Minutes be signed as a true record.

Matters Arising:

Currency: At previous meetings it had been decided that the currency used should be sterling, yen or US dollars. All delegates were happy for this to stand. It was asked should all transactions be in these currencies or just conference fees. It was decided that the host country would do local transactions in their own currency and hold funds in one of the three currencies.

Attendance: There was some upset at the meeting in New Zealand that observers were not allowed into closed meetings. Joy encouraged everyone to attend all meetings at this council. There was further discussion about who could attend meetings and who could vote. As the “guidelines to World Council meetings” was on the Agenda later it was decided to leave any further discussion until then.

World Banner: Joan Morgan reported that only one design for a logo had been received from Sri Lanka. An example of this on a banner was produced for Council to see. Council was asked to think about it and also whether they thought that a World Banner was needed.

ACCOUNTS:

The accounts for the World Fund, World Travel Fund and the World Project were presented by Gillian Steel.

It was proposed

‘that the accounts be accepted’. Proposed Australia, Seconded USA, Vote Agreed unanimously. Therefore, the motion was carried.

REPORTS

After tea the report from each of the following countries was presented and formally accepted. Australia, Barbados, Cameroon, England, Ghana, Ireland, Japan, Lesotho, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka.

Nigeria would report later within the World Project report.

Kenya didn’t report officially but Madeleine Muramba spoke of what it meant to her to be at World Council.

The business meeting then closed the day.

Thursday 25 July

The second day of business opened with prayers followed by the official reports from South Africa (Transkei), USA, Wales, Zambia. These were all formally accepted.

Transkei asked that Council now recognise their country as South Africa and their Church as the Church of Southern Africa. Council agreed.

Joy Parkin, World Vice-Chairman gave her formal report and stressed the problems about the projects, etc.

Joy Epton gave her formal report explaining the theme and why she chose it.

GUIDELINES FOR WORLD COUNCIL MEETINGS.

There was a lot of discussion about membership, attendance and voting at World Council meetings. Various amendments were made to the Guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR GFS WORLD COUNCIL MEETINGS.

- 1 The organisation shall be called the World Council of the Girls Friendly Society.
- 2 Purpose. The purpose of the World Council of GFS shall be to promote fellowship between the members of the Society throughout the world by the exchange of

information and ideas. The promotion of World Assemblies, camps, exchange visits and correspondence between members shall be encouraged.

3 **Day of Prayer.** September 29, St Michael and All Angels Day, shall be the GFS World Day of Prayer.

4 **Membership.** Membership shall be open to GFS in all countries whose purposes are in fundamental agreement. Each country seeking admission shall be considered separately and shall present a letter of support from its Bishop, and the policy shall be inclusive rather than exclusive.

5 **Officers.** It shall be the responsibility of the Chairman of the World Council to arrange for the election of the country to preside over the World Council for the succeeding period, the voting to be carried out by mail if necessary. The method of voting to be determined by each country concerned. There shall be one vote for each member country in this election.

a. The duration of the office of Chairman shall usually be for not less than three years and shall coincide with the term between meetings, and the Chairman shall relinquish office immediately at the conclusion of the Council meeting. The responsibility for the chairmanship of the GFS World Council shall rest on the person of the Chairman and not on the Executive Committee or Board of the country she represents.

b. The World Chairman is empowered to appoint her own secretary for her term of office.

c. The Chairman of the previous period shall be the Vice-Chairman up to and including the next meeting of the Council.

6 **Attendance:** Representation at Council meetings shall be extended to two () from each country, one of whom shall ideally be between the ages of 16 and 25.

7 **Voting at Meetings.** Each delegate to World Council shall have one vote. If the president of the country hosting World Council is not the world Chairman, then the president of the GFS in the country concerned shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Council. The Vice-Chairman of the World Council shall also be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Council. Observers are invited to the Council but shall not have the right to speak or vote. The Chairman has the casting vote.

8 **Agenda.** Suggestions for inclusion on any Agenda shall be sent to the Chairman of the GFS World Council to reach her not less than three (3) months prior to the date of the meeting. The draft Agenda for a meeting of the Council should be circulated to the Chairman and secretaries of member countries as long as possible in advance to allow for discussion and suggestions.

9 **Minutes.** Minutes of each meeting shall be circulated and signed by the Chairman of the meeting and shall be recorded in a book which shall pass from Chairman to Chairman. Further, that as a common language will be necessary for this book, English be used as the official language. The minutes shall be circulated by the host country no later than a year from the council meeting.

10 **Newsletter.** The newsletter, where possible, be edited in the country providing the chairman, or by another country at the request of the country providing the Chairman. The distribution within each country shall be the responsibility of that country.

- 11 **Finance.** All member countries should, if possible, contribute to a common fund to help defray the expenses of the country carrying the World Chairmanship. Each country to pay World Dues of ten (10) pounds sterling per year per country, until the next World Council. The World Chairman may administer all world funds.

Agreed at the 15th meeting of the GFS World Council held in England 22-30 July 1996.

NEWSLETTER

There was a suggestion that the newsletter be done by different countries like the World Day of Prayer. Council would think about this.

WORLD PROJECT

Clarice Modu presented her report about the work in Nigeria and the World Project. Unfortunately, a video showing the work was incompatible with the video recorder, but financial statements and building plans were put on display for everyone to view. A letter was also displayed from the Mothers Union in Nigeria to the Mothers Union in England praising the GFS work in Nigeria.

Joy Epton reported that we had received approximately £10,000.00 for the project, contributions being made from Japan, Ireland, USA, New Zealand, Australia, England and Wales.

Various suggestions were made as to how everyone could contribute to the World Project Fund. It was agreed by Council that all World Day of Prayer service collections should go to the World Project; however, because of the rates of exchange problems it would be better if some countries brought 3 years of donations with them to World Council.

The Philippines Project was giving great cause for concern as it had not yet started, and no one had been able to contact Kate to see what was happening.

Within the money raised for the Philippines project was the money for the Kenyan Project – approximately £13,000.00 plus – this was all unaccounted for at present.

Members were upset that the money was not being used for the purpose it was intended and felt that it should be returned.

After much discussion it was proposed that

“Money that had been collected for Africa prior to the Philippines Project should be returned to the World project fund now”.

Proposed New Zealand, Seconded USA, Vote Unanimous. Therefore, the motion was carried.

Prayer and support are needed for the Philippines especially as they are not represented. It was hoped that Japan might be able to help through their contact with the Philippines.

Joy would also ask Kate what her plans are for the money collected that she still has for the Philippines Project.

World Project for 1996-1999.

No new suggestions for projects had been sent in. It was proposed

“That we continue to fund the Nigerian Project for the next three years, working hard to try and finish it within that time.”

Proposed USA, Seconded England, Vote Unanimously agreed. Therefore, the motion was carried.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP TO WORLD COUNCIL

A letter from the Archbishop of Papua New Guinea had been received asking for Papua New Guinea to be admitted as a member to World Council.

It was proposed

“That whereas a representative of Papua New Guinea is present, at the 15th World Council, now in session at Swanwick, England and whereas a letter has been received from the Bishop supporting the work of the Girls Friendly Society in Papua New Guinea, and its inclusion in formal membership at World Council, be it resolved that Papua New Guinea be accepted into full membership of the World Council effective at this 15th World Council, July 22-30, 1996”.

Proposed USA, Seconded Sierra Leone, Vote Unanimous. Therefore, the motion was carried.

LINK COUNTRIES

The question of “Why are we linked” and “What is the purpose of the link” were asked. After some discussion it was decided that it was

- 1 Mutual communication
- 2 Mutual support and help (not necessarily financial_
- 3 We must work hard at maintaining our links.

The links were then rearranged forming a sixth group

- A Australia, Liberia, Korea, Cameroon.
- B England, Gambia, Guyana, Barbados, South Africa
- C Ireland, Kenya, Zambia, Philippines
- D USA, Nigeria, Sierra Leone
- E Wales, Sri Lanka, Ghana, Lesotho
- F New Zealand, Japan, Newfoundland, Papua New Guinea.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

It was agreed that we would keep this on 29 September. It was noted that Zambia’s 1996 World Day of Prayer had been distributed.

Three different countries were needed to prepare the World Day of Prayer – not just the countries who can’t host World Council. These should be sent to the new Chairman to be distributed.

The following countries agreed – 1997 Ireland, 1998 Ghana, 1999 Nigeria.

TIME BETWEEN COUNCILS

There was a lot of discussion about this, and various suggestions were made.

It was proposed

“That the time between councils should remain at three years”.

Vote: For 17, Abstentions 1, Therefore the motion was carried.

HOST FOR THE NEXT TWO COUNCILS:

Two offers were made – Australia and South Africa.

A break for tea was held for countries to discuss the offers. Australia then withdrew their offer and gave their support to South Africa as they felt it was a way forward for South Africa. There then followed a lot of discussion especially as the Bishop elect of South Africa was not in post. It was then proposed

“That the World Council in 1999 be held in South Africa”.

Proposed Australia, Seconded USA, Vote – For 9, Against 0, Abstentions 8

Therefore the motion was carried.

It was then discussion that if the Bishops of South Africa did not accept World Council, then it would be held in Australia.

World Council 2002

There was a discussion as to whether the venue for 2002 should be decided now.

It was then proposed

“That the venue for 2002 should be chosen”.

Vote: For 7, Against 10, Abstentions 0. Therefore, the motion was lost.

CONSTITUTIONS

Each country was asked to report the current standing of their constitutions.

Australia – needs updating, Barbados – needs signing by Bishop, Cameroon – based on Ghana, to be ratified with Council and Bishop, England – Just been reviewed, Ghana – needs to be taken to Council and signed by Bishop, Ireland – needs reviewing, Japan – to be signed by Bishop, Kenya – needs to be looked at again, Nigeria – needs to be signed, New Zealand – treaty at present, a proper constitution needs to be drawn up, Papua New Guinea – asked for copy for guide, Sierra Leone – still to be signed, Sri Lanka – Bishop needs to sign it, South Africa – it needs sorting, USA – fine at present, Wales – as England, Zambia – needs ratifying and signing by Bishop.

It was requested that a signed copy of each country’s constitution be sent to Townsend House. The Chairman would contact those countries not present.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Newsletter. South Africa stated that they would take on the newsletter and it was unnecessary to spread it out to other countries – but please write the articles.

Recipe Book. Would this be available – Joy would ring the GFS office to clarify the situation.

Formal Thanks. Clarice formally thanked Council for extending the project in Nigeria.

Fax Numbers: It was requested that a list be drawn up of fax numbers and telephone numbers and circulated for easier contact.

World Banner: It was finally decided that this was not needed. However, Zambia, Papua New Guinea and Kenya needed a banner. The Junior Delegates, Japan and Ireland offered to make them.

Travel for World Secretary and Treasurer

It was asked why the former Secretary and Treasurer were paid for by the World Council Fund as it makes it expensive. There followed some discussion. The Chairman asked that because of the lateness of the day this matter be put on the Agenda of the next meeting.

New Zealand formally thanked Joy for her Chairmanship of the meeting and the meeting closed at 5.55pm.

Monday 29 July.

Because of a few loose ends an extra meeting was called. The session opened with prayers. Joy thanked all the members from England especially Pauline Searle and Emma Rowson. She also formally welcomed Priscilla Johnson from the Gambia who had arrived at the weekend.

Joy went on to discuss the various problems of running a World Council offering helpful hints and suggestions for the future.

She expressed her thanks that England had allowed her a travel fund to visit various countries and stressed that no fund was available from World Council for the World Chairman to travel. It should be noted that the World Travel Fund needs rebuilding.

There was also some discussion about whether a new World Chairman would be commissioned. It was also felt that someone needed to be commissioned from a communication point of view. It was agreed unanimously to commission a new World Chairman.

South Africa nominated Nobantu Makunga as World Chairman. Congratulations were given to Nobantu.

World Project

Where should money sent? Money for the World Project should be sent to England where it will be banked and sent on to Nigeria.

Nobantu then thanked Council for the task; it is a growing gift of hope for the future. She welcomed everyone to South Africa. Nobantu then thanked Joy and the English delegation for all their support. Nobantu finished with a song of thanks to Joy and England.

The session ended at 11.10am.

APPENDIX 1

In attendance were:

Chairman	Joy Epton
Secretary	Alison Carter
Chaplain	Rt Revd Bill Ind
Vice-Chairman	Joy Parkin.

Delegates:

Australia	Jan McNamara, Leanne Tait
Barbados	Mary Marshall
Cameroon	Justin Nzegwu
England	Pauline Searle, Emma Rowson
Gambia	Priscilla Johnson
Ghana	Juliana Okine, Christine Adjei
Ireland	Maeve Hannon, Tanya Woods
Japan	Mariko Yanagida, Meiko Negishi
Kenya	Madeleine Muramba
Lesotho	Alice Mafereka, Matseliso Tse'phe
New Zealand	Liz Lowry, Anne Town
Nigeria	Clarice Modu, Sussan Ada Ebo
Papua New Guinea	Lucille Haembo
Sierra Leone	Henrietta Johnson, Angela Jackson

Sri Lanka	Gris Samuel
South Africa	Nobantu Makunga
USA	Dorothy Orr
Wales	Katherine Worrington, Philippa Stephens
Zambia	Beatrice Zulu, Grace Kooma.

APPENDIX 2

Greetings were received from:

Australia	Bishop of Tasmania, Bishop of Wangaratta, Juniors and Members, Rockhampton GFS.
Barbados	Bishop of Barbados, Rector of St Paul's Church, Barbados
Cameroon	Presiding Bishop of Cameroon
England	Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, Archbishop of Canterbury,
Ghana	Bishop of Koforidua
Ireland	Archbishop of Dublin, Archbishop of Armagh
Japan	Bishop of Tokyo, Bishop of Okinawa, Bishop of Kita Kanto, Chairperson GFS Nippon Sei Ko Kai
Kenya	Bishop of Mombasa
Lesotho	Bishop of Lesotho
Nigeria	Bishop of Orlu
New Zealand	Archdeacon of Ohariu, Archbishop of New Zealand
Papua New Guinea	Bishop of Popondota
Sierra Leone	Vicar General of Freetown, Bishop of Bo
South Africa	Bishop of Natal
USA	Presiding Bishop, The Episcopal Church, Bishop of Connecticut President of Episcopal Church Women, Bishop of Los Angeles, Bishop of Pennsylvania
Wales	Archbishop of Wales, President of Wales GFS.

The Minutes of the 15th World Council

Monday afternoon saw the arrival of most of the delegates and observers and after finding bedrooms and unpacking everyone sat down for an evening meal.

The conference started with an official welcome from Joy Epton, the World Chairman.

Information packs were distributed, and the coming week was explained to everyone including our theme "A Task with a Vision. Hope for the World".

The official greetings were then received from each country (app2) Thanks were also given to Sri Lanka, Lesotho and Zambia for the World Day of Prayer. The day ended with a service of Compline led by the Chaplain to World Council, Rev Bill Ind.

After breakfast it was on to the coaches for a 9.30am start to Liverpool Cathedral for our Opening Service. As we approached Liverpool, we were greeted with road signs showing us the way to World Council. On arrival each country set up their stalls for the open day.

Our Opening Service followed with a procession of banners from England branches and dioceses and then the colourful array of each countries banner. This then led onto the open day. After a well-deserved tea provided by Liverpool GFS it was back onto the coaches for our journey home.

Unfortunately, one coach was a bit delayed due to a puncture, but all returned safely. Our day was rounded off by a Taizé style service led by Joy Epton.

After morning worship and breakfast Wednesday was the first of our business days. This was interrupted after morning break for the official photo session.

Our evening entertainment was provided by the Ricklins Brass Band who treated us to our own “Night of the Proms”. This was followed by evening worship.

Thursday morning worship was led by Japan and after breakfast four ex-World Chairman – Floris Bain, Anna Iwai, Joy Parkin and Subuola Thompson were waved off in their chauffeur driven Rolls Royce to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. Then it was back to “work” for everyone else for the second day of our business.

Our entertainment this evening was a talk and display by the Robin Hood Society and our worship was an evening worship from Iona led by Ireland.

Friday dawned bright and after worship and breakfast it was on to the coaches to start our day trip. Our first stop was at Stratford-upon-Avon where we had lunch and then it was on to Honnington, home of Mary Townsend. Whilst we were there, we planted five roses around her grave and held an evensong in the Chapel. It was then on to Shipston for tea. After arriving “home” it was a quick exit for the young delegates and observers for their fun weekend. The rest of us went into our evening meal where we were joined by the England Membership Conference.

Our evening was led by guest speaker Elizabeth Sharples who spoke about tolerance and the theme of World Council. The day ended with Compline led by Bishop Bill.

Saturday started with worship led by Australia and after breakfast we sat down to some Bible Study led by our Chaplain. The theme was “A Call to God”: with reference to Mary and Jeremiah. We split into groups to discuss various questions.

After coffee it was thanks to Elizabeth Sharples and then on to a presentation about the Gt Yarmouth Project. This was led by Karen Haravbey and Carole Riley the two workers from the Project along with Jodie and Josie two girls who have received help and support from the project and are now helping to try and prevent others from going through their problems by talking in schools, etc.

The Gt Yarmouth Project is a project which helps young women who find themselves homeless and pregnant.

After lunch it was time to feedback on our Bible Study questions and then onto our craft afternoon. This was a chance for everyone to have a go at making something they’d never done before – with some very clever results.

After our evening meal we were treated to the musical “Candle in the Dark” written performed and produced by Athelstone GFS branch about the life and work of Mary Townsend. We then drew the raffle for the quilt. Our worship this evening was about Women of Note and was led by the Membership.

After breakfast on Sunday, we had a full communion service during which the Lord's Prayer and blessings were said in everyone's own language. Our preacher was Christina Baxter after coffee we finished off reporting back our Bible Study questions which tied up with Christina's sermon. There then followed questions and answers with Christina and Bishop Bill. After lunch it was time to relax with displays from the Ripley Morris men and Amber Valley Gymnasts followed by free time and evening prayer. Our evening meal was followed by the "International Evening"!!

Worship the morning was led by Africa and after breakfast the final business session was held. After this there was a chance to hear about the history of the conference Centre and visit the Danby Pottery Centre. The afternoon was spent packing ready for our departure tomorrow morning. It was then time for our Service of Light led by Bishop Bill. Monday evening was time to let our hair down at the Barn Dance with the USA also teaching us some line dancing!

Early morning chaos started our final day as we breakfasted and departed by 8.00am. We arrived at St Pauls Cathedral to see a sea of blue on the steps. GFS had taken over London. Our final service took place during which Nobantu Makunga from South Africa was commissioned as the new World Chairman. Everyone then departed either for their homestays or for their flights home.

The above minutes were agreed at 16th World Council in South Africa

Signed: Nobantu Makunga – 3 July 1999.