

## DOVE TALES CHAIR'S REPORT 2023-24

Our first campaign of the year from August 2023 was for Armenia. The war in Nagorno-Karabkh has been largely ignored by the press so we were glad to support the prisoner of war campaign. This came from Alexis Krikorian, of the Armenian charity Hyestart. A number of Armenians were being held illegally by the Azerbaijani government and we agreed to sponsor one – and the Scottish Peace Network (SPN) agreed to sponsor a second.

On UN Peace Day, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023, we held a joint zoom event, partnering with Libertas, Hyestart and the Scottish Peace Network. This was hosted by Arthur West of the SPN.

In September we took part in a fringe event for the Wigtown Book Festival, with an event calling for peace in Ukraine. This took place in the Baptist church, which was lent to us for free for the second year running and for which we were very grateful. The readings were by Dove Tales members from both Dumfries and Galloway and from Glasgow.

The end of October saw us teaming up with Scottish CND on a joint event for the Mexican Day of the Dead in the Scottish Writers' Centre at Glasgow's CCA. It was the launch of SCND's *Reclaim the River* campaign, protesting the nuclear submarine base in Faslane on the river Clyde and the destructive power of nuclear weapons.

The event featured a talk by David Peutherer, chair of SCND, as well as poetry and music from Dove Tales members. Arthur West, a previous SCND chair, read a poem by the late Mairi Jack and music was provided by Carol Jamnejad, Cait Ferguson and Campbell Gunn. An open mic followed the official event and Dove Tales member Pauline Bradley provided more music.

At the end of January 2024, Dove Tales member Margaret Elphinstone brought out *Lost People*, a dystopian novella about the aftermath of war which went on to be shortlisted in the Scottish Book Awards. We featured it on our blog and held an event on zoom to help publicise the book and the issues. The recording can be viewed on our YouTube channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHbeCkVmEgY>

Over the next few months we were working on a peace anthology, seeking contributions from both Dove Tales members and writers and artists from the wider Scottish literary community.

The collection was titled *Kiss, Warrior, Kiss* and featured reflections on peace and what we lose when we value profit over people. It was published in June by Fireopal Books and we launched it at the Scotia Bar, Glasgow, in June, as guests of the Glasgow Literary Lounge. Like all our publications, it can be purchased through our website.

[www.dovetalesscotland.co.uk](http://www.dovetalesscotland.co.uk)

Signed:

*Mary W.Craig (Chair)*

*Mary Rafferty (Treasurer)*

Pauline Bradley

*Ray Evans*

Rose Fraser Ritchie

*Liam Murphy*

*Jean Rafferty*