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Canadian Yearly Meeting

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SUNDERLAND P. GARDNER LECTURE
2001
INSIDE.

What Canst Thou Say

I should have written this piece as soon as I came back from Canadian Yearly Meeting, when I was full of the joyful spirit that I felt after spending a week among Friends. Instead I am writing it just before posting the magazine off to the press, and after the terrible events at the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon.

What is there to say? It had started as such an ordinary day. My son Matti left for his boarding school in Halifax that day. We saw him off at the airport and then went to work. But of course, he only got as far as Montreal because of all the - what shall I call it? - confusion in the air. I started my morning off with a finance committee meeting, and as we sat talking of the budget one colleague after another burst in to tell us what was happening in Washington and New York. It was all so surreal. We actually tried to continue the meeting for some time before what passes for reality sank in and we too went to watch the television in the office downstairs.

Later that Tuesday I drove to Montreal to pick up my son (who had missed the bus back to Ottawa provided by the airline). On the way I read a trip report two of my colleagues had written about their travels in Colombia earlier this year, and all the horror and devastation that people face there because of Plan Colombia. As I read, all the while the radio played out the days events in New York and Washington. What was ordinary at that moment?

And yet this week, we do indeed seem to be back to ordinary life, but with an ominous sense of waiting. Life goes on, but so does the news. We are surrounded by images of the horror of the events and the horror of the refugees piling up on the Afghan/Pakistani border. It is all of a piece, refugees piling up in Afghanistan, in Colombia, in many other parts of the world- Iraq, Burma, the list goes on and on with terrorism as a horrible reaction to the injustice of our world. We can only pray that this senseless violence will not lead to violence far worse, taking Robert Barclay's words to heart:

Whoever can reconcile this, 'Resist not evil', with 'Resist violence by force', again, 'Give also thy other cheek', with 'Strike again'; also 'Love thine enemies', with 'Spoil them, make a prey of them, pursue them with fire and the sword', or, 'Pray for those that persecute you, and those that calumniate you', with 'Persecute them by fines, imprisonments and death itself', whoever, I say, can find a means to reconcile these things may be supposed also to have found a way to reconcile God with the Devil, Christ with Antichrist, Light with Darkness, and good with evil. But if this be impossible, as indeed it is impossible, so will also the other be impossible, and men do but deceive both themselves and others, while they boldly adventure to establish such absurd and impossible things.

All we can do is ask God's blessing as we try to cope with the aftermath, as we hold in the light all those who have suffered loss and devastation. We can only hope that the American leaders, our leaders, the other world leaders, will realize that a vengeful reaction is as much a crime as the one already done, the strike back is as horrible as the strike taken. "Art thou in Darkness?" we can ask, as James Nayler did. It is a time to take his caution to "mind it not, for if thou dost it will fill thee more, but stand still and act not and wait in patience till Light arises out of Darkness to lead thee." This is what we need to tell our leaders. This is not a time to make things much worse, but a time to "abide in the Light which leads to Grace and Truth."

The rest of this issue is about Canadian Yearly Meeting in Windsor Nova Scotia, which seems so long past now, but which it is very good to remember.

A.M.S.

March Issue of The Canadian Friend

Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee will be editing this issue. The theme is aboriginal issues and the deadline is November 1st.

All contributions are to be sent to Jennifer Preston Howe at Canadian Friends Service Committee, 60 Lowther Avenue, Toronto ON M5R 1G7. Any information for Around the Family, or notices or advertisements are to be sent to Anne-Marie Gilliacus by December 1st. This information will be passed along to the new editor of The Canadian Friend, who will be laying out the March issue.

Epistle of Canadian Yearly Meeting

August 18, 2001

Greetings to Friends everywhere from the Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Our 168th Yearly Meeting, and our 46th as a united Meeting, took place from August 11-18, 2001, at King's-Edgehill School in Windsor, Nova Scotia. 166 adults and 40 Young Friends came together from across the nation and beyond. Among us were 27 first-timers at Canadian Yearly Meeting, including a number of visitors from wider Quaker bodies and Aboriginal communities.

Our theme this year was "Seeking Unity with Nature," and our location in the beautiful Annapolis Valley brought us closer to nature, as it also brought us closer to one another. Friends actively pondered our recognition that humankind is only one aspect of creation. In this time of ecological turmoil, we must make substantial changes in our ways of living and gathering as Friends in order to prevent further damage, and to restore the balance of nature among all creatures. The efforts of the Ecology Working Group were appreciated by all, setting the theme for our gathering and inviting Monthly Meetings to share meeting and individual efforts in the form of displays. We welcomed the participation of Young Friends who shared the concerns about bio-technology and also provided positive actions that could be taken by all. Our gathering was marked by enthusiastic support for continuing ecological work, and by the metamorphosis of the Ecology Working Group caterpillar into the Quaker Ecology Action Network of Canadian Yearly Meeting" butterfly.

There were many activities in keeping with our theme. Our speaker in Quaker Bible study, Tom Baugh, was grounded both in biology and theology. Outdoor walking meditation made use of local trails and provided a new alternative to worship fellowship and worship study. The Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture by Sarah Chandler, titled "The Never Broken Treaty?" addressed Quaker relations with Aboriginal peoples. We were welcomed by Cathy Martin of the Mi'kmaq, upon whose lands we met. Our other Aboriginal guests were Vic Yellow Hawk White and gkisedtanamoogk, who spoke with Young Friends. They also participated in the Canadian Friends Service Committee panel on racism, along with Nissa Puffer of the Quaker United Nations Office in New York and Betty Peterson.

We reaffirmed our connections with wider Quaker bodies, and our appreciation of the many mutual benefits of these links. After labouring with some difficulties, we are continuing our affiliation with Project Ploughshares, an ecumenical Canadian peace organization. We asked Project Ploughshares to seek nonviolent solutions to humanitarian crises, with the help of such organizations as Peace Brigades International, Christian Peacemaker Teams, and Nonviolent Peaceforce. Concerns were raised about Kairos, a new structure for bringing together a number of ecumenical church projects on social justice; however, Canadian Friends will be participating.

We learned of the Western Half-Yearly Meeting no-interest loan fund, made available for housing and education.

Canadian Yearly Meeting has financial concerns. Some of these arise from Friends' use of resources, whether for travel or paper for documentation and communication. We are small in number, we are all busy as we can be, and we are not laying any concerns down. That leaves growth as our option. Through our Home Mission and Advancement Committee, we sense an urgency to expand our membership. A growing acceptance of electronic technologies can help bridge the wide geographic expanses which characterize our Yearly Meeting. At the same time, we are mindful of the needs of those Friends who choose not to adopt computer technology.

An ongoing continuity was evident. We shared many intergenerational activities such as meals and worship, the Buddy Bazaar, music, dance, and family night. At our annual picnic, we were witness to a dramatic display of nature's power in the rising tides of the Bay of Fundy. In memorial meeting, we celebrated the lives of those who have departed, remembering their love and faithful service which are bearing fruit in the Yearly Meeting. We note that deaths are balanced by new memberships, young and old. Just as several new babies were in attendance, we also celebrated the birth of Peninsula Monthly Meeting, our 23rd Meeting, located on Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

Our gathering was an interweaving of strands of joy and anguish. In worship and in shared activities, we felt a deep sense of reliance on God's guidance. We sought ways of living our faith. We seek ways of providing support and training to encourage Friends who might feel uncertain about their gifts, and who do not feel included. The many Young Adult Friends likewise searched deeply concerning their role at Canadian Yearly Meeting. Special care is being taken to include the writings of Young Friends as we develop a Canadian *Faith and Practice*. Our anguish arises from our knowledge of current wars and conflicts and the condition of the earth. We are seeking to understand our own role in such violence. The opportunity to alleviate such distress came through an urgent call from Ramallah Friends School in the West Bank. We seek strength and faith to respond to those in need.

This was our third gathering at King's-Edgehill School. We greeted each other with love and joy, worshipping, working and playing together throughout the week. Other creatures were also in attendance: the crows whose calls punctuated our days, the skunk that approached our meeting but after some consideration turned to go a different way, the bat that visited the women's washroom and the crickets and moths who kept us company in the evening. We are thankful for our time together, and for the many gifts of creation. We humbly commit ourselves to doing our part to bring about a better future for all life on earth.

Young Friends Epistle (Ages 15 to 18 years)

August 11-18, 2001, King's-Edgehill School, Windsor, Nova Scotia

As a diverse group of Young Friends we gathered together to build, strengthen and enrich our community in the spirit and our experience. This year all regions of Yearly Meeting were represented in the composition of our youth programme. The 20-plus members of our group came with the anticipation of renewing old friendships and the open willingness to seek out and nurture new ones.

We met early in the week to establish guidelines to ensure a safe and healthy community. During this lengthy discussion a concern was raised that exclusive relationships could be detrimental to our community as a whole. We eventually discerned that one-on-one time does not necessarily detract from a sense of community, but rather it can add to the group's feeling of togetherness when done with sensitivity. As the week progressed we found this to be true.

The theme for the gathering was "Seeking Unity with Nature," which was strongly reflected in our programme. While playing an earth simulation game with Ian Graham, we experienced first-hand the human greed that threatens our planet. We also discovered that with co-operation and trust there are enough resources to go around. On a walk with Ruah Swennerfelt, Louis Cox and Anne Mitchell we explored our familiar world in unfamiliar ways, using all five senses. Later in the week we had a group sharing session with gkisedtanamoogk, Vic Yellow Hawk White and Sarah Chandler. The topic of discussion was our society's relationship with indigenous peoples and our collective relationship with "our mom," the earth. This also reflected what we felt was a secondary theme for the week: Aboriginal issues.

Many Young Friends felt individually to attend the Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture given by Sarah Chandler and were pleased to find once they arrived that other Young Friends had been similarly led. Sarah's point of view helped us feel that our relationship with Indigenous People, though not currently ideal, is promising and has hope for the future. We thank Sarah for her continued commitment and contributions to improve this situation. One example of Quaker involvement in Aboriginal affairs is shown in the current situation at Burnt Church/Esgenoôpetitj, which was brought to our attention in an interactive discussion with Tuulia Law and Charlie Kennedy. We fully support continued peacemaking efforts in Burnt Church.

Additionally in our programme, Marc Forget brought to our attention a thought provoking query having to do with Quaker Committee on Jails and Justice, "Who does punishment benefit?" Leading from this, we discussed our justice system and ways we could change it to reflect Quaker and human values through restorative justice. Friends hope to search for publications written by Young Friends to be included in the Canadian Faith and Practice. Cheryl Neill brought us together on our final day through fun and laughter in her drama workshop.

Young Friends demonstrated to the greater gathering their ability to organize and work cooperatively by preparing a meal for the food co-op one evening. Outside of programme time we enjoyed a variety of activities. These activities were community strengthening and contributed to a balanced week physically, spiritually and emotionally. These included: wink, card games, discussions, star-gazing, exploring the grounds, communal tenting, ultimate Frisbee, football, soccer, meeting for cuddling, movie night, beach trips, Winnie-the-pooh, swing dancing and running from skunks.

Because of the short time at Yearly Meeting we felt that sleep wasted precious time with F/friends and that it should be avoided at all costs. We were successful in this endeavour, greatly helped along by the only Young Friend Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business that has ever lasted three days. All in all, Friends were grateful for any levity provided at these meetings.

As the gathering draws to a close, Friends experience the sadness which invariably accompanies the end of such an amazingly intense experience. However, we part with a renewed sense of life, energy and spiritual purpose and the knowledge that we do not leave our friendships behind.

Young Friends Epistle (Ages 12 to 14 years)

August 11-18, 2001, King's-Edgehill School, Windsor, Nova Scotia

To Friends everywhere

This year in the 12-14 year-old age group we learned a lot from our Youth Leader, Barb Everdene, taught Barb lots of important stuff, made friendships, and tried many new things. We took time off from our everyday life to appreciate the nature around us, through worship sharing down at the pond with Ruah Swennerfelt and Louis Cox, and a “water ceremony” led by gkisedtanamoogk and Vic Yellow Hawk White.

We learned important things from many older Friends, such as the benefits of organic farming from Trevor Chandler. As well, we had several outings into the town of Windsor. One of these was our expedition to the Windsor Ware store, the first underwear store in Canada. After visiting the store, we had a quiz to find out when the store was founded — 1916. One sunny afternoon, we also went swimming at the local pool and ate ice cream.

Our work project for the week took place at Robert Hessian's 150 acre retreat centre for brain-injured folks. We cleared trails with Robert and had a really good time playing cards with his brain-injured friends Kelly and Doug.

June Etta Chenard helped us write Advices and Queries for adult Friends, Cheryl Neill taught us some great improvisation skills, and Andrew Gage helped lead us through a Bible study and worship sharing.

We all tried to plaster-of-paris our faces, hands, and feet, played group games together, and lounged on the giant crash mat in the gym. Finally, Margaret Dymont shared with us a writing meditation on Friday afternoon. We had an excellent time this week and will miss this place when we're gone. We think this year tasted like chili pepper — we wanted to finish our epistle off with something spicy!

Young Friends Epistle (Ages 9 to 11 years)

We gathered at King's-Edgehill School in Windsor, Nova Scotia, August 11th to 18th, 2001.

We named our group the nine-one-one group.

We made bead animals and did lots of origami.

We watched "The Miracle Maker" and talked with Anne Thomas about everything in the movie to make sure we understood. The movie was about Jesus' life.

Many Friends came to share with us.

We learned songs in Swahili, English, German, French, and many other languages.

We wrote Advices and Queries. During a treasure hunt, the people we found turned out to be the treasures.

We also played an Earth simulation game.

We learned some Quaker history, and visited a filly foal.

Our favourite part about CYM was us all gathering together — so many people who stay active as they grow older.

Thank you to all the Friends who helped us and made our programme possible. We hope to be together again next year.

Young Friends Epistle (Ages 5 to 8 years)

We read books.

We did crafts
(playdough,
seed pictures, body
drawings).

We learned
about predators
and prey.

We played with
babies.

We played fris-
bee.

We played in the
gym.

We played
bowling.

We made chokecherry syrup with Tom Findley.

We saw a new foal.

We made new Friends.

Thank you to Paige, Mary, Sophie, Sara, Carolyn, Carol, Marian, Sue, Muriel, Linda, Tom, young Friends who dropped in and everyone else who helped with our youngest Friends in and outside of children's programme.

Experience of the Spirit in my life

by Anne-Marie Zilliacus

The library at King's-Edgehill is a lovely old building, all wood panelling, elegant and light. Twin metal spiral staircases frame a small dais at one end of the room and at the other a wooden staircase leads upstairs to a fortepiano that dates from the 1800s. We sat in our circle in the main room, waiting expectantly for the Spirit to move, for Friends to share with us how their lives had been touched this year. It is a wonderful way to begin the week at Yearly Meeting.

Caroline Parry rose and told us of a series of events that taught her about loss. The first of her losses occurred while she was in England last Christmas. Inadvertently she left a suitcase on a bus, "and I cried."

Then in March, Caroline attended a workshop on hallowing diminishments at Friends House in Toronto, but she also had a dance workshop to go to. Not wanting to have to carry anything at the dance workshop she wrapped her wallet up and left it in a hiding place at Friends House. On her return it was gone. Was the universe trying to tell her something about being overbooked?

May came, and she was teaching a course at a senior citizens home on writing in faith. The second week of the course Caroline hurt her back while gardening. That evening, weighed down as usual with a number of books and photocopies as well as her dulcimer, Caroline prepared to catch the bus. She asked a young woman to mind her things while she bought tickets. When Caroline returned with the tickets, everything was gone. She called the police but she still had to teach the class. She prayed that her things would at least be of some use to the young woman and felt that all she could do was trust that the best outcome would happen. At the break Caroline phoned her

answering machine and a voice told her that her things had been turned in. Three losses, escalating in sacredness, showed Caroline that you can lose anything and keep your centre.

"Fifty years ago," Jane Zavitz-Bond told us, "I went to meeting with a little girl, and she was fussy and I took her out. After meeting a dear Friend said 'Oh Jane, don't take the baby out, we like having the children.' Today that meeting is half children. Some of them belong to me. I think they all belong to all of us."

At that moment ten month old Shan Li crawled across the centre of the circle towards Hazel Gifford, same age.

"The children need us," continued Jane. "We welcomed children into our Meeting. It's more important to do this than anything, for them to feel that love and care from all of us mean they'll have a sense of love and security which will help them through their lives. It will be the difference to many of them." *Both babies looked up at Jane.* "I certainly didn't expect this," she said.

Hanna Newcombe rose to tell us of a little boy she had seen on a bus, who kept running down the aisle from his

mother. "Adam, come back" called his mother, but he kept going to a woman on the bus who laughed and said to the mother, "You see, my name is Eve."

"Spirit in my life," Lyn Adamson told us, "has been to make space in my life. As my children became teenagers I've made space in my life for peace work." Lyn went to the Hague Appeal for Peace as the representative for Peace Brigades and this led her to a new project in East Timor. During her involvement with this work she first cut her work time from five to four days a week in order to focus on the UN Decade for Children. Then she decided to take a two day a week job with the Peace Brigades Indonesia project, having faith that she will have resources enough to put into the UN decade, and to focus on opportunities for youth peace workers. Lyn feels this work is an expression of the Spirit in her life and is grateful for Friends for their support.

"Seek first the kingdom of life and all these things can be granted to you," John Calder said, as he told us of his amazement that at this stage of his life there is so much to learn. New Brunswick Monthly Meeting has been en-

Hazel Gifford and Shanli Berube, having a conversation.

riched through its links with Native Elders, links that are precious to John.

John told us of a night when he had been weeding the garden and praying for a sick friend, a Native woman. He saw a beautiful eagle on the shore and later that night found an eagle feather — which he thought he would take to his friend, but he was a bit shy about doing so. That night John was going to a conference and his friend lived nearby. On the way he saw a moose on the side of the road, eating grass, and stopped to watch. This pause gave him the chance to think, “I’ll take the feather. I’ll take the feather.” John told us that he found the whole experience humbling because he realized that God speaks to each of us in the language of our own hearts.

“Sixteen years ago,” Alison Lohans told us, “my husband lay dying. There was a night when he was oxygen deprived, not expecting to live the night. A friend came to visit, bringing coffee, muffins, and a numinous presence.” Her husband came around that night and lived another seven months, a time of good, close conversations and healing, a time to be treasured.

Young Friend Reykia Fick rose to tell us of her experience as Clerk of Young Friends Gathering at Friends General Conference this past summer. After a year of working on Sundays, unable to attend Meeting for Worship, she arrived at the gathering feeling ungrounded, unsure of her role even though she had attended a clerking course at Pendle Hill. The Clerks realised that people had been encouraged not to speak at Meeting for Business — to save time! Reykia was led to minister on the importance of business meeting and how the spirit moves so that the best decision may be reached. For the rest of that meeting she felt a deep centredness and gratitude.

“Some 67 years ago,” said Ed Abbott, “I started down the road that eventually brought me to the Religious Society of Friends. My father was a country pastor and I aspired to follow in his footsteps.” While at school Ed came across an article in *The Canadian Churchman*, by an English pacifist, and realized that if he took the teachings of Jesus seriously he could be nothing but

a pacifist. When the war came he could not identify with the military, even in his field of medicine, so registered for alternative military service. In northern Alberta he met Isabel Showler’s brother and heard of the Wider Quaker Fellowship. It was through them that Ed joined the Friends Ambulance Unit and how he found his spiritual home among Friends.

Katie Vaux’s neighbour, whose father had just died, asked Katie how she would explain spiritual maturity. “It is to leave your ego at the door in worship,” Katie told her, “leaving you open to experience the will of God.” Katie felt this because of an experience at a Quaker wedding a few weeks earlier, where she knew no one, including the wedding couple, but had felt called to speak. In spite of her resistance, she found she had to put aside her own needs, her ego, her feelings and say that “Love is the alpha and the omega. Love is our task in this life.” And she was called to share this with us tonight.

At King’s-Edgehill in 1998 way opened for Keith and Ellen Helmuth to find housing and jobs in Philadelphia. Ellen told us how thankful she is for those blessings because she knows that good fortune doesn’t always last, and it was only months later that their beautiful farm was burnt down, probably through arson, opening Ellen to doubts about evil. She could not hear people say “Everything happens for a reason,” because she felt that was blaming the victim. In time Ellen has been able to reflect on evil, on the ocean of darkness, and to remember a friend, whose son died in a logging accident, who told her that there are some things in life we will never understand. She also remembered Muriel Bishop Summers’ words at a panel at FGC last year. Muriel said that we need to name evil. There is so much in the world and Quakers are not good at talking of it.

“I’ve tried to remain very humble in my approach to ministry,” said Kathleen Hertzberg, “and, as Douglas Steere said, ‘mind the call, that is all.’ And as I look back at my own life I see that the call has been there and that I’ve responded with humility before the Lord, and the sense of the dialogic relation with God. Everything has to be related to the pres-

ence of God. I pray that this may be our prayer and experience, that God speaks to us in our innermost lives. Who is this God that whispers songs in our mind without making claim for it? This is our greatest call, that we answer that call in our innermost being.”

“I came to Friends about 26 years ago,” Ruah Swennerfelt told us, “young, lost, a single parent with three young children. That first Christmas, we went to Meeting. The children began to giggle. I was so embarrassed. I told them quietly to go outside and get the giggles out.” And they did, and there was a burst of laughter outside. They came back, bumped their heads, began to giggle again and Ruah was mortified until an older woman stood and said how wonderful it is to hear laughter in the Meeting. Then Ruah felt loved, embraced, and at home.

Grace Wolf told us of a fellow, an alcoholic, who hangs out at the garbage near her work, collecting recycling. Over twenty years her colleagues have grown used to him and he, in his gentle way, cares for them. One day a colleague lost a knapsack, and Eddie found it, with its contents scattered all over. He gathered everything together and returned it to Katie who felt honoured that he had entrusted it to her, that they had become friends through this.

“I’ve been struck by the idea of listening,” a woman rose and said, “and have been pondering it as a concern in my life.” She told us of an experience in a workshop a few years back, with an exercise called “the door,” which is an exercise in listening. There are three roles, one who goes out, one who is an open door, the rest are closed. When the person re-enters they must discern who is the open door and through this process gains a new insight into listening, using all senses.

Another woman rose and said, “I’d like everyone to open the doors of this Yearly Meeting to the other creatures who have much to teach us. We have much power that we are using for destruction. Bit by bit we’re losing them all. I’d like us to invite them in to share with us before it all goes.” With this invitation, Yearly Meeting began.

Anne-Marie Ziliacus is a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting.

Speaking from the Heart

by Kirsten Ebsen

2001 is the 70th anniversary of Canadian Friends Service Committee, a cause for celebration, although Canadian Friends were providing faithful service before CFSC was born in 1931. A snapshot of this service, in the form of a Quaker Gray Jay, was presented to CYM by CFSC Clerk, Carol Dixon, at the CFSC's bi-annual presentation to Canadian Yearly Meeting in Windsor, Nova Scotia, August 16. What is a Quaker Gray Jay, you may ask. It's a collection of documents, pictures, and stories of the people who have worked for CFSC (both staff and volunteers) over the seventy years since it began. Friends will be able to use the Jay to make presentations about CFSC, or to teach First Day School. However, on the night of the presentation the Gray Jay was not the only event. There was also a panel on the topic "Racism: Conscious and Unconscious" that included Betty Peterson from Halifax Monthly Meeting; Nissa Puffer, from the Quaker UN office in New York; Vic Yellow Hawk White of American Friends Service Committee, representative for the American Native Program in Davis, California; and gkisedtanamoogk of the Mi'kmaq'ik Nation, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The panel carried on from the previous evening when Sarah Chandler had delivered the Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture, urging all F/friends to take action in our local communities to work towards true social justice for our First Nations friends and neighbours.

This night, gkisedtanamoogk reminded us that our survival on Turtle Island is intrinsically linked with our connection to our elders. In the Mi'kmaq'ik tradition, a person's actions are viewed by the effect those actions have upon their ancestors seven generations before, and on the children, seven generations into the future. Any actions taken in their community are viewed within a fourteen generational spectrum.

It is very important not to lose sight of that thread, he said, because our survival depends on it. This land, mother earth, is sacred, and we need to reconnect with Gaia if we wish to survive. It requires rediscovering the sacredness in everyday life, moment to moment. In that light, gkisedtanamoogk feels that racism becomes a non-issue since it is based upon fear and not knowing.

Life and creation, as the Mi'kmaq'ik perceive it, is experienced in the feminine, not in the masculine. Therefore, our future is not to be determined or

Vic Yellow Hawk White

gkisedtanamoogk and Nissa Puffer

worked upon by the men; it is the experience of the feminine which will ensure our survival. Furthermore, the destiny of humankind is not in the hands of humankind. It is in the hands of the Earth. We are all indigenous people to the earth. The Mi'kmaq'ik are working actively to shield and protect their women, and to empower them.

When native elders speak to me (a Caucasian) about their customs and living mythologies, something very primal is awakened. We, too, once lived in a culture where the feminine was supreme — supreme not in the sense of temporal power, but as the harbinger and progenitor of life, and the sacredness and interconnectedness which this entails. A fragment of this ancient knowledge is handed down to us in the iconography of the Virgin Mary.

As gkisedtanamoogk spoke so simply about such a huge global issue, I found myself wishing that George W. Bush and his paternalistic buddies at the Pentagon could be present to witness his wisdom: that they may learn to open their ears and hearts and minds, before it's too late. Nissa Puffer spoke about her work during the last eighteen months with the UN Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. The Conference will be held in Durban, South Africa in early September. In the quest for non-Caucasian peoples to achieve unity and consensus for the Conference, they've had to address their own differences and conflicts. An Afro-American living in Chicago has a very different set of daily circumstances to contend with than an Afro-American in Mississippi or a Kenyan, Rwandan, or Senegalese. The one form of oppression they all share is institutionalized racism and exclusion. Europeans, originally from Africa, also confront differing realities in their lives. So their struggle is not only an issue of "white against black," but also amongst themselves, as they reach past their cultural differences. However, this does not minimize the persecution and injustices inflicted upon them by the dominant culture. This can go so far as the denial of citizenship in some countries.

Nissa Puffer said that working in the cause to stop racism is

intensely personal. Out of all the people who have been working on the Durban Conference, she didn't meet one person who had not been deeply affected personally. Vic Yellow Hawk White, a Cherokee native, shared his experiences as a child born into a dysfunctional family and raised by two grandmothers: one German-American, the other, Cherokee. He used his own life to illustrate unconscious racism. When he lost his temper as a child, his European grandmother rationalized it by saying: "What can you expect? His father is an Indian." And yet Vic knows that his grandmother loved him deeply.

As an adult he realizes how rich his childhood had actually been through having been raised in two different cultures. But his path to maturity was tough, leading through years of alcohol and drug abuse before he found his balance. He had the good fortune to apprentice with Thomas Banyaca and other great native healers. Most of his boyhood friends are either languishing in jail, are in-between sentences, or dead. He asked Friends for our help,

in whatever way we can, to minimize the casualties as his people return to the sanity of the sacred life. Betty Peterson was the final speaker, recalling her early activist days in the US prior to her emigration to

Sarah Chandler

Canada. She drew particular attention to the many brave Jewish-American activists who placed their lives on

the line during the 1960's civil rights movement. And she spoke about the oppression in Israel today against the Palestinians, and how dangerous it is for anyone who speaks out on their behalf. Anyone who dares is in danger of being branded an anti-Semite. The fact remains that the Palestinians are oppressed and persecuted in their own land and that a peaceful and just resolution must be found.

Betty Peterson

Betty Peterson recalled arriving in Canada and finding that the plight of Canada's native peoples was as horrendous as the discrimination in the US had been against black Americans. She was led to participate in the Lubicon Blockade in the mid-eighties, and to protest against the test flights in Labrador, which destroyed the Innu way of life. She continues to be a strong voice for justice for Canada's First Nations Peoples.

The night before, at Sarah Chandler's lecture Cathy Martin, a Mi'kmaq'ik from Nova Scotia, spoke to Friends. In closing, I recall her words. "For the first nine months all humans understand the same language, which is listening to our mother's heart beat in the womb. If, as adults, we live and speak from our hearts, our communications will transcend all cultural and linguistic boundaries, and will be understood by all, as it was during those first nine months."

Kirsten Ebsen is a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting.

Advice and Queries, written by young Friends (nine to fourteen years old)

Having fun in general and relaxing : - Sometimes you just have to do something pointless.

Seeking Unity with Nature: - Why litter when the trash can is just a few feet away?

Connecting and seeking unity with nature: - If you are walking along in the woods and you see something dangerous, leave it alone and it will leave you alone. (usually)

Seeking Unity with Nature: - Try to live with only nature for a day or two. Learn to accept nature as it is. Why use things you don't need to use and

make more pollution?

Fun is good for the soul. Have fun and play G.A.M.E.S.

Take time to look around and just see how things are.

Every few weeks, do something pointless and fun.

Take time off to be active, read, go walking in mud, and just generally have fun.

Live simply and sparingly. Use only what you need.

Why do we use what we do not need?

Try to forget about your work once in awhile.

Seeking Unity with Nature: - Try to live with only nature resources.

*Walk through the mud at least once in your life. Don't always be serious.
Simplicity and Clarity - All you really need is optimism.
When giving instructions, speak slowly and clearly and explain yourself.
If you see a bee, leave it alone and it will do the same.*

*Don't make a commitment you can't keep.
Are you living to the full simplicity possible in your community? Do you buy things
you don't need? Do you worry too much?
Take walks, runs, look around and explore and appreciate the nature around you*

How can we make a difference?

A report from the Visions and Strategies Sessions
of the Pre-CYM Workshops, Aug. 11 and 12.

We encourage Friends to discern the spiritual basis for caring for Creation, and to see how all is interconnected. As a way to do this, the Visions and Strategies sessions listed personal projects which could make a difference to the Earth. Then we brainstormed on **Strategies Friends could use in our Meetings, Working Groups and Committees**. We offer them under the following headings:

Advocacy

- National bodies such as Canadian Yearly Meeting could pressure government to act on issues of climate change,
- could encourage local governments to promote change in local bylaws, e.g. allowing for household systems that are healthful and practical such as composting toilets and use of grey water.

Education

- Could invite visitation to allow visitors to see Friends' organic farms.
- "Work Camp" concept to assist sustainable development, to train youth and ourselves and share as part of another community in either Canada or the wider world.
- Youth training in non-violence.
- Funds for education in appropriate technology.
- Friends schools and colleges emphasizing sustainable living.

Information and Communications

- Search, compile resources (from, on the Web) for the various topics of sustainable life.
- Information-sharing exchanges.
- More communication via electronic mail for Committees.
- Meet via telephone or teleconference at least half the time.

Economics

- Reform the national and international credit union movement, starting with our local CU's or co-ops
- Invest in socially responsible ways.
- MM's, CYM and other Quaker bodies should hold their investments only in ethical instruments, giving priority to funds such as OIKO Credit.

Our Homes

- Designing homes that embrace appropriate technology, and nurturing environmentalists to live in them.
- Retrofitting existing housing for solar energy and heating.

Within our Meetings: our structure and contents

We could:

- use only re-usable plates, cups, utensils,
- use compact florescent light bulbs,
- hold sustainable meetings free of non renewable energy resources

Young Friends Vivian, Graydon, Brian, Ainsley and Ivan demonstrate a solar cooker.

and fast food imports,

- construct Eco-Friendly Meeting houses,
- do energy audits on Meeting Houses and correct problems.

Within our Meetings:

Programs

- Help establish groups who may wish to join in sustainable living re loans, management, etc.
- Explore ways to change attitudes (our own and the public's) so that "giving up things" evolves to "voluntary simplicity" evolves to a "world of Enough for all"
- Create Simple Living support groups
- Monthly Meetings could have discussion groups, sharing ideas and supporting other members acting in sound ecological ways.

Within our Meetings: Yard and Transportation

- Reduce or eliminate the need to mow and water lawns with less lawn, mowing with rotary mower.

Granola baking in a solar oven built by Vince Zelazny.

- Make Meeting Houses available to committed groups to reduce need for added buildings.
- Friends could consider whether we are using the world's resources well, in the amount of travel we do by our memberships in so many organizations, and consider how much paper we use in our communications.
- Share transportation, encourage Friends to carpool, bike, walk, or take public transport to Worship, committee meetings, CYM.

Within our Meetings: Food

- Serve only organic, fair trade coffee and tea; compost food scraps; encourage those without gardens to bring their own compost to the Meeting; set regular time for prayer for change in humans' use of God's Creation, similar to worldwide Prayers for Peace; hold Meetings for Business on same day as Meetings for Worship to reduce transportation needs; re CYM: make a commitment to prioritize buying first: organic locally grown foods, then locally non-organic foods, then our nationally produced foods, then all others.
- MM's and CYM could commit to buying fairly traded coffee, tea, chocolate and sugar, share excess food with Friends who have less.

Call of the Crows to a Council of All Beings by Peggy Land

It seems that, like us, crows are loud, aggressive, plundering rascals who are not likely to doubt their rightful place on this Earth. But we tend to dislike them, and perhaps it is because of these very similarities. And perhaps when I first really heard their cries, that is why I initially resisted speaking for them at what would later be the Council of All Beings- the final stage of a workshop inspired by the Buddhist

Peggy Land

scholar Joanna Macy, and led with utmost care and sensitivity by skye faris.

Despite our small numbers, the three of us had no doubt that this was the time and place for us to be. So we sat down under a grove of gigantic poplar trees in a triangle, and there on the ground in the exact centre, we saw that a lovely hawk feather had been waiting for us. skye said later that she knew at that moment that this, her seventh such workshop, was going to be good!

And it was good — together we shared our pain for our wounded planet and then explored some features of our bodies which we have inherited from previous lifeforms. For example, our articulated spines from ‘Grandfather Fish’ and our muscular heart-pumps from ‘Great-Grandmother worm’. The next day, bringing deeper appreciation of what has already been lost, and where we evolved from, we meditated on what lifeforms might like us to speak for them at a Council.

Well, I have always felt drawn to turtles and birds, but mainly the pretty ones and ones that sing beautifully. As I meditated, the cawing of the crows annoyed me. Why ever would they need me to speak for them? Could it be that even they are endangered too? I considered this while going to get some water for painting the masks we were to make. On the way back, a lovely crow feather greeted me in the grass so I accepted this gift and the message. It was incorporated into my black mask as a kind of vertical eyebrow. When I went to find another, there were none to be seen of course — feathers don’t appear on demand, is my experience — but a little later when I least expected it, another appeared, and almost exactly the same size.

We had worked together in silence on our masks, all representing beings of the place we shared — skye’s turned out to be the Wild Carrot (aka Queen Anne’s Lace), and Barbara Aikman’s, the hawk. We tried them on and became rooted in the ground, or beings of the air respectively. We spoke in a ceremonial way to each other: “I am Wild Carrot, and I speak for the so-called weeds of the world.” We shared what it was like for us, and gave thanks for each other’s strengths in

these difficult times. For a short time, it was as if we had become the very beings that had called us.

Later, in the intergenerational event that followed, we were asked to help represent two of the four life elements, Earth and Wind. While we all sorted ourselves out into the four elements and shared what they meant to us, the crows watched us intently from trees. They seemed to caw in agreement, often three times, after our leader explained what she wanted us to do next. Eventually, we all found our places in the great scheme of things, and wove the strands together in joyous celebration.

When we all met for our first Meeting for Worship together on the Monday morning, two days later, a relative new-comer invited other-than-humans to join us in worship as well, and she specifically invited the crows, “because even they are endangered too.” Crow feathers continued to appear as symbols of our unity with nature. Several Friends were seen wearing them in their hair. When Ruah Swennerfelt found one immediately after I had shared my crow story with her, on her way to the chapel, we hugged as sisters of the crow clan. Louis Cox found another lovely one and gave it to me, so I was proud to wear it when I gave my report from the Ecology Working Group. That was the afternoon after Tom Baugh spoke to us of the importance of “finding our place in nature again.” From where I sat, I could hear a crow cawing in agreement exactly while Tom was

saying those words. When I finally returned home to work on an article about the West Nile Virus, it was to learn that the virus had crossed

Peggy Land, skye faris and Barbara Aikman as Crow, Wild Carrot and Hawk.

the border into Canada, in the
form of one dead crow. Its warning call haunts me, but I
will never again resent it. Thank you, skye, for helping us to

identify and appreciate that wonderfully vibrant and rascally
crow-energy at CYM 2001.
Peggy Land is a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting.

Seeking Unity with Nature Through Traditions and Testimonies

by Caroline Parry

I registered for the Pre-Canadian Yearly Meeting workshop on Seeking Unity with Nature because I like to preface my participation in our business sessions with a time to get spiritually grounded. Also, as an actively “green” person, I was excited by this theme for CYM, and was looking forward to worship, learning and networking around it. Originally, I chose Ben Richmond’s section on “Traditions and Testimonies” because I mistakenly believed he was a wise elder I had met through Friends General Conference, and I thought it would be most interesting to hear what he had to say. At our introductory session, however, I learned Ben was not who I thought he was, and so instead felt attracted to Kate Davies’ section on “Vision and Strategies for Change.” Eventually, I reasoned that I am in Kate’s meeting and can talk and learn more with her here at home, in contrast to meeting and learning from an “outside” leader, so I reverted to ‘plan A’ and attended Ben’s group on “Traditions and Testimonies” without any clear idea of what I would be getting — I got a lot!

Normally, I am a heavy note-taker when someone gives a talk or leads a workshop, as I find writing helps me to concentrate and focus during the talk, and my notes are an invaluable resource afterwards. But this time I initially arrived at our classroom without paper, so my notes began as many scribbled addenda to the first handout Ben distributed — which I think was from *The Journal of George Fox*, (Nickalls edition, p.263) for the year 1656. We started, however, with a consideration of the early chapters of the Book of Genesis, trying to determine the characteristics of life, people and their relationship to God pre- and post- “The Fall.” Unfortunately, not only are those early notes incomplete, but I also see that my pen slipped from time to time

when I got dozy — oh me, the flesh is weak! Nonetheless, I think I can share much of the richness of the workshop with readers. We also considered the Lord’s Prayer as given in Luke 11:2-4, and the idea of the Jubilee Year, with references to Acts, Deuteronomy, Leviticus and Romans.

Ben’s goal was to lead us, through studying the Biblical text, to see how much of Fox’s fiery language and imagery, and hence our testimonies, are directly rooted in the Bible. He encouraged us to understand Quakerism as primitive Christianity, NOT Protestant-filtered theology, based in the study of the Bible as its primary source. Thus when Fox exhorts Friends to “Keep . . . in the wisdom of the creation, that is pure . . .,” he is talking about conditions before the fall of Adam and Eve. Further to my confessions in the last paragraph, I must also say I am not a strong Bible scholar or reader, but even seasoned Christocentric Friends like Susan Bax, who ARE strong Bible scholars and readers, were clearly engaged with, and stretched by, Ben’s explanations and ideas. Below are a number of those, listed more in point form than as a cohesive essay. May you too be enriched by Ben Richmond’s insights.

- Ben views the Creation story as myth, and believes it is told in Genesis not so much to give us an historical account as to explain the causes of things, explain why we experience the world as we do.
- How evangelical Fox is! His exhortation to “Spare no deceit! Lay the sword upon it” refers to the sword as “the word of God.” Ben said this was the imagery that caught the attention of, and sent out, the early Quakers and contributed to the colossal rate of growth of the early Quaker

movement.

- For Fox, the “that of God” which we think of as quintessentially Quaker, was certainly there within people, but trapped, not free. Ben referred us to Fox’s words about “the spirit that is transgressed and in prison, which hath been in captivity in every one.” Fox and the early Quakers believed the spirit of Christ has the power to get past or break down all that holds us in captivity. This is essentially a spiritual transaction.
- Fox doesn’t say what it is that holds us in captivity, according to Ben Richmond. Our group had considerable discussion about the many ways in which the principle of God in each of us is oppressed: selfishness, greed, self-centredness, societal oppressions, emotional trauma and hurts.
- If we really study Fox, Ben believes, we will see he is telling us that Christ can bring us into an inward understanding where we will see the roots of our Quaker testimonies in the “pre-Fall” realities, like the equality of the sexes that existed before Eve ate the apple and persuaded Adam to follow her. For another example, Ben sees the abundance and “interesting work” of naming Creation that characterized that pre-Fall time as the basis of our testimony of simplicity.
- Referring to both John Woolman’s *Plea for the Poor* and to Acts 2:38-47, Ben helped us consider many aspects of the ideas concerning the 7th sabbatical year and 50th jubilee year. He pointed out how the initial total sharing of their belongings among the early Christians began to deteriorate,

and the blessed community became split by hierarchy — leading to classism, racism and sexism.

- In Romans 8:2-9 Paul writes to the Romans and contrasts the “law of the Spirit” (when we are aware of having the Christ within us and of listening to God) with the “law of sin and death” (all the negative aspects of “after the Fall”). In Paul’s language, the term “flesh” essentially stands for the life of not listening to the spirit of God.
- Romans 8:15-17 refers to an understanding that we are children of God, the heirs of God, jointly with Christ. We have to be willing to suffer with Christ, to be humble and low, in order to be lifted up in glory with Christ. This is central to William Penn’s thesis of “No cross, no crown.” In 21st century terms, this means we have to be willing to stand up against the dominant culture and its fear-based economy, with its consequent exploitation of all that can be exploited.
- In reading Romans 8:18-21, remembering how important it is not to take the ‘fallen world’ as real, Ben tries to establish connection with people spiritually not by proselytizing, but by

asking, “How does the witness of the spirit of God work in you?” and listening to their stories.

- Ben spoke of longing for a Society of Friends where we ALL share our resources. For him, building the spiritual communities of our meetings is how we can undergird our spirituality. We need life together — in God and in community.
- In the Lord’s Prayer: think of sin as whatever alienates us from God. The term “our daily bread” has more than literal meaning of food. The original word translated as ‘daily’ doesn’t appear anywhere else in the Bible! It may well mean ‘the essential essence’ or “bread of Life”; or it might connote the bread of the future, when “the Kingdom comes.”
- Ben believes that those who have adopted the Lord’s Prayer have chosen to live a life based on basic generosity, of forgiveness of debt and the commandment to “give and it will be given unto you.”
- Ben affirmed that the faith community needs to undergird all our activity, and made the point

that ecological action groups are functioning as new faith communities for many people.

- Might we create an ecological testimony? Many of the ideas we shared might be woven into such a testimony. In our group, mindful of the request to create a skit or other contribution to the Saturday evening all-gathering program, we devised a small piece, based on the chorus of the Woody Guthrie song “This Land Is Your Land.” Here are the words which we invited everyone to join us in singing and chanting — may you use them, too, perhaps invoking other aspects of creation precious to you, as well.

[sung]

*This land is precious,
This earth is holy,
From Bonavista to the Vancouver
Island,
From the Arctic Circle to the Great
Lakes’ waters —*

This land is shared by all of life.

[chanted]

WONDER, GRATITUDE, REVE-
RENCE, GOODNESS, INTER-
DEPENDENCE, HUMILITY,
JUBILEE — SHARE THE
WEALTH!

[repeat chorus]

*Caroline Parry is a member of Ottawa
Monthly Meeting.*

From EWG to QEAN By Bryan Dragon and Kitty Dunn

The Ecology Working Group, renamed Quaker Ecology Action Network of CYM, is an ad hoc committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting, established in 1999 as an informal email reply-all list of a dozen people. It provided Canadian Friends with their own environmental network to address environmental issues from a Canadian Quaker faith outlook, as well as network with FCUN (Friends Committee on Unity with Nature) and other faith-based and secular environmental groups. There was no budget; it was an experiment, in networking by email alone. In 2001, the EWG received a budget of \$350. Over this year, the number of network members doubled; during this (2001) session of CYM, that number doubled again, to fifty.

For the past year, the co-clerks have been Peggy Land (Ottawa Monthly Meeting) and Arnold Ranneris (Victoria

Monthly Meeting). They are now stepping down. Vince Zelazny (New Brunswick Monthly Meeting) and Bill Curry (Prairie Monthly Meeting) take their places for the coming term.

“An Ethic of Sustainability” gave a Canadian Quaker outlook toward environmental concerns. It appeared in the **Reports for Canadian Yearly Meeting 2000** and in *The Canadian Friend* of March 2000. It is inspiring to read. This year CYM approved a minute on sustainability, which appears at the end of this article.

Over the past year, the network developed a five-star eco-friendly meetinghouse audit in conjunction with formal energy audits of three meetinghouses. The committee also developed an eco-friendly home and garden audit for personal use. In cooperation with a United Church minister, Peggy Land

initiated an authentically grass-roots Canadian initiative for the Jubilee Renewal of the Earth Campaign. It is called "Consider Clover." They prepared a pamphlet, which will be posted on our website. Another network member initiated the preparation of an educational booklet exploring nuclear energy and nuclear waste issues in language aimed at the grade six level. We are supporting its publication and are posting it on our website. Last year's budget of \$350 will fund these efforts and will help print Tom Baugh's talks (which will also be posted on our website – can you afford not to visit it?). Still another initiative was a CYM display prepared by ten different Meetings describing what their members and attenders have done over the past year to shrink their ecological footprints. Many Friends are working very hard upon ecological concerns, doing so quietly and effectively as researchers, advocates, organic farmers and growers, and in other areas, as they live their eco-witness.

At CYM this year, our network underwent a name change, becoming the Quaker Ecology Action Network of CYM (pronounce it KEAN, please). Here is the minute which accompanied the name change:

The QEAN strongly encourages all meetings and individual Friends to take action to reduce their ecological footprints by conducting ecological audits, such as the one developed by the QEAN, and implementing appropriate measures

The Network recommends that all Meetings establish their own Ecology Committees to facilitate this work. We invite Meetings or their Ecology Committees to provide ongoing information on their progress through QEAN for CYM 2002. QEAN and FCUN will act as a support and a resource to the Meetings and their Ecology Committees, and will report back to the next CYM.

Our network is currently focusing its work in eight areas, which we have called sections of QEAN. We invite participation in this work by Friends across Canada. Have a look at this list and let us know where you want to fit:

- *Eco-friendly Meetinghouse Projects & Home Projects*
- *Ethical Considerations of Biotechnology*
- *Climate Change*
- *Nuclear Energy*
- *Sustainability*
- *Ecotheology Discussions*
- *Vision and Strategies*

There is a close relationship between QEAN and FCUN. Louis Cox and Ruah Swennerfelt of FCUN have attended CYM for several years, and drawn Friends into numerous discussions of ecological concerns and their spiritual origins. FCUN held its Annual General Meeting in Toronto in October 2000. During May 2001, Louis and Ruah made a 6,000 mile trip across Canada, between their home in Burlington, Vt. and Bellingham, Wash., with visits to Thousand Islands, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Argenta Monthly Meetings. Louis and Ruah live in an energy self-sufficient house, where they publish *Befriending Creation*, which appears semi-annually and is available from FCUN, 173-BN Prospect St., Burling-

ton, Vt., 05401-1607, or through CSFC. They are members of QEAN and will share resources with us.

Tom Baugh was another source of light for this CYM session. He presented the Bible Study sessions and was here with his wife Penny from "the deep woods of the southern Appalachian foothills in Georgia", where they are part of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting. A career biologist and ecologist, Tom became interested in theological questions about ten years ago. He took an MA in theology, with a thesis titled "Ecological Theology: Search for Synthesis." His search led to the literature of the Wisdom Tradition.

Tom's Bible/Quaker Study sessions used familiar texts from the Old and New Testaments to open the way into what he calls "a green theology of oneness with creation." He encouraged us to hope that we are actually part of a general awakening, a new enlightenment. Quakers, he suggested, have a particular role in this awakening, and do so by virtue of a consciousness that has grown out of affirmations about our unity with the natural world that began with Fox and Penn. This role is ours as well, he said, because of our consistent belief in a God-centred universe whose inner truth and meaning can be known through the vehicle of continuing revelation. This role is best exercised, he added, in a simple life, the longstanding ideal of Quakers witnessing to truth. Each day, Tom gave us searching queries for the worship study sessions. The one he left us in his last talk was:

"What one thing can I do to help an earth in crisis?"

Tom is now a member of QEAN, and will undoubtedly have a dynamic role in our ecotheology discussions. Care to join them? Contact us at our website. Go to the CYM website (www.quaker.ca) and click on EWG or QEAN; or, get in touch with a network member in you meeting; or, contact one of the network clerks.

Bryan Dragon is a member of Yarmouth Monthly Meeting and Kitty Dunn is a member of Calgary Monthly Meeting.

Canadian Yearly Meeting, Sixth Day Morning, August 17, 2001

Minute on Quaker Ecology Action Network

We approve the proposed minute on Sustainability, which now can serve as a Minute of Record, to be used by any Friend or meeting as an expression of our beliefs on sustainability.

Minute on Sustainability

Friends believe we are all manifestations of the Creator, the Divine Spirit, God. As our knowledge has grown we have come to realize that indeed all life forms are exquisitely inter-related and inter-dependent; thus all life is sacred. We envision a Religious Society of Friends in the 21st Century that includes in its testimonies a clear call of responsibility to live in harmony with all life on Earth.

We see that our traditional peace testimony of nurturing peace with each other must be clearly expanded to include nurturing peace with all of the Created world. We are inspired to do this with a renewed respect for Creation which goes beyond self-interest. We envision a relationship with Earth that allows us to see ourselves as an integral part of God's creation and not as the sole inheritors of it, to use as we will. We seek non-violent ways of meeting the needs of our species without compromising the viability of other species with whom we share this Earth. While Friends respect science as a useful tool for understanding aspects of reality, we recognize there are divine mysteries that remain beyond our ability to understand.

Human exploration has revealed the Earth to be a beautiful blue-green sphere in the vastness of space — our home in the Universe. We will further strive to understand and respect Earth processes — among these, the growth and respiration of living things, the flow of the Earth's waters, and the natural flow and mixing of gases in the atmosphere — and do our utmost not to upset its balance, and to strive to restore balance where it has been upset.

Given the implications of Friends testimonies on peace, on simplicity, on equality, and on respect for integrity of Creation, we pledge ourselves to the Precautionary Principle, by which new technology is embraced with great caution. Holistic accounting of impacts, including scientific, moral, and ethical accounts may or may not confirm technology's benefits. These things may only be known in the fullness of time.

We further pledge to share these concerns with the wider human society outside the Society of Friends, and to support and love one another as we carry these concerns forward.

While evidence of ecological disaster is all around us, we can and must make changes now which will heal our spiritual and physical connections with the Earth. In the tradition of First Nations Peoples we work to ensure a better future for, at the very least, the next seven generations. We see that significant changes in the way we live our day-to-day lives are necessary for life on Earth to survive and flourish.

Quaker Ecology Action Network Minute for Canadian Yearly Meeting

To follow up from this 2001 session, CYM prayerfully encourages all Meetings and individual Friends to take action to measure and reduce our ecological footprints. QEAN offers suggestions and resources:

- Conduct ecological audits
- Establish monthly meeting ecology working groups or networks to address issues and facilitate change within meetings, and as bodies which can network with other faith-based groups and beyond the faith community.
- Make use of resources provided by Friends Committee in Unity with Nature, QEAN and other groups.

QEAN will welcome news from monthly meetings and individual Friends about their activities and results so we can share with one another through reports, poster displays and other means at CYM 2002. News can be sent to QEAN through its Email forum or to one of the Co-Clerks, Vince Zelazny or Bill Curry (s.t.c.)

Steps in the fight against patenting of life forms in Canada

by Anne Mitchell

In August 2000 the Yearly Meeting agreed to write to the Prime Minister on the issue of patenting life forms. Harvard University has sought the right to patent a genetically altered mouse in Canada for cancer research. The Federal Court of Appeal upheld Harvard's appeal and agreed that the mouse should be patentable in Canada.

Canadian Yearly Meeting wrote to the Prime Minister asking that the Federal Government appeal this decision to the Supreme Court of Canada. In its letter to Jean Chrétien, CYM expressed its concern that such a decision has far reaching ethical, societal and moral implications – and that such a decision should not be made by two out of three federal court judges. Rather, the decision should be made by parliament after a fully informed public debate. Other groups including the Commission on Faith and Justice of the Canadian Council of Churches, Greenpeace, Council of Canadians and the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy wrote expressing similar concerns.

In the fall of 2000, CYM received a response from the Prime Minister's office indicating that the Government of Canada was going to seek leave to appeal this case.

In January 2001 the issue of patenting life forms was raised at the Ottawa Monthly Meeting retreat. A minute came out of that retreat which included the query – “What is it in nature and in human knowledge that we have the right to own?”

In May 2001, the St Lawrence Regional Gathering also considered this issue and a minute from that gathering included – “that all of life is sacred” – and asked that this concern be brought to the attention of the Canadian Council of Churches.

Later in May 2001, the Governing Board of the Canadian Council of Churches heard a panel presentation on biotechnologies, heard the minute from the Ottawa Meeting retreat and the St Lawrence Regional gathering, and agreed to consider seeking intervenor status before the Supreme Court of Canada on the commodification of life issues related to this case. The decision was deferred to the Executive of the Canadian Council of Churches in consultation with the Biotechnology Working Group of the Canadian Council of Churches.

In June 2001, the Supreme Court of Canada granted the Government of Canada leave to appeal the decision of the

lower court.

In July 2001, the Executive of the CCC agreed to seek intervenor status, along with the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, before the Supreme Court of Canada.

In August, the CCC and the EFC engaged the services of a lawyer to help them with this case, held preliminary meetings on the arguments that will be put forward in an affidavit to be submitted to the Supreme Court.

At CYM, this year, the Yearly Meeting agreed to support this application to the Supreme Court. The affidavit will be submitted by September 13th. The Court will then decide whether or not to allow the CCC to intervene on this case.

Anne Mitchell is a member of Toronto Monthly Meeting and the CYM representative on the Governing Board of the CCC.

Anne Mitchell

To the Editor,

The article, “Ecological Integrity & Religious Faith,” that appeared in the May issue of *The Canadian Friend* was originally written as a supporting document for a proposal being submitted to the Program Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. As such, it was addressing the situation of the Society of Friends in the US. Before it went out for wider circulation I should have made that clear in the text. When it appeared in *The Canadian Friend*, I immediately realized it did not reflect accurately on the situation of the Society of Friends in Canada.

I recognize that Canadian Yearly Meeting has had a long-standing relationship with both the World Council of Churches and the Canadian Council of Churches and has worked on environmentally related issues in these forums. I recognize that Canadian Friends Service Committee has long worked on many projects of direct ecological significance. I also recognize that CYM's current International Affairs project in Ottawa is making environmental issues central to its start-up orientation. While the general analysis of my article may be relatively appropriate for Friends in Canada, the observations on lack of participation in ecumenical coalitions on the environment and a lack of focus on public policy are not. In Friendship,

*Keith Helmuth,
New Brunswick Monthly Meeting*

What Happens in Meeting for Healing?

By Caroline Balderston Parry

At Canadian Yearly Meeting 2001, I was very glad to be able to offer to be the anchor person for Meeting for Healing, having helped Ottawa Meeting have a monthly group for this purpose for several years.

Over the course of the CYM week our usual lunchtime gathering of Meeting for Healing convened in three different places, until we found the right quiet location. Each day at least four or five F/friends gathered together in a worshipping circle, absorbing latecomers with ease. Those present changed somewhat each day, though several faithful folks attended all our sessions (perhaps they were just more efficient lunch eaters?). All told, perhaps ten or twelve different individuals attended over the five days we met. A more significant statistic, however, is that we were given (or brought with us) a total of about 60 names of individuals, plus several families and the situation in the Middle East, to pray for.

Initially, I suggested we centre down with a special prayer for our group, each asking in whatever style was our own heart-centred way, that this meeting to pray for healing would go well and be well-attuned to Divine guidance. Then I began with reading out names given on the slips of paper collected from a central spot (we used a beautiful cloth bag made by Jo Vellacott, pinned to the general announcement board). I paused after saying each name, hoping people would be able to concentrate on each name in turn.

Different members of the worshipping circle then spoke up to name someone, sometimes only a first name, and offering a bit of information about their ‘subject’ if they could. Each day followed the same pattern, although after the third session we stopped reading out all the names we’d accumulated, as the list became too lengthy. However, I wrote all those names on the board each day, so we could remember as many as possible. Generally we closed with a warm circle of hands, but on the first day we also shared something about a healing we had experienced and were grateful for. I reminded the group of John Calvi’s pithy wisdom: all prayers boil down to be of one or two types: HELP! or THANK YOU! It seemed good to balance our requests with gratitude, as well.

Over the week, several people shared their inner process, explaining what they do during Meeting for Healing. We thought others might be interested in what was said, perhaps even feel encouraged to join us or to start their own Meeting for Healing within their home meetings. Initially, I wrote up two prayers/process comments for the CYM daily bulletin, but as the sharing expanded, I felt sure there was enough wisdom to create an article in *The Canadian Friend*.

☪ Barb Aikman told us she begins with this cleansing prayer:

*May I be at peace;
May my heart remain open;
May I awaken to the light of my own true nature;*

May I be healed;

May I be a source of healing to all beings.

Then she repeats this prayer, replacing the word “I” with the name of the person she or the group is praying for.

- ☪ Betty Polster said she visualizes each person, if she knows him or her, and surrounds them with love.
- ☪ Doris Calder holds each person or situation up to the Divine, asking for their needs to be met, “in accordance with God’s will.”
- ☪ Jo Vellacott suggested we consider the meaning of “healing” as “moving towards wholeness.”
- ☪ Lynne Phillips learned (through a book called *Gifts of the Spirit*) that anyone can give a blessing, that blessings aren’t only for a clergy person or other spiritual leader to give. So she simply tries to do that, surrounding the individual just named, or who has just asked to be held in the Light, with blessings.
- ☪ I myself usually repeat a prayer first said to me by a loving body worker named Mary Anne Carswell, in Toronto (actually I think this was published in these pages a few years ago, but probably bears repeating):

*May the Radiant Light
and the Healing Energy
of the Universal Love
Be active in this place;
May it surround and protect,
nourish and sustain [person x] and myself;
May its peace touch his/her/my/our hearts,
Allowing her/him/me/us to let go
and heal his/her/my/our self/ves.*

I try to say it with focussed intention, concentrating on each name, and if my mind wanders, I just start the prayer again.

At the end of our final Meeting for Healing, Bert Horwood shared some wisdom he had learned from a Navajo teacher. To those Native People, healing is seen as more than “to cure” — more a matter of being in harmony with the natural and social order. The Navajo word for this concept is not easily translated, but “beauty” is how it is often expressed in Navajo prayers. Typical Navajo prayers, which may be familiar to Friends, may sound like this:

Now I walk in beauty

Beauty is before me

Beauty is around me,

above and below me. . .

Later Bert learned of a Celtic parallel idea, embodied in

the image of the breastplate of St. Patrick, that healing can mean to be surrounded by a loving balance. For that week at CYM, we all were indeed held in loving balance as we prayed that so many others might also be "healed."

Caroline Parry is a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting.

CYM 2001: "Live. Laugh. Love. Sleep later."

While reading a magazine on the ride home from Canadian Yearly Meeting, I saw an ad that could have been written about Yearly Meeting. It said: "Live. Laugh. Love. Sleep later." This simple saying perfectly captures the spirit of my favourite week of the year. **By Nori Sinclair.**

LOVE

This year's journey out to Nova Scotia embodied my desire to live a little more adventurously. My mom, my sister, my sister's friend and I travelled to CYM on the train. My first long train trip ever, it was the first of many new experiences this trip. I found it amazing that I didn't even know how big Canada actually was until I saw how the different landscapes blended into each other. Rocky mountains of the west, both short and green hills and majestic snowy peaks rose above the train. Trees of all types and colours stretched proudly upwards, reaching for the sky, and rolling hills interrupted the endless yellow expanse of the prairies. The sun shone brightly as the train travelled through the Canadian Shield, and its

thousands of sparkling sapphire lakes called invitingly. I saw the tidal bores of the Atlantic provinces for the very first time and was astonished to see the muddy trails carving lazily through farmer's fields, slowly filling with chocolate brown water from the ocean. I saw all types of animals: ever-present cows of myriad shapes, sizes and markings and flocks of majestic blue herons. Beaver lodges abounded, reminding me why the beaver is our national animal. All in all, it was an amazing train ride, filled with new and beautiful sights and the anticipation that comes with knowing that every tree, every corn field and every mountain brought me closer to CYM.

LAUGH

Laughter is good for the soul. I've never doubted the fact. At CYM we remind each other constantly what it is to see the humour in a situation, whether it be deliberate or accidental. We are even able to laugh at ourselves, truly a wonderful gift. There are lots of examples of the humour so apparent at CYM, but I wouldn't want to make anyone feel "excluded" by what might seem like an inside joke. I don't know if anybody noticed the raucous laughter coming from the Young Friends' table at the picnic. Four of the Young Friends had decided to hold a sandwich-making contest. I had never thought such a contest could be a spectator sport, but did I ever enjoy it! The judges (the makers themselves) debated the

use of such bizarre sandwich ingredients as salsa and potato chips, as well as the relative merits of different luncheon meats. I had a hard time telling who enjoyed eating those sandwiches more, the actual eaters or the audience!

Always popular at CYM is my favourite rough-and-tumble contact sport "Wink." It's a bit tough to explain how to play, but it involves some seriously tension-relieving wrestling. We always play at the beginning of the week, to allow time for recovery from various bruises and scrapes. Even with some slight injuries, it always amazes me that we can play such a physical sport carefully enough that we all end up having a good time.

LOVE

CYM is like coming home after a long, tiring voyage. I find it hard to express the love that exists at CYM without sounding sappy. If "friends are the family we choose for ourselves," the Young Friends are indeed my true family. I always find it astounding, the closeness that arises in our

community in such a short time. The intensity of it is incredible. It seems to me that more occurs in a week-long Quaker gathering than in a year anywhere else. It's no wonder that many of my most treasured experiences happen there.

SLEEP LATER

As we said in the 15-to-18-year-old's epistle, "Sleep robs us of precious time together and is to be avoided at all costs." We truly tried to live up to this one, but I found that I had to sleep occasionally to retain both my sanity and my coherency. Over the week I slept in progressively more interesting places. First in my bed in the dorms, then in a tent

on an air mattress, then as the tent grew more crowded, without the mattress. When we were at last crowded out of the tent, we slept a night on the high jump mat in the gym, which was quite comfy, I must say. Finally, the last night I didn't even go to bed, staying up all night for the first time ever. Granted, I did sleep a full 24 hours the next day to make up

for it...but it was definitely worth it.

At the first intergenerational meeting for worship, we were asked to write down a prayer for ourselves. I now extend my prayer to you: "May the light that shines so brightly at CYM follow you home." And may the spirit lead you to CYM next year!
Nori Sinclair is a Young Friend from Victoria Monthly Meeting.

SEEKING UNITY WITH NATURE

A CYM Quaker Bible Study with Tom Baugh

Notes by Keith R. Maddock

Tom Baugh, a member of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting, is a biologist and theologian, who obtained his doctorate of theology degree under the supervision of Matthew Fox — a noted creation theologian. He arrived at Canadian Yearly Meeting to share his thoughts on unity with nature from the perspective of, in his own words, “a Christocentric traditionalist Quaker.”

With his gifts of sound biblical and scientific knowledge, he introduced us to a fresh concept of the Trinity, including God the Creator, humanity and the natural world. His object was to expand our understanding of compassion beyond the anthropocentric model to embrace the fullness of creation. I will briefly summarize each segment of the four day series, including the list of biblical citations, other resources, and queries which he thoughtfully provided for our continuing reflection.

Day One

The first day, Tom spoke of two main threads in Christian religious thought. On the one hand, nature has been seen as good. In this context, the “dominion” we read about in the book of Genesis is the life we share with all other creatures. It is not the exclusive prerogative of humanity. This view was developed in the early church by such writers as Irenaeus and Augustine (of the once richly bio-diversified North African coast) — and continued through the Middle Ages in the reflections of such saints as Francis of Assisi, Hildegard of Bingen, and the Rhineland mystics.

The second thread seems to have held to the view that nature is not so good, and requires a firm human hand to keep it under control. Those who see it as something to be subdued and made subservient to human needs and ambitions continue to promote the destruction of the planet in our own time. A less daemonic, but still potentially harmful strand in this thinking, has developed the concept of stewardship, in which humanity still occupies a managerial role — though ostensibly for the well-being of the whole. This second strand leaves open some possibility of dialogue with fundamentalists in the contemporary concern for environmental theology.

Today there are two corresponding paths in environmental theology. With the development of an increasingly sophisticated ecological science and cosmology, opportunities are being opened for the most

progressive forms of religious development in harmony with the natural world. Yet the fundamentalist position still affirms that responsibility for care of the earth was fixed at the moment of creation, distrusting most forms of secular knowledge that seem to contradict the literal interpretation of scripture.

Tom Baugh

Bible Readings:

Deuteronomy 30:19 Jeremiah 9:11
Revelation 6:8 Genesis 8:21
Proverbs 1:24 I Corinthians 1:25
Genesis 1:26 Psalm 24:1
I Corinthians 10:26 Genesis 1:1

Other Resources:

H e s s e l & R e u t h e r ,
e d s . , C h r i s t i a n i t y
and Ecology
Joseph Sittler, *Theology for the Earth*
Jurgen Moltmann, *God in Creation*
www.earthministry.org
www.nrpe.org (National Religious Society for the Environment)

Query:

In my daily life, do I choose those patterns of living so that those who follow after me may live?

Day Two

Contemporary liberation and feminist theologians tend to sideline the concept of stewardship in favour of a more relational and holistic view of the world. The fresh emphasis is on inclusive community. While the anthropocentric model (i.e., the world created for humanity) did introduce a sense of intentionality and meaning for

creation, it has also brought us to the understanding that the inward-dwelling Spirit of the individual is the same principle that created and continues to sustain the whole.

No one is separate from the whole in this intricate web of relationships we call the natural world. But this also implies that we need to listen more intently for the signs and sounds of

God around us and within. As Nietzsche suggested, we kill God by trying to keep the divine principle to ourselves. Looking for ways to reorient ourselves into the natural continuum, we seek, with Francis Howgill, “a Heaven that did gather us and search us all.”

Bible Readings:

Romans 8:22 Genesis 1:1
Psalm 33:6 Genesis 1:10-31

I Kings 19:11-13 Colossians 1:15
Psalm 24:1 Leviticus 25

Other Resources:

God for the 21st Century (Templeton Foundation Press)
Sallie McFague, *The Body of God*
Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Gaia and God*
Paul Barnard, *The Travail of Nature:
The Ambiguous Promise of Christian Theology*

Query

How am I living as a co-creator with God to bring forth a renewed earth?

Day Three

Tom then considered what he called the “other nations” — that is, the other species with which we share the earth. There is a wealth of biblical justification for this approach, including the suggestion in Ecclesiastes that humans and animals share the same fate regardless of their real or imagined hierarchies. A developing consciousness that seems to elevate humanity over other creatures also enables us to elevate them. As Meister Eckhart wrote, “All creatures have flowed out from God’s will.”

The anthropocentric structure of reformation theology assumed that only human beings were conscious and — more explicitly — capable of experiencing pain. As a result, many creatures have been thoughtlessly tortured to serve human ends, and pushed to the brink of extinction.

Yet the Bible tells us that God favours a rich diversity on the earth (John 14:2), and whenever we move toward a mono-culture, God is grieved (Genesis 6:6). Some recent scientific studies have been exploring the feelings of animals

in the belief that their experience and their suffering reflect back upon the nature of being human. He reminded us of the thread of universal and inclusive compassion that has been an integral element of Christian religious thought. Even Luther, the humanist leader of the Reformation, conceded that God is substantially present everywhere.

Bible Readings:

Psalm 104:24 Ecclesiastes 3:19
Genesis 1:30, 9:8 Matthew 25:40
Leviticus 19:19 John 14:2
I Corinthians 15:39

Other Resources:

Andrew Lindsey, *Animal Theology, Animal Gospel*
David Griffith, *Animal Mind*
Henry Beston, *The Outermost House*

Query

How can I accept a personal responsibility for God’s creatures?

Day Four

In the final session, Tom reflected on the needless degree of anxiety we often feel when we are mindful of our destruction of the environment. It is all the more important to be active, to keep in dialogue with other people, and other religious communities who share our concern. As Paul reminded the Colossians, “In whatever ye do, do it heartily as if working for the Lord and not merely for humans (Col. 3:23).”

Other faith groups, such as Islam, Buddhism and the Chinese cosmologies are rediscovering a green thread running through their sacred teachings. Within the Judeo-Christian tradition, Quakers (among others) base their sense of relationship on the belief that God continues to dwell within Creation. This has ethical implications, as George Fox alluded to when he wrote, “it is not God’s intention that we use other creatures in a lustful manner.” In 1693, William Penn urged that we exercise caution in our use of the world. Then, in 1760, John Woolman- “awestruck by Creation” — wrote that “earth, sea, islands, bays and rivers are all the work of a God

who is perfected in wisdom and goodness.” Woolman was emphatic on the themes of simplicity and sustainability as we attempt to live in harmony with our environment with an inclusive compassion that does not focus solely on the human condition. A number of contemporary Quaker writers, including Elizabeth Watson and Ruah Swennerfelt, were mentioned as continuing this line of testimony.

Bible Readings:

Colossians 3:23 Genesis 6:6
Revelations 21:1

Other Resources

Ted Barnard, *Ecology of Hope*
Barbara Frost, *The Quakers*
www.fcun.org (Friends Committee on Unity with Nature)
www.quaker.ca/ewg (Quaker Ecology Action Network)

Tom Baugh's address:
White Oak Cottage, 3021 Foster Manning Road
Summerville, Georgia 30747
USA

706-378-9919
springmeadow@mindspring.com

Keith Maddock is a member of Toronto Monthly Meeting.

Query:

After a week focused on issues of “earth faith and practice,” what commitment can I make to help Earth in crisis?

Reflections of a Unitarian Friend

by Nathalie Brunet

I am both a Unitarian and a Quaker. For the past six years, I have worked to help build a new Unitarian Fellowship in St-John's, Newfoundland; and for over two years I have also belonged to a Quaker Worship Group, whose revitalization after several years of dormancy was catalyzed by several members of my Fellowship. This summer I came to my first CYM gathering, looking for many things and with many questions.

At the innermost level, I came looking for spiritual nourishment. I wanted, and found, just the opportunity to spend lot of time in a spirit of worship. I love the period of silence that precedes and ends seemingly every occasion where two or more Quakers gather for any purpose. I treasured the discipline of remaining in that spirit of worship as we conducted our business in the manner of Friends. And I was challenged to keep my heart open as so many spoke in worship of the injustice and suffering in the world.

More specifically, I also came to learn from the Quaker manner of doing business. Over the years, I have increasingly taken on leadership roles in my Unitarian Fellowship, and have always approached that work as a spiritual practice, a way to serve my community by helping to shape and facilitate a process that would enable the group to move in the direction it needed to go, rather than a call for me to set the direction myself. I have grown much in the process. I had never experienced a meeting for worship for business before coming to CYM, but I had read about it, and felt that I had much to learn from a long and mature tradition of governance in a spirit of worship. This also, I found.

Throughout the week, I also found gifts I had not sought. Quaker parlance, especially words like "leading" and "discernment," gave me

Nathalie Brunet

words to express attitudes and experiences I have known but could not name. I received the gift of being *heard* in worship, and what a deeply powerful experience it is. I need to thank for this the members of my walking meditation group who stayed with me as I wrestled with new thoughts and leadings. And I found fellow recorder players! Joy in my soul!

Finally, I came to find out something about the community of Quakers today. My Worship Group is small and isolated, and contains few people with any direct experience of the larger Quaker family. So I came to find out what it's like to hang out with Quakers, and to what extent I might affiliate myself with that community. I found that, yes, I belong among Friends. But I also found myself renewing my commitment to my primary community of faith, my Unitarian Fellowship. Membership is not just a matter of theological agreement, shared practice and emotional sense of belonging; it involves a commitment of time and energy to contribute to the life of a community. Though I am finding small ways to share in the work of sustaining my Quaker community, I find that my first commitment is to my Unitarian Fellowship: this is the group I have been journeying with for these many years, and I must keep faith with it.

And so I come back full circle to my opening sentence, in the same order: I am both a Unitarian and a Quaker.

Nathalie Brunet is an attender of St. John's Worship Group, Newfoundland.

Nonviolent Peaceforce

Two Special Interest Groups on the Nonviolent Peaceforce on Tuesday, Aug. 14 and Thursday, Aug. 16 drew 23 Friends who asked how we can help prevent violence at the upcoming G8 Summit at Kananaskis, Alberta, and how we can extend the nonviolence training offered by the Nonviolent Peaceforce in Ottawa to other parts of Canada, especially in Atlantic Canada and Western Canada.

by Carl Stieren

The original proposal for creating a Nonviolent Peaceforce came from a San Francisco Friend, David Hartsough, and a Presbyterian from St. Paul, Minnesota named Mel Duncan. Since then, with the help of Ottawa Friends Carl Stieren, Sibyl Grace, Murray Thomson, Carol Hodgson and others, the first country group of this

initiative was founded with the original name Global Nonviolent Peace Force - Canada. The Canadian group is supporting the goal of the international group to create a standing, trained force of nonviolent interveners to be sent to crisis areas to prevent violence and create the space for local groups to struggle nonviolently and seek resolution.

The group discussed the possibility of Nonviolent Peaceforce either providing training in nonviolence to protesters and to police, or of organizing a Third Party Neutral force to stand between the protesters and the police at the G8 Summit at Kananaskis, Alberta in June, 2002.

The group saw the PowerPoint presentation on the Nonviolent Peaceforce, and learned about the Introductory Training Series in Conflict Resolution that the group held in Spring, 2001 in the Ottawa Friends Meeting House. There will be a fall 2001 training series as well, a special seminar on violence reduction techniques on Monday, October 15, and an International Dinner on Saturday, November 10.

Friends from Western Canada asked about the possibility of providing

training in Western Canada and Atlantic Canada. For the fall series in Ottawa, less than half of the costs of the training are covered by participant fees. Ninety percent of the remainder is provided by Ottawa Monthly Meeting, and ten per cent is provided by Nonviolent Peaceforce Canada. OMM and Nonviolent Peaceforce Canada have a letter of agreement to run the training series, the seminar, and a retreat planned for January 2002.

On Wednesday, six Friends with an interest in the Nonviolent Peaceforce visited the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre at Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. Hanna Newcombe of Hamilton Meeting, Sibyl Grace of Ottawa Meeting, and Carl Stieren of Ottawa Meeting were joined by Bea Chapman of Ottawa Meeting, Betty Peterson of Halifax Meeting, and Margaret Clare Ford of CFSC. The Centre's librarian donated some surplus books to Nonviolent Peaceforce Canada. Staff at the Centre's programme department proposed that the two organizations exchange names of appropriate trainers and recent research studies. The Centre staff also suggested that Nonviolent Peaceforce Canada bring the religious perspective on peacekeeping and violence reduction

techniques to the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre.

The group organizing large-scale unarmed peacekeeping has a new name. After considering a dozen names, the international Interim Steering Committee, meeting in Circle Pines, Minnesota, USA July 27 to 29, chose a new name: Nonviolent Peaceforce. The Canadian group, meeting on Thursday at Canadian Yearly Meeting in Windsor, Nova Scotia, also chose a new name: Nonviolent Peaceforce Canada. Trevor Chandler will be a Western contact person and Alleson Kase will be an Atlantic Canada contact person for Nonviolent Peaceforce Canada.

Carl Stieren is a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting.



Ecumenical Miscellany by Mona Callin

For the past several months Ecumenical Committee has been working on a review of its mandate. The preliminary work thus far has been carried out by Central Section of the committee. We are now seeking input from East and West Sections and from all Friends with an interest in ecumenical matters in general and the Ecumenical Committee in particular.

On Saturday, August 11th, the day before Yearly Meeting began, Ecumenical Committee held its Annual General Meeting to which all Friends associated with Ecumenical Committee present at Yearly Meeting were invited. We were fortunate in that several past and present committee members and one potential member were able to attend. As well as discussing some aspects of the

Mandate, we seasoned two important items of business to be referred to Yearly Meeting.

With reference to the mandate, the meeting decided to revert back to calling the committee, the Ecumenical-Interfaith Committee, a name we thought was more appropriate at the present time and reflected more accurately the wording of our mandate. In considering the six terms of reference, we thought that in order to more successfully meet the first one, "To provide mutual spiritual and practical support and sharing for Canadian Yearly Meeting representatives to other Quaker and ecumenical/interfaith bodies.", we agreed to establish Committees for Clearness and Care for each representative. This plan arose from concerns expressed in

response to a questionnaire circulated by the Clerk last year. Many thanks to those respondents for their assistance. The second of the 1995 terms of reference reads, "To provide information about ecumenical matters to all Canadian Yearly Meeting Friends.". Because Central Section thought this objective had not been fulfilled as well as it might be, they approached the Editor of *The Canadian Friend* with the idea for a column, "Ecumenical Miscellany", to appear regularly in the journal. It is our hope that members of Ecumenical-Interfaith Committee, representatives to wider Quaker bodies, inter-church councils and committees, and inter-faith groups will contribute reports, letters, articles, and other material for the column. Ecumenical Miscellany will also contrib

ute to meeting the third and fourth terms of reference of our mandate.

The two major items presented to the Ecumenical-Interfaith Committee for seasoning were:

- a) a follow-up on the Harvard onco-mouse item that our CYM representative to the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee brought to the committee at YM 2000. We were advised of the implications for CYM if this issue is presented to the Supreme Court of Canada, as seems likely to be the case, and;
- b) the Coordinator of Canadian Friends Service Committee introduced the very sensitive issue of the restructuring of the inter-church coalitions including the name change to Kairos.

The thoughtful consideration the committee gave to these two issues led to

the development of two carefully worded minutes which were presented to and approved by Yearly Meeting later in the week. Further information about these items will be found in the Yearly Meeting Minutes 2001.

Also during the meeting, we had the opportunity to express to the Clerk of Finance Committee our concern about funding for representatives to wider Quaker bodies. In particular, we were anxious that funding should be available to enable these representatives to attend regular meetings of their committees and carry out their responsibilities on these committees. We were especially concerned that these representatives be able to attend, on behalf of Canadian Yearly Meeting, the biennials or triennials of these committees which take place in various parts of the world.

Another way we sought to gather input from interested Friends was to offer a Special Interest Group (SIG) at Yearly Meeting 2001. We hoped Friends

present at Yearly Meeting would help us determine if the mandate drafted in 1995 was relevant in 2001. The SIG was well attended and the discussion was lively and encouraging. Friends were interested in the matters discussed at the Annual General Meeting on Saturday. The thinking behind the name change and the idea for Ecumenical Miscellany were welcomed. We also explored ways in which we could put new technology to work for the committee. Edith Miller's offer to edit Ecumenical Miscellany was gratefully accepted.

You have just read the FIRST Ecumenical Miscellany. What do you think of it? Please send your comments to the Editor of the *The Canadian Friend*.

Mona Callin is a member of Hamilton Monthly Meeting and has just stepped down as Clerk of Ecumenical-Interfaith Committee.

Globalization . . . Gobble~Your~Nation?

By Sybil Grace and Kitty Dunn

The Special Interest Group on globalization that happened at Canadian Yearly Meeting this year, with Jerry Ackerman, is starting a network to discuss ways to shine a prayerful, nonviolent light on the globalisation protest which will manifest at Kananaskis, Alberta, next June.

We hope that Quakers involved in peace and social justice issues in their communities will connect with us for ideas in making a visual national statement of Quakerism in action.

Some ideas discussed at the SIG were:

- To decentralize the protests to communities across the country to allow a greater number of concerned citizens to participate peacefully. This would reduce the impact on the fragile ecosystem of Kananaskis, and reduce the use of fossil fuels transporting people across the country.
- To hold days of prayer and fasting (a Gandhian measure) and silent vigils, prior to the meeting in June.
- To create street theatre to attract media attention away from

their focus on violence.

- To allow Quakers who are led to come to Calgary to protest, offering a Quaker billet and support.
- To encourage local meetings to offer training workshops on nonviolent protest as a public declaration of our testimonies.

Please encourage your Monthly Meeting to make a request to Canadian Friends Service Committee to consider such a project; please send us your ideas or enlargements on these ideas; please ask to be part of our email network; please connect with like-minded organizations and faith groups in your community and commence the planning-

Kitty Dunn, Calgary Monthly Meeting, 2523 17A St. NW, Calgary AB T2M 3S7, Tel: 403 284-2550, email: <kitty_dunn@yahoo.com> and Sybil Grace, Ottawa Monthly Meeting, 45 Ella Street, Ottawa ON K1S 2S3, Tel: 613 235-2725, email: <sybilgrace@ncf.ca>.

Young Adult Friends at Canadian Yearly Meeting

by Andrew Gage

Quakers like to think of ourselves as inclusive – as bringing everyone together. Perhaps as a result, some Friends seem to view the

desire of younger Friends to hang out, on occasion, with Friends who are closer to their own age with unease. Is it un-Quakerly? Don't get me wrong: I

treasure the opportunities I have had to learn from and develop relationships with Friends who are both older and younger than myself. But in so many

meetings there are few Friends under forty, and, as someone who's in his late twenties, it can be good to spend time with Friends who are at a similar stage in their lives. Perhaps we need to support this desire in order to be inclusive.

While I attended Victoria Monthly Meeting I had made a few attempts to organize potlucks or video nights for Young Adult Friends (Friends who identify themselves, in reality or in spirit as 18 to 35 of age), occasionally with some success. I'm now in Vancouver, and have started to get involved in similar efforts there.

But this year's CYM took such networking to the national level. Katie Vaux of Wolfville Monthly Meeting had made a special effort to convince YAFs to attend, and had arranged for time to be scheduled in the agenda for a YAFs workshop and for general meeting times. At least partly as a result, I was one of four YAFs attending from Vancouver.

The first YAFs meeting brought together some fifteen or twenty YAFs or supporters. As we went around the circle introducing ourselves, it became increasingly clear that many of us were looking for a Canada-wide network of Young Adult Friends. For some of us it would be an opportunity to ask questions and learn about the Quaker faith. For others, it would be a way to foster a sense of a broader community. Still others felt that it represented the first step towards coordinating YAF involvement at CYM.

On Tuesday evening, YAFs participated in a story-telling workshop facilitated by acting instructor, Cheryl Neill. We drew pictures about a time at which we had connected with nature

and then shared stories with each other about connecting with nature. It was an invaluable opportunity to get to know each other and to form the connections we were all looking for.

Some of the YAFs also attended the Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting (CYFYM). It was a shock for me to realize that CYFYM historically included 15-35 year olds (therefore primarily made up of YAFs). For the past few years, however, Friends in the 15 to 18 year range have taken the lead, and some of us had not even realized that YAFs were a part of the CYFYM. YAFs suggested to CYFYM that it appoint a YAF to co-clerk with a Young Friend in the 15 to 18 year range, as a way of reinvolving YAFs in CYFYM; appointing Reykia Fick and Nori Sinclair as co-clerks of CYFYM follows this recommendation. In addition, YAFs were appointed by CYFYM to other positions.

Through the rest of the week YAFs discussed different options for remaining in touch through the year. There was general agreement that some form of electronic network is a good first step, which will allow us to overcome our geographic difficulties. What is not so clear is whether the existing listserv run by Young Friends is a sufficient tool, or

whether a separate website or listserv should be run to encourage interactive discussion among YAFs.

In the end we took two steps in creating a YAF e-network. First, Maggie Julian agreed to collect brief reports and updates from YAFs to be sent out on the Young Friends listserv as a periodic e-newsletter for YAFs.

Second, we have set up a YAFs website for those YAFs who wish to engage in a more active discussion. Some YAFs have expressed interest in opening this discussion page up to a broader audience – Canadian Friends at large perhaps – and possibly in developing a page connected to the quaker.ca website. But for the moment, we've created the YAFs page at communityzero.com/CYAF. Friends (and in particular YAFs) are welcome to check it out and comment on whether this type of web community is something they would be interested in participating in.

CYM was at times exhausting (one of the CYFYM meetings went to 2:30am), usually fun, and always educational. But one of the best things coming out of it, at least for me, is the hope of a strong community of YAFs across Canada. If YAFs want it, we can have it.

Andrew Gage is a member of Victoria Monthly Meeting currently residing in Vancouver. He has been involved in trying to network between Young Adult Friends in both cities.

For more information about the YAFs e-network efforts check out www.communityzero.com/CYAF or e-mail Andrew at agage@pacificcoast.net.

NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND

by David McKay

David McKay

“How was CYM?”

“Numbing.”

I always return from Canadian Yearly Meeting exhausted (all used up) and numb. It's hard to articulate just what happened or how I felt about it until two or three days later. This is, what Yearly Meeting is for me.

My first impression was that the food, while not excellent was an improvement over earlier years. This is for both food co-op and for the dining room as I signed up for both. I always count myself blessed when I return home from a Quaker gathering and can say I ate no lentils. So I was blessed (but not any longer, the doctor tells me my blood serum cholesterol is a tad higher than the 5.2 maximum he had in mind for me; already I'm learning to eat lentils at home).

The next remarkable thing was the business sessions. We seemed to conduct our business and ourselves without savaging each other on the floor of Meeting for Worship for Business (M4W4B). I hope this is as we are becoming a more peaceable people and not simply because we didn't do anything controversial enough to gore one another over. The next great spiritual hurdle for us is to find a way to do business without making our recording clerks (and their army of assistants) redraft each minute fourteen-gazillion times.

We did all sorts of good stuff on the floor of M4W4B:

- We witnessed the rise of a new monthly meeting
- We committed ourselves to looking at “governance”
- We saw the environmental concern evolve into new forms and practices
- We were exercised about our finances (and created an ad hoc committee)
- We affirmed our participation in Wider Quaker Bodies
- We endorsed a Young Friends' concern about the patenting of life
- We heard reports from CYM Committees: Home Mission and Advancement Committee (HMAC), Friends Foreign Missionary Board, and Nominating Committee
- We agreed to reorganize *Organization & Procedure*

When I go visiting as Field Secretary my visits have a formal component where I meet with a group of Friends and we address some aspect of our faith lives in discussion, worship sharing, or some combination. Then there are the informal conversations, before we gather, over breakfast, at the potluck, or just strolling down the street together. While the formal gathering may be the ostensible reason I'm there, it is often the informal moments together that speak most strongly about people's concerns in their lives and in their meetings. I found this true at CYM as well.

The conversations were about where folks lived. One Friend, new to the CYM experience, found that much of the work of CYM did not speak to his concerns. For him, as with most of us, our primary experience of Quakerism is the local meeting. In fact there are Yearly Meeting resources available to the local meeting and worship group: HMAC, Religious Education Committee, and Continuing Meeting of

Ministry and Counsel each have care and nurture of local meetings as at least a part of their terms of reference. That care for the local just seems so invisible in the priorities and agenda of the annual session sometimes. The newly renamed Quaker Ecology Action Network hopes to work more directly with monthly meetings, worship groups, and individual Friends.

About a half dozen people asked about the future of the Field Secretary Project and where I saw it going after my contract ends in March. I replied that field work of some sort is very strongly needed. I also hoped to see field work redesigned so visitations could happen to fewer places more often for whoever continues with the work in future. HMAC will have a fuller report next CYM and it should provide a renewed model (or possibly one or two) for us to consider.

I remember the reading of the names of those who passed on during the year at my first CYM as a dull formality. This year I attended the memorial meeting where we witnessed the grace of God in the lives of those who are now gone yet somehow with us. I am beginning to think it is one of the most important things we do at CYM. Maybe I'm older now and can feel the metallic taste of mortality on my lips. At any rate, word reached us this gathering of the passing of a Friend known to many: Muriel Bishop Summers. Our prayers went out to her family in this difficult time.

I appreciated the opportunities for worship. Down in Chatham, Ontario my chances to meet with Friends for worship have dwindled to my visits as Field Secretary. I surprised myself in being more faithful to the late evening worship than to early morning worship as I am ordinarily a morning person.

The Saturday we packed to go there was one last session of business and closing worship. I gather the CYM Epistle received its (nearly) final reading then but I cannot testify to that myself. By the last day I was reaching my QSP (Quaker Saturation Point) and the thought of sitting through yet another session prior to a day of sitting on buses and planes seemed excessive. Instead, another Friend and I trekked out behind the school grounds in search of the legendary birthplace of hockey.

Thanks to an obscure entry in a past schoolmaster's dairy, Long Pond (a 20 minute walk from the school) enters Canadian history. The students of King's played the first game of hockey mentioned in documentary evidence. Only it wasn't called hockey and the boys may not have used a puck.

Long Pond is smaller than an NHL rink and the corners are suspiciously square as though sculpted for the benefit of the hockey pilgrims who may visit. Despite its small size we saw a muskrat, two ducks, and a great blue heron. The heron also saw us and took flight. No day can be counted as lost in which I catch glimpse of a great blue heron in flight and I do not think I have seen one this close before. A grand day and well worth the visit.

David McKay is a member of Coldstream Monthly Meeting and Field Secretary for Ontario and Quebec.

Fosfell Friends Community

All recipients of The Canadian Friend will have received the Fosfell letter of July 2001. This is a reminder for those considering joining the Fosfell Community. A number of people have contacted us, but there are still a few openings. If you feel that Fosfell is the right place for you, please let us know so that we may decide more accurately how many units to build at this time. Ground-breaking is now scheduled for March 2002, and occupancy for the fall of 2002.

Please get in touch through

Vivien Abbott at R.R.2, Oro Station, Ontario, L0L 2E0, Tel: (705) 835 2999.

The Best Things in Life are Free (and do not harm the environment or other people)

by Kate Davies

One of the things I enjoy doing most is lying in bed just after I have woken up and reflecting on my life. I find that during the early morning stillness I can step back from the busyness of daily events and make sense of my experiences by seeing them against the backdrop of the larger ebbs and flows of life. Later, as the day unfolds, I often enjoy a walk by the Ottawa River, chatting with a friend, and reading a book. A spontaneous hug from my son or a phone call from a family member may become highlights of my day. These activities, and others like them, give me pleasure and make my life meaningful. In short, they make me feel happy at the deepest levels of my being.

I am not alone in finding happiness in such simple things. Surveys in the US and the UK suggest that most people's deepest aspirations are non-material. In the US, a 1995 survey¹ showed that 66% of the respondents said that they would be more satisfied with their lives if they could spend more time with their families and friends. In the UK survey², 38% said that given a 'free day', they would spend time with family or friends and 28% said that they would go for a walk in the country. The UK survey also indicated that most people aspire to socially and spiritually meaningful lives, rather than to lives that are characterized by material wealth and worldly success. Similarly, the findings of the earlier US survey emphasized people's desire for a greater balance between materialism and consumerism, and more meaningful values centered on family, responsibility and community.

Both surveys highlight the huge gap between what we say makes us happy and what we actually do with our lives. We say that the simple things in life are the ones that give us a real sense of

Kate Davies, Jonathan Davies, Peggy Land

meaning and contentment, but we are participants in the most consumerist society ever to exist in history. We say we want to live less materialistically, but at the same time we are part of the 20% of the world's population that is consuming 80% of its resources. While most of us believe that we buy and consume more than we need, many are deeply ambivalent about changing their lifestyles. We live, it seems, caught between the allure of the consumer society and the 'real things' that bring lasting joy and satisfaction.

But why are materialism and consumerism so seductive? What is it that makes many people in North America and elsewhere want to 'shop until they drop', despite the facts that consumerism does not make us happy and that current patterns of consumption are destroying the earth and causing all sorts of social problems?

Perhaps part of the answer lies in the way we have become distanced from the effects of our consumer society. We simply do not see the damage done by our lifestyles because it happens somewhere else – and 'not in our backyards'. Most Canadians live in

cities and towns and simply do not see the environmental and social consequences of their lifestyles. We do not often see clear-cut forests, toxic waste polluting a lake, or the scar of an open-pit mine. We do not see the sweat factories in the developing world that make the clothes for sale in Canada's stores. They are all many miles from our homes and workplaces. Moreover, as economic globalisation progresses, the distances between producers and consumers get longer and longer.

This 'distancing' is one reason why it is easy for us to blinker our eyes and our hearts to the effects of our actions, but the main reason

for our continuing fascination with consumerism is that we have been encouraged and even exhorted to consume. In other words, consumerism is largely a learned behaviour. And the key architect of the consumer society, especially since the end of World War II, has been the advertising industry. Indeed, it can be argued that the advertising industry has been more effective at changing people's behaviours and values than any other type of social intervention in recorded history. For example, when disposable garbage bags were first introduced in Canada, housewives had to be taught not to expect garbage men to empty the garbage out of the plastic bags and to return the bags for re-use in subsequent weeks.

For the last fifty years, the advertising industry has tried to convince us that our happiness depends on buying that new dress, this year's car, the latest kitchen appliance – whatever. It has created markets for new products and services by telling us that we need them, in order to be happy and fulfilled people. The advertising industry has attempted to turn us into consumers by telling us that it is good

to consume, and that we 'deserve' to have whatever it is that is being advertised. This strategy of making shopping a desirable and an ethical pastime is clear in the slogan now being used by one of Canada's largest retail chains - "Shopping is Good." Taking things even further, we are encouraged to compete with each other to see who can be the best consumer, with expressions like "keeping up with the Joneses" and "he who has the most toys wins."

But if we have learned to be consumers, perhaps we can now unlearn this destructive and harmful behaviour. As Quakers, we are

committed to simplicity and to living lightly on the earth, and around the world, and we are collectively known for our non-materialist values. Through our example, we have a unique role to play in reminding people that happiness can never be found in consumerism and materialism. We can join the millions of 'downshifTERS' who in recent years have chosen to adopt simpler lifestyles that express their core values about life.

In our hearts, we already know that the most meaningful things in life are not consumerist, and that family, friends, nature and community are the real sources of love and joy in our

lives. So perhaps we can encourage others to act on what we know and to listen to that small, still voice inside that tells us that "the best things in life really are free" (and do not harm the environment or other people).

Kate Davies is a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting.

1. *Yearning for Balance: American Views on Consumption, Materialism, and the Environment.* July 1994. The Merck Family Fund.
2. Robins, N., and Sims, A. 2000. *British Aspirations.* Resurgence 201:6-9. (July/August)

Stewardship Economics and Peter Brown

by Michael Miller

On Canada Day, last July 1, the Fredericton Worship Group of New Brunswick Monthly Meeting hosted Peter G. Brown, the distinguished American Quaker economist and environmentalist. After unprogrammed worship and potluck, he shared some of his ideas on redirecting the economy to reverse the rise of poverty and ecological damage.

Peter Brown was recently appointed Professor and Director of the McGill School of Environment in Montreal, Quebec. He attends Montreal Monthly Meeting. Elizabeth Rossinger, an alumna of McGill University and now a member of New Brunswick Monthly Meeting, helped to arrange his visit to Fredericton.

Michael Miller and gkisedtanamoogk

Using lucid, non-technical language and a set of effective slides, Peter shed light on the often murky theory and practice of mainstream economics, what he calls the Washington Consensus. This view, adopted by most countries of the world, is preoccupied with stimulating economic growth through free trade and decreased roles of government. As he said in his article in *University Affairs*, November 2000, "Instead, what is now needed is an economy of stewardship, dedicated to preserving and enhancing the commonwealth of life with which we share this planet." For those wishing to delve more deeply into this very important and timely question, I recommend Peter Brown's latest book, *Ethics, Economics and International Relations*. It is a demanding

but rewarding read, even for those not versed in the field of economics like me. A Canadian edition is being printed as I write and is available through University of Toronto Press. I used the first edition, published by Edinburgh University Press.

Let me quote the author further in his critique of economic growth as an end in itself:

Growth is not a measure of benefits but a measure of overall economic activity. That we have more of it means only that we have more of it — not that we are better off. Much economic growth creates negative side effects like pollution, but current measures don't take this into account. Indeed the money we spend to protect ourselves creates more growth!

Incomes can rise while wealth falls. If we cut trees, income can rise during the cutting, but the ability to sustain it falls after the trees are gone. Growth contains no measure of distribution, so poverty and inequality can and do rise at the same time that overall economic activity increases.

Free trade works fairly only if the parties who engage in it have comparable advantages. In the heyday of capitalism we saw how often labour and the public did not have an equal playing field with national corporations. A century later the influence of internationals rivals that of government. A healthy, equitable international economy

doesn't just happen in a vacuum. It is built on such international institutions as property, contracts, courts, banks, and constitutional regimes, according to Brown.

In his talk to the Fredericton Worship Group, Brown developed his analysis by tackling four basic questions ignored by the Washington Consensus: What is the economy for? How big should the economy be? How does the economy work? How should we think about waste?

As an example of his refreshing clarity, here is his take on how big the economy should be:

The world's economies are committed to infinite growth on a finite planet. Our economic regime rests on taking sunlight from the past that has been stored in fossil fuels, soils and forests, and spending it on current consumption. It shifts many of the byproducts of these activities to the future, from building up carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to the dispersion of heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants. Having not asked this simple question, we continue to live beyond our means, laying waste the biosphere on which we and the rest of life depend in the process.

Brown also points out that the polluter-pays principle is very short-sighted: there are some things you want to prohibit, early death for example, and not just get compensated when they happen. The policy goal should be that the material in the earth's crust and the compounds produced by society do not accumulate in the biosphere.

What I find especially disturbing is how mainstream economics has been allowed to insulate itself from what we now know about society's true place in the environment.

Here is a paragraph from Chapter 3:

Perhaps the most pervasive scientific error made by mainstream economics is that it carries forward, as an unexamined background assumption that humans are not significant actors in the earth's biophysical systems. In most economic texts there is no description of any kind of nature. There are few, if any, entries under environment, natural resources, nature or other cognate ideas. It is as if the rest of the physical world did not exist or that humans could not affect it.

But at the very common-sense level we know that this picture is completely misleading. Humans are instruments of change from the micro-environment to the global level, from what goes on in our own blood streams to the shape of mountains and the course of rivers.

The question that now comes to my mind is, "What are all the economics departments and business colleges doing about these new insights?" Nothing much, apparently. Here is Peter's answer:

Stewardship economics is not something dire or beyond our reach. It means revising our place in the world, and taking many of the tools of the current economics, such as interest rates and taxes, and putting them in the service of future life on this planet. What is not clear is whether professors of economics will have the courage to write and teach outside the destructive paradigm.

Michael Miller is a member of New Brunswick Monthly Meeting.

Creation-Centred Spirituality A new approach to spirituality by Pashta Marymoon

Although some Friends may not recognize the term 'Creation-centred Spirituality', many are likely to be familiar with the major writers within the movement – such as Matthew Fox (ex-Catholic, now-Anglican priest), Thomas Berry (who was a Passionist priest and member of the Sierra Club), Brian Swimme (physicist), and Rupert Sheldrake (biologist).

I was personally introduced to Creation-centred Spirituality (CCS) in the mid-80s through Matt's book, *Breakthrough: Meister Eckhart's Creation Spirituality in New Translation*, and actually met him at a lecture in Ottawa. Although I was very impressed, the context was still too Christian-biased for my own focus at the time. When I caught up with the movement again in the 90s, I found to my delight, that much of the reading in new science that I had been doing, was not only consistent with CCS's development, but some of my favourite science writers were actually involved in it.

While most of CCS writings still have a strong Christian overtone (albeit not the traditional one), I found that many of the

writers were moving into a more Universalistic approach, and both scientists and theologians (what Duirmuid o'Murchu refers to as 'quantum theologians') alike were re-connecting spirituality and science. As this was work I had been doing mostly on my own, from a more Wiccan/Quaker perspective, I was excited to find others moving in the same direction. I am now a member of GreenSpirit (the only non-British member) and editor for the section on 'the Goddess/Divine Feminine' of its resource papers (semi-equivalent to our *Faith and Practice*).

One of the strong points of CCS is that it is not an attempt to create a new religion, but rather a new approach to spirituality, belief/practice, and particularly creation stories (which ground the basic beliefs within the faith system), within the faith communities that already exist. At the moment, the movement still seems to primarily involve Christians, but there are many with pagans/Wiccans, Buddhist, or Taoist leanings as well. Especially in England, Quakers and Quaker Universalists have been very active in the movement – a

Quaker Universalist edits the GreenSpirit Journal (CCS group in England): another wrote the pamphlet *What is Creation-centred Spirituality?* that is used as a primer on CCS ideas. There have been a few movements the other direction as well – CCS folks who have been introduced to Quakerism and found it to be ‘the spiritual home’ they had been looking for.

There are many aspects of CCS that are consistent with modern Quakerism – a respect for all faiths; a focus on personal ‘listening to the Spirit’, rather than inter-mediated dogma – and on progressive revelation; a commitment to human rights (via its connection with liberation theology) and environmental/Deep Ecology concerns; a creative and non-control/power-based approach to resolution; a distinct rejection of hierarchy (especially as a religiously-authenticated model); and a delight in creativity and celebration of all sorts that Friends are only beginning to re-validate.

The following is the overview I wrote for the workshop on Creation-centred Spirituality that Fran Grady and I gave for the Victoria Meeting’s annual Island Gathering this spring, called ‘What is Creation-centred Spirituality? Is it Quakerly?’. We also developed a 14-page resources package, including information on Creation-centred Spirituality (short articles, bibliography, internet resources, etc.) and relevant Quaker quotes, which is available as an email attachment or ‘snailmail’ hardcopy (if one can’t receive the attachment). If you are interested in a copy, please email me at wc586@victoria.tc.ca or write to me at #401-885 Craigflower Rd., Victoria, B.C. V9A 2X4.

Introduction Statement on Creation Spirituality

Creation Spirituality integrates the wisdom of Western spirituality and the global indigenous cultures with the emerging scientific understanding of the universe and the passionate creativity of art. It is the earliest tradition of the Hebrew Bible and was celebrated by the mystics of medieval Europe. On the individual level, Creation Spirituality recognizes the artist, mystic, and prophet in each person by honoring the experiences of awe and gratitude; suffering, darkness, silence, and mystery; imagination, creativity, renewal, and rebirth, and justice-making and celebration. On the community level, Creation Spirituality provides a solid foundation and holistic perspective from which to address the critical issues of our times, including the revitalization of education, religion, work and culture; the honoring of women's wisdom, the restoration and celebration of hope in today's youth; and the promotion of social and ecological justice. On a cosmological level, Creation Spirituality advocates the telling of the universe story, and our active participation in that story, through art, education, and ritual.

from *Creation Spirituality Network Magazine*,

Creation Spirituality - Overview (by Pashta MaryMoon)

From my perspective, Creation-centred Spirituality has four primary foundations –

1. a new, - or rather in some senses, revived - approach to spirituality,
2. the new cosmology (including leading-edge scientific theories in physics, biology, etc.),
3. deep ecology and
4. evolving paradigms of Wholeness.

Others could be suggested, but these are both common and particularly significant to me. Each element of this quaternary of foundation is itself founded on a range of new approaches to understanding life and nature – their physical realities, the relationship between them, and spiritual meanings or implications they suggest– that have emerged throughout the 20th century.

1. Spiritual Approach

Creation Spirituality is not a religion, or a cult. Rather, it is an approach to personal and collective spirituality that can be applied to many religions or belief systems. The movement began in Christianity, with Matthew Fox’s work, spread to the scientific community, then to pagans (and incorporating aboriginal people’s concepts), and most recently, is just beginning to spread to other belief systems.

From its Christian roots in particular, Creation Spirituality focuses creation as a blessing, rather than a curse, and sees humankind as Evolution’s development of the capacity for co-creation, rather than ‘born and bred’ in ‘original sin’. Evil and sin are not denied, but are re-examined for their deeper nature. They are considered as resulting less from the transgression of an original Mother or ‘fall from grace’, than as the result of our continuing struggle with the limitations of our present conscious capacities and choices.

A critical element of Creation Spirituality is its panentheistic approach to the Divine and the Universe. Panentheism means ‘all is in the Divine, and the Divine is in all’. Everything, whether animate or inanimate, is considered to be integrally interconnected – electrons and atoms; plants, animals and humans; and stars and galaxies – all essentially equal, as expressions of the Divine in this Universe. One could suggest that the Divine is the soul/spirit of this Universe (and all other potential Universes), and the Universe is one body of the Divine.

‘Con-gnosis’, including both what we usually call the conscious and the Unconscious, is the connecting element – all existence, in some form or another which we may not understand, is involved in consciousness, and its process of evolution. Similar to Teilhard de Chardin (a much beloved and quoted foreparent to CCS), Creation-centred Spirituality believes that spirituality and consciousness are continually in a process of evolution, and moving towards complexity and unity - in what Teilhard called the development of the ‘noosphere’, the sphere of gnosis or knowing. Teilhard theorized that this ‘noosphere’, as a shared consciousness, would evolve as a medium to bring more and more of life into a conscious awareness of this ‘everything is connected’ – and especially for humyns.

Creation-centred Spirituality also re-claims creativity and celebration as authentic worship and participation in Divine

purpose. While austerity has its value, it is not considered more 'spiritual' than art, festive celebration, song/dance and even truly loving sex. As such, the deep and 'whole-hearted' participation of the body in worship is encouraged, rather than denied. Spiritually, we become co-creators of the world we live within – using heart and body, as well as intellect/brain, to express and share our deep, abiding and profound kinship with the Divine within all of existence.

2. New Cosmology

There are perhaps four major and profound discoveries that were made about our Universe during the 20th century.

- A. First of all, we discovered that our Universe is organized into an almost uncountable number of galaxies, and continues to create more – both expanding, and re-birthing new stars and galaxies out of old ones. The Universe and its denizens are neither fixed nor static, nor operate as the Newtonian 'mechanical clock'. We live in a constantly creating and evolving Universe. Spiritually, this indicates that there is room once again for the Divine to be an active part of the Universe itself - instead of a somewhat 'absentee landlord' ruling a mechanistic and finished Universe from a distance.
- B. Secondly, we discovered that matter does not exist as we previously thought - it is not a fixed tangible thing. Rather, it is only one form of energy: energy which functioning in two states – wave and particle – and is continually transforming from one state to the other. Spiritually, this indicates that what we would call 'magic' or 'miracle' is not against Nature or illusionary, but a significant and natural potential of the Universe. The Spirit truly is alive and functioning throughout every arena of the whole of the Universe.
- C. Thirdly, we realized that all the known matter in the Universe only accounts for 10% or less of the gravity required to hold It together – the rest of the mass required, called Dark Matter (or, a new theory – part Dark Matter, part Dark Energy), continues to be a Mystery which probably can not be solved by empirical science. Furthermore, we came to re-understand that chaos is not 'no order', but a very deep and subtle kind of order, and in fact, the very basis of creativity. Spiritually, this suggests a Divine which is intimately, immanently and creatively involved with Its creation, despite being an insistent Mystery. It also re-validates our mystical insights and intuition – as equally valid to empirical science – for only these two can glimpse the Mystery that empirical science CANNOT penetrate, yet (albeit reluctantly) has to admit, exists.
- D. And finally, we re-acknowledged that everything in the Universe – seen and unseen, definable and indefinable – is 'in relationship', in some way or another. We can no longer think in terms of separate and independent 'parts', but must change our paradigms to ones of Wholisms, and ever-larger spheres of relationship, contextualization, and interdependence. Truly, "everything is a part of everything

anyway" (Donovan song – 70s). Spiritually, this perhaps insists that all of existence be considered sacred – with no split or duality between the material/carnal and the spiritual. It also allows us to re-claim our interdependence with all of life – in fact, existence – our immense 'family', AND re-claim a equal and responsible place with it.

We are the first generation of our species to know about our cosmic heritage, or rather to prove, unequivocally, its existence. We can never again consider ourselves 'alone in the Universe', even if we never encounter the other sentient species within It: we are 'stardust', kin to all that exists. As Thomas Berry says, "The natural world is subject as well as object...the maternal source whence we emerge into being as earthlings... the life-giving nourishment of our physical, emotional, aesthetic, moral and religious existence. The natural world is the larger sacred community to which we belong. To be alienated from this community is to become destitute in all that makes us human."

3. Deep Ecology

We are also the first generation to see the Earth as a whole being, rather than as parts – as the ground we walk up, the food we eat, etc. It took both 'leaving home' and being capable of totally destroying 'home', for us to realize two critical things. First of all, this home of ours is utterly precious, miraculous, and irreplaceable. Secondly, no matter whether you consider Gaia to be a living being or not, this planet home of ours functions as a organism, and deserves respect and to be treated as having all the needs and rights as any other living being. As such, Mother Earth Herself is sacred, and so are all the parts of Her body – oceans, mountains, atmosphere; the green ones, animals and humyns alike.

Humankind is, perhaps and hopefully, moving from being an adolescent species to a young adult one. We can no longer treat Gaia as an inexhaustible parent to our every whim, or assume that She will be able to continue to provide for us if we destroy Her resources and the interdependent life that She nurtures. Instead, like any young adult, we must begin to take over some of the parenting responsibilities, in ensuring that both Mother Earth and all Her children survive and are healthy: we must go beyond the usual implications of 'stewardship' and take a co-creator or 'midwifing' role. Spiritually, the Divine Feminine is restored, as Mother Earth and Grandmother Universe.

4. Paradigms of Wholism

All of the above – panentheism, a continually creating and evolving interdependent universe, a 'grown-up' responsibility for the survival of 'home' – both are founded upon, and encourage, a paradigm of Wholism. This paradigm is neither new or simply re-emerging at this time. Our ancient ancestors perceived the world through a wholistic 'eye', although they did not have the scientific knowledge to prove

what they knew: throughout the ages, mystics of all faiths have also delved into the Mysterious Deep through such an 'eye', although their world rarely had the language to express what they discovered there. What is new in our age, is that we now have scientific evidence of these mystical insights, and the mystical and scientific can be re-united into a deeper cosmology that can be expressed.

An absolutely necessary aspect of this paradigm of Wholism is that it is not based on dualism, but rather, polarity.

Difference and diversity is not seen as competing and mutually-exclusive options, but rather as 'two (or more) sides of one coin'; not within the confines of 'either-ors' within which one must win and the other lose, but rather, as both/and, in which a mutual and equivocal resolution is always the long-term answer. Quakers have always had the insight that such resolutions were possible, if not vitally necessary – in our approach to conflict resolution, war, and social concerns, and in terms of our praxis approach to life, where belief and practice are one and the same.

In our new 'adult' and co-creator relationship with the world, we can no longer continue to split the aspects of the world, in an absolutist way, into one half which is authentic, acceptable, and/or spiritual, and another half which is not. Body is not longer distinctly split from spirit and soul, spiritual from physical, world from its creator-patterns, humyn from all other life and even the inanimate, religion from science, light from dark, thought from feeling, male ways from female ways, left from right hemisphere of the brain, conscious from unconscious, nor true redemption from deep and intrinsic participation.

Instead, we are called to re-learn how to honour, in a mature way, the winding paths of time and space - in which these 'two sides' are constantly in creative tension, moving

apart and re-uniting, in the evolving dance of complexity and unity – all within the Whole: all expressions of the Divine.

The 4-Fold Path — the 4 'Vias'

Polarity has its own polarity – a relationship called 'quaternities'. The cross is a symbol of two polarities intersecting with each other – a quaternity. Although much of Christian theology is based on trinities, quaternities are more fundamental to both Nature and the spiritual insights of our ancient ancestors and of mystics.

In order to understand how we can move into this new paradigm of Wholism, Matthew Fox proposed a quaternity of approaches to how we view the world and make choices – all of which are equally valid and interdependent.

Via Postiva – is the approach of affirming and honouring what already is, 'here and now' – befriending creation; cosmic blessing; pantheism; and praise or thanksgiving.

Via Negativa – is the approach of letting go of what presently is – befriending darkness; emptying; silence; learning from pain; and radical trust.

Via Creativa – is the approach of acknowledging our co-creator role in the world – befriending creativity and divinity; art as meditation; trusting deep images, imagination and intuition; and the Divine Feminine.

Via Transformativa – is the approach which combines all of the others into an evolving relationship with the Universe and the Divine – befriending new creation; creative and embodied celebration; compassion with and for all; erotic and relationship-based justice; and a continual openness to new revelations from the Spirit.

Pashta Marymoon is a member of Victoria Monthly Meeting.

RUTH MORRIS IN MEMORIAM

BY JOY MORRIS

"And all that mighty heart is lying still..." - Wordsworth

Ruth Morris died at home peacefully, in Salmon Arm, BC on September 17, 2001 at the age of 67, ending a prayer-filled struggle with cancer. Ruth and her husband Ray were active members of Toronto Meeting for over 30 years, prior to moving to Vernon Meeting for their retirement. Ruth was the Coordinator of the Canadian Friends Service Committee from 1975 to 1978. The strong leading she was given to work in the area of criminal justice helped to convince Canadian Friends to adopt a Minute supporting the abolition of prisons, at Yearly Meeting in 1981. She wrote three seminal books in this area: *Crumbling Walls*, *Penal Abolition*, and *Stories of Transformative Justice*. Ruth was born December 12, 1933 in Buffalo, NY. She joined Friends while at university in Ann Arbor, Michigan, after attending for several years. She worked for American Friends Service Committee for one year, and attended several Quaker work

camps, at one of which she and Ray met. They moved to Toronto in 1968, and raised their four children (Peter, Corinne, Douglas and Joy) in the Meeting there. Ruth was a social work administrator and activist with numerous agencies in Toronto. In her spare time she wrote two religious books — *Journey to Joy*, and *Christian Faith in Action* — two children's books, and sundry articles in Quaker and social policy magazines. Her book *Transcending Traumas* is being published posthumously. For her lifelong work on social justice, she was inducted into the Order of Canada in a special ceremony in her home on July 30.

Ruth's work for the marginalised, strong spirit, and powerful faith and convictions were an inspiration to many. The Light shone brightly through her, and she has passed that torch along now.

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