

# The Canadian Friend

Volume 106, Number 2

May 2010



Healing our Communities  
Living in Community  
House Rules

# The Canadian Friend

The Canadian Friend (ISSN 0382-7658) is the magazine of Canadian Yearly Meeting, and is published five times a year on its behalf by the Publications and Communications Committee. The Canadian Friend is sent to all members of Canadian Yearly Meeting and to regular attenders. It is funded through quotas and free-will donations of the membership to further the work and witness of the **Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada.**

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Subscription rates for one year are: \$28.00 for Canada, \$39.00 CD for the US, \$49.00 CD for other countries. Single copies are \$5.60, or with insert \$7.60. We welcome donations to help cover the costs of publication and distribution.

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Publications Mail Registration No. 09887

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## Editor's Corner

I have mixed feelings about community. My dad literally gave it his life. Though absolutely sincere, he was susceptible to the first thing calling itself *God's Will*. Consequently, my earliest decade was lived in an oppressive cult named the Children of Light. A delusional woman distorted George Fox. In fact, every one of her *visions direct from God* was found years later in books of all religious stripes - gathering dust in her abandoned attic. No matter the painful cost of that experience, I still yearn to be vitally enmeshed in community. At the same time I carry a keen suspicion of dictatorial dogmatic madness. Seems too many communities I've encountered have developed at pretty high human cost. Yet I believe the isolated nuclear family is not enough, and that humans would be a healthier, safer lot, if we were closer knit, more accountable, and interconnected with each other in our neighbourhoods and villages. Steve Fick's account of developing cohousing in Ottawa testifies to our yearning for closer community.



A few years ago the Monteverde Community caught my attention. Robert Boehm, visiting our Meeting from California, told me his dad had lived in a Quaker community in Costa Rica. Not long after, I met the Hadad family. A hopeless romantic, I was engaged by a story told me by Tacy Hadad, the granddaughter of Hubert and Mildred Mendenhall - founders of the Monteverde Quaker community. Tacy was soon to marry a young man who grew up in Monteverde. As they looked through old photos of her childhood, one taken of Tacy at the cheese factory caught his eye. That other child in the photo - the boy - was himself. Long before *finding* each other, before she left for Canada, they had played together as young children. You will enjoy Signy Fridriksson's story of volunteering at Monteverde in 2009. She mentions that same cheese factory.

Dave Greenfield writes an article on continuing strife between Israel and Palestine. We know of those in both camps who reach across to each other and do not believe themselves superior to the other. As Jennifer Kavanagh writes: "Borders are enforced by ignorance and fear. Only when we distance ourselves, fail to perceive another's reality, fail to recognize the humanity of a fellow human being, can we ill-treat or exclude him, and consolidate our fear in repressive legislation." Let us pray that the voice of reason will prevail to allow Palestinians and Israelis to value and create community together.

I am thankful to have been introduced to Samson Nashon. On learning of my work, a friend told me that her colleague at UBC had a story for me. You too will appreciate the story of Samson Nashon's commitment to building community in Western Kenya.

Finally, remember as Bert Horwood cautions, we need to follow some house rules if we are to live harmoniously in our community on this planet.

Blessings, Sherryl



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Cover: Photo taken at Terra Firma Cohousing. Left to right: Nick Huber, Phyllis Danu, Marlene Neufeld, Signy Fridriksson, Bob Neufeld. Image on pages 8 and 26 from the cover of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Correction: Catherine Verrall's article on page 9 of March 2010 - column two, paragraph three, should read: "It evolved into a spiritual sense of relationships within the numinous world, and until the rise of agriculture about 10,000 years ago, and the patriarchal age (within which nearly all of today's religions developed) we humans more or less got it right. We managed to live in harmony within the cosmic energies."



## Letters to the Editor

Readers are invited to submit letters to the editor.

Please send your letters to:

Sherryll Harris, Editor

E-mail: cf-editor@quaker.ca



Dear Editor,

I so enjoyed both of Bert Horwood's contributions to the March Canadian Friend. What a great summation of the universe story. Great question, "Is Heaven bad for Earth?" I will keep them for future reference.

Irene Watt,

Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting

Greetings Sherryll,

The mountain Quaker community in Costa Rica is called Monteverde. It is up in the rain forest where monkeys live and a rare bird called the Katesall is occasionally seen.

I was never there myself and so don't know too much except what I heard secondhand from my father Daniel E. Boehm, who lived there about fifteen years.

Both of my brothers and my sister visited there during his stay but I never made it. My dad is now ninety-two years old and living here in San Jose, California.

I do know that the colony at Monte Verde was founded by Hubert Mendenhall and his wife in the 1950s. They left the United States in an effort to find a place safe from nuclear war. There is still a community there with a school, cheese factory, hospital and many dairy farms. As you know, Hubert Mendenhall's wife still lives up near Duncan close to the Koksilah River and she would be the one to talk to for the full story. Cheers, Robert Bohem, San Jose, California

Hi Sherryll,

This gives me a good moment to enthuse to you about the most recent CF. I am very excited about it, and came near to ordering in several more copies - maybe I still will. It shows forth much in terms of where we are right now as Friends. I lent my extra copy to a non-Friend friend first of all, because I knew she'd be interested in Gerald's article and others. This is the first that I've noticed Friendly talk about the New Story, and that's great that you got that out to us.

Thank you! Margaret Slavin,

Wooler Monthly Meeting

Dear Friend Sherryll,

Thank you very much for your wonderful e-mail. It came in a timely manner as I have shared your Fall editorial with some colleagues of mine whom I respect, who have been struggling with how to relate to their critics. I have taken a stance rooted in Quakerism to the amazement of many. Once again thanks very much. This piece and my persistence on loving even those (who are) our critics, has led to a changed approach of love and patience. I have shared your offer about my work in my home community in Kenya, with Shirley Buchan who coordinates our fundraising activities.

I look forward to meeting with you too.

In Friendship,

Samson Nashon, Vancouver Monthly Meeting

Dear Editor,

I belong to a small but active Quaker Internet pen pal group. It is the most logical way for isolated Friends to keep in touch with other Friends. Originally when I first heard about it I thought HMAC had finally joined the 21st century. But it is actually the idea of one Friend who has invited various isolated Friends to write to each other. It has been my life-line with Friends, mainly other isolated Friends. We have become a community. We can talk about things of the spirit or just what's happening in our daily lives. As I live such a long distance from any Monthly Meeting, and it takes ferries to get there as well, joining in with a Meeting for Worship on any given Sunday would mean a two day trip for me. This then is a second wonderful attribute of our Quaker pen pal group. We may not have a Meeting for Worship but we are forming a long distance fellowship that I normally can't have, not being able to attend a physical Meeting for Worship.

We have grown from internet exchanges to old fashioned hand written letters, and several of us have had the good fortune to meet. I would highly recommend any Friends to join in our on-line and snail mail Quaker pen pal group.

In Friendship,

Alfred Muma, Powell River, BC

## Readers Respond:

# The Quaker / Doukhobor Connection

*Koosma Tarasoff*

I was interested in the reference to Doukhobors in the Fall issue. Quakers and Doukhobors have many connections. The Doukhobors, like the Society of Friends, arose in Europe during the turbulence of the seventeenth century, when revisions in the Orthodox Church rituals caused widespread dissension. They originated in various regions of central and southern Russia, migrating first to the Crimean area of the Milky Waters, and later to Transcaucasia, and since the 1990s back to Russia proper. Their June 1895 Burning of Arms event in the Caucasus was a defining act in Doukhobor history that led to increased persecution and exile. In 1899 a portion moved to Canada and today number about 40,000 in this country (mostly in British Columbia and Saskatchewan) several hundred in the USA (primarily in California and Oregon). Up to 30,000 remained in Russia and the former USSR, concentrated mainly in the Rostov-on-Don region, and in scattered areas of Russia. A few remained in the Caucasus. In their belief in the spirit of love and the spark of reason within each individual, they resemble the Quaker notion of God within. Their rejection of the institution of the church resembles that of Lev N. Tolstoy who had little use for intermediaries whom he considered to be exploiters of human dignity. In their attack on militarism they resemble the traditional peace groups - Mennonites and Quakers.

As a second generation Doukhobor I have had the privilege of rich contacts with Quakers since the 1950s. It began with my correspondence with J. Passmore Elkinton of Philadelphia, the son of Joseph Elkinton who published a book on the Doukhobors in 1903. The closing impressions of my first visit to Philadelphia Friends, as guest of the Elkintons in March 1983 was unforgettable.

My time in Philadelphia was limited to twelve days, but those twelve days were an intense and memorable experience. As I was saying farewell to the Elkintons, I was very much aware that this was an historic visit. This goodwill mission not only renewed the Quaker-Doukhobor ties in North America, but more seriously it strengthened our mutual concerns for the most

vital priority of our times - that of peace-making. My departure from the Elkinton family was favoured with a warm embrace, reflecting the best of the Quaker friendly tradition. It was a shared experience that one rarely gets in our busy industrial world, but one that touches the very core of love within us. As the Quaker founder George Fox taught, love is a quality that is available to all. Love warms us when we seek it, when we nurture it, and when we allow its light to shine.

Love has the magical and curative power to transcend racial, religious, and political boundaries. In our day, we need love - not bombs or missiles. Love is the way!

*Koosma Tarasoff attends Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

[Website on Quaker-Doukhobor ties: [www.spirit-wrestlers.com](http://www.spirit-wrestlers.com)]



[Editor's note: I was excited to see the same reference in the Fall Issue. A dear friend - Mildred Fahrni - taught in the Doukhobor school at New Denver, BC. That school was much like a prison, as the children were taken forcibly from their parents and stuck behind high fencing. Mildred's brother-in-law, Bob McMaster, defended the right of their families to get their children back. One day when I was twelve, my stepdad loaded up the station wagon with food for a number of Doukhobors who were stranded in a nearby campground, blockaded from entering our town. He returned with an extended family of three generations - the Podovinokoffs. They lived with us until a baby was born and we became fast friends. Naturally I was interested to learn from Koosma how Quakers helped the Doukhobors find refuge in Canada]

# The Monteverde Community

*Signy Fridriksson*

In 2009 my husband, Steve Fick, received an additional two-week bonus of vacation time, in honour of his twentieth year as the cartographer for Canadian Geographic Magazine. Needing an extended and restful break completely away from work pressures, we applied to be volunteers at Monteverde Friends School. In late February 2009 we set off for five weeks to be part of the rural, progressive community of Monteverde, which is nestled in the cloud forest of northwestern Costa Rica.

We were already aware of the dramatic impact that the relatively small community of Quakers has had on this area, and beyond. But after living there, it is difficult to imagine what the Monteverde area would be like without the Quaker settlement.

The Monteverde community was founded in 1951 by a group of American Friends, who left the States during the Korean War. They objected to the increasing militarism of the United States, and were attracted to Costa Rica, which had abolished its military following the Second World War. After a long search, they settled in a section of cloud forest, choosing it for the cool climate that would facilitate dairy farming. In order to market their milk, they founded the Monteverde Cheese Factory, which still supports local farmers and is a major employer in the area.

To protect the area's watershed, they purchased large tracts of land, some of which were virgin forest. Eventually realizing the treasure they were holding, they established the *Reserva Biologica Bosque Nubosos Monteverde* (Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve) a private nature reserve created in 1972 by scientist George Powell, and Quaker Wilford Guindon. Costa Rica now has twenty-seven percent of its land protected in nature reserves and parkland. Ecotourism is very important to the local economy and to national pride. Biologists from around the world travel to Monteverde to study the flora and fauna.

About thirteen years ago, Friends purchased a depleted coffee plantation on the flanks of a steep hill, several kilometres from the Friends School. *Finca La Bella* (Beautiful Farm) is now home to twenty-four formerly landless families, who live and farm the land, growing coffee and other crops organically. In 2000, José Cruz Salazar and William Leiton Mendez, from *Finca la*

*Bella*, visited Canadian Friends at CYM in Montebello, Quebec, to tell us about this successful project.

Monteverde Friends Meeting shares its home with Monteverde Friends School (MFS) which was built to provide education for the children of the founding families. It is now bilingual and accredited by the Costa Rican government. The school provides an excellent Spanish-English education for Quakers, non-Quakers, and exchange students from various countries.

We spent our time at MFS volunteering as classroom assistants. I worked full-time with the Grade 5/6 class and Steve divided his time between volunteering in the Grade 7/8 class, and working on a challenging painting project.

Our days were structured, but stress-free. We got up early to walk fifteen minutes down the rough gravel road to catch the bus to school, assisted in the classroom, then walked home for forty minutes - twenty minutes along a winding dirt road, then twenty minutes literally straight up! Since it got dark at 6:30 and the rough road was hard to navigate, we generally spent the evenings at home talking and laughing with our host mother after supper, and retired to bed by eight.

Monteverde is a walking culture. The pathways interlaced through the trees are as important as the roadways, to connect the scattered houses. We had lots of exercise as we made our way around the community and into the village of Cerro Plano, and the town of Santa Elena.

We lived with the wonderful Tico family - Luisa and her daughter Michele and son Martin - a student at MFS. Our host mother was a great cook of traditional foods. Gallo pinto, the local rice and beans dish was central to every meal.

We found our host family, the school staff, and the students warm and welcoming. The Friends Meeting and Quaker community made us feel at home. Although we worked one-to-one with students in the role of helpers, we didn't have the responsibility of lesson planning or grading. We just arrived and contributed as needed. Our time in Monteverde provided us with the break we longed for, and we returned home rested and relaxed.

Many Canadian Friends have been to Monteverde Friends School. We overlapped by a week with Ethan Chiddicks from Kitchener Area MM who volunteered immediately before us. For more information see [www.mfschool.org](http://www.mfschool.org), <http://www.fincalabella.org/> or <http://www.monteverdeinfo.com/index.htm>.

*Signy Fridriksson, Ottawa Monthly Meeting*



## Book Review:

### *The O of Home*

by Jennifer Kavanagh

O Books ISBN: 978 1 884694 264 8

When I went to the launch of Jennifer Kavanagh's book, I wasn't sure what to expect. Home – how would I define it? Is it the flat above the Meeting house? Is it a place in the US where I used to live? Is it wherever I am with my family?

I wasn't surprised that Jennifer had looked at many sides of the question. She had worked with me in Quaker Homeless Action with the street homeless; she had worked with Quaker Social Action with émigrés far from their native lands, struggling to live in our country. But, she surprised me with the depth to which she had gone in exploring the variations on the word and then examining the reverse of the situation. With chapters on our bricks and mortar, our community, our borders and belonging, and our planetary home, the book comes full circle: *The O of Home*.

Jennifer says: "In looking at the subject of home, we need to explore not just what it means for us as individuals, but also in the context of our communities, of our nations, and of our species. We need to consider not only what our outer houses mean, but those within."

This led me to realize that if I am not happy in my own skin, I am not happy anywhere. Taking this idea further, outside bricks and mortar might shelter me physically, but my soul needs a home as well. Looking at the reverse of what I would consider my home to be – with my husband, near my children – would be out on my own with no fixed abode. Many people live in this way, whether they are street homeless, or refugees fleeing from something so scary that they need to leave their own place of safety.

Jennifer says: "Home is not static. Home is the balance between security and freedom; of belonging and longing. Home is both an end and a beginning."

*The O of Home* made me think and re-examine my own presumptions of home.

*Trish Carn*

*Finchley Meeting, England*

[Reprinted with permission from *The Friend* - UK,  
12 March, 2010]

### Excerpts from *The O of Home*:

"A period of financial crisis, when much that we have held certain has been turned upside down, is a good time to question assumptions such as the inviolability of borders and nationhood or the superiority of the human race; the notion that some groups of people are somehow different, lesser, "other". Or that home is synonymous with four walls, investment, status and proof of identity.

"If we accept that the world is home to every human being, that the boundaries we have created are artificial divisions in the human race; if we accept that the suffering of any one person diminishes us, what can we do to lessen that suffering? Inner and outer borders are created by possessiveness and greed. The inequality, both within nations, and between them, is an ever-widening gap. Can we in Western nations constrain our desire for more and more? Acquisition is not fulfilling but addictive; our yearning is without end. Can we bring back that infinite yearning, that yearning for the infinite, from its material expression to its proper spiritual dimension?

"Borders are enforced by ignorance and fear. Only when we distance ourselves, fail to perceive another's reality, fail to recognise the humanity of a fellow human being, can we ill-treat or exclude him, and consolidate our fear in repressive legislation.

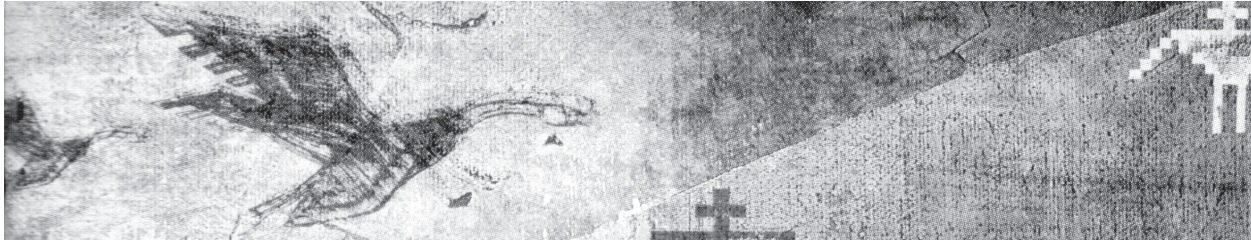
"The more we are at home in ourselves, the less we will feel the need to scapegoat others, to project on to stigmatised groups of people our own fear of difference, our own lack of belonging. We will not need to shore up the borders of our soul, our community or our country against the "other", because fear and borders will dissolve in loving acceptance of the oneness expressed in such rich and astonishing diversity.

"When we are truly at home, we will understand our place alongside fellow-creatures on this planet, the deep mutuality of all life-forms, and the need to heal what we have wounded. We will better understand what we are continually given by other living beings, and will have a wish to give something back; at the very least to bring to consciousness the beauty and preciousness of creation. We will recognise with humility our place as tiny points in space and time in the universe, and realize how much there is that we do not understand."

*Jennifer Kavanagh*

*Westminster Meeting, London England*

*Member of Quakers United in Publishing (QUIP)*



# Quaker Committees Witness for Support of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

*Elizabeth Koopman*

On September 13, 2007, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by the UN General Assembly. At that time only four nations voted against this Declaration: Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States. In 2008, Australia decided to endorse this crucial Declaration. This leaves only New Zealand and two major powers in the Western Hemisphere - the US and Canada in official opposition to Indigenous human rights in their own countries, in the Americas, and globally.

It took over twenty years of international collaboration to frame the Declaration which establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, well-being and rights of the world's Indigenous peoples. The Declaration addresses: individual and collective rights; self determination; rights to lands and resources; cultural rights and identity; rights to education, health care and employment; the right to use and preserve Indigenous languages, and other important rights. It outlaws discrimination against Indigenous peoples and promotes their full and effective participation in all matters that concern them. It also ensures their right to remain distinct and to pursue their own priorities in economic, social, and cultural development. The Declaration explicitly encourages harmonious and cooperative relations between States and Indigenous peoples.

In the Americas, Indigenous peoples from Ecuador, Bolivia, the United States, Canada, and elsewhere

continue to organize and collaborate in support of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. These efforts build upon the foundation of the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for which Quakers notably witnessed. At the urging of the former National Community Relations Committee, the American Friends Service Committee minuted an early support of the Declaration during the formative years of UN work. Baltimore Yearly Meeting Indian Affairs Committee, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Indian Committee, Canadian Friends Service Committee, and Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee have written to their respective leaders, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and President Barack Obama, to change the vitally important US and Canadian positions, and to endorse the Declaration. New York Yearly Meeting's Indian Affairs Committee is currently formulating its epistle to the President. These letters are continuing important steps in this Quaker witness.

This UN Declaration is important for all, not only for Indigenous peoples. Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues, Vicky Tauli Corpuz, reminds us that: "Edmund Burke's exhortation that the 'price of freedom is eternal vigilance' very much applies to us, indigenous peoples, and to our supporters. Indeed, the price for our assertion to be recognized as distinct peoples, and to have our rights as contained in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, protected, respected, and fulfilled, is eternal vigilance."

Many Friends consider a Quaker witness on behalf of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to be a special contemporary spiritual witness for peace, justice, and an earth restored. We urge Friends to join us in seeking their discernment of this witness.

*Elizabeth Koopman*

*Philadelphia Monthly Meeting on behalf of the  
Canadian Friends Service Committee and the Quaker  
Aboriginal Affairs Committee*

(Friends may access the actual document via UN Permanent Forum Indigenous Issues, UNPFII. Search "Declaration." Or search via <http://cfsc.quaker.ca/pages/un/html>)



# Gathering

August 2008 - Lumsden Beach

*Catherine Fraser Verrall*

Saskatoons glowing fuchsia red to midnight blue  
joyous gift from three-year lack  
I reach out and receive  
giving thanks to berry bush and birdsong  
earth's mystic synchronicity of sun and rain  
and power to give in myriad forms.  
Watching out for ivy's poison  
guarding berries safe for birds  
not greedy humans  
I reach out, and receive

I take, remembering  
remembering Uncle Herb plodding  
up that Pictou County, New Scotland hill  
guiding us city kids to raspberries,  
luscious globes of vitamins  
guarded by thorns and mosquitoes  
threatened by clear-cutting  
even in that sacred valley  
of St. Mary's River East.  
Earth's gifts -  
we reached out, and received

I take, remembering  
remembering my sisters  
in this prairie valley, the Qu'Appelle  
Cree, Assinaboia and Metis  
since time immemorial honouring earth's cycles  
planning, gathering, sharing the gifts  
Saskatoons glowing fuchsia to midnight blue  
They reached out and received  
Giving thanks

I too, remembering

*Catherine Verrall*  
*Prairie Monthly Meeting*

# The Power of Restorative Justice

*Penny Joy*

It was through my work as a documentary filmmaker that I first encountered Restorative Justice (RJ). Several years ago our company, Gumboot Productions, was invited to document a retreat entitled: *The Spiritual Roots of Restorative Justice*. While interviewing many of the participants at that retreat, I heard from judges, ex-cons, police officers, representatives of the major religions, and indigenous peoples. I became very excited. This was a real alternative to the criminal justice system that allowed for respect, compassion, and deep listening! We subsequently produced a documentary entitled *The Spiritual Roots of Restorative Justice*. RJ redefines crime as harm done to persons – crime and conflicts are seen as violations of interpersonal relationships, which create obligations and liabilities. Transformative justice seeks to heal, to the greatest degree possible, both those parties directly involved, and the web of relationships within the community.

Convinced and committed from that initial involvement, I joined a Restorative Justice Coalition at William Head prison - a further eye -opener. Weekly gatherings offered opportunity for inmates to sit together with people from the outside community to discuss things that matter to us all. We had profound discussions about basic human concerns: fear, loneliness, forgiveness, and anger. Some talked about their specific crimes; most not. They talked about their families, their childhoods, and how their lives went sideways. I learned how so many of them, incarcerated for serious crimes, had never been acknowledged or listened to as children, and how many had been grossly abused. From that life experience they searched for different methods to dull the pain and confusion they felt, often with drink or drugs. It was from those wells of despair and confusion that their crimes were committed.

Supported by highly experienced mediators, I also participated in some of the high profile restorative practices known as Victim - Offender Mediation, where I saw lives reclaimed. This happened sometimes after years of anguish and despair in the lives of both the victim and the offender.

A group in our community decided that there was important work to be done in trying to reach young people when they first become entangled with the law. We hoped this would be at a time when understanding and support could affect learning, and motivate a considerable change in behaviour. Thus, the Victoria Restorative Justice Society was formed, and everyone undertook Restorative Justice training.

The principle difference between the traditional retributive justice system and restorative justice can be summed up by a series of questions. The traditional system asks: "What law has been broken? Who broke it? How should they be punished?" Restorative Justice asks: "Who has been hurt? What are their needs? Who is responsible for making things right? How, as a community, can we heal the harm that has been caused?" These are two very different ways of dealing with conflict. Restorative Justice is victim-centred, offender-focused, and community-driven. It is not about battling it out in court. It is not about punishment. Rather it is about forgiveness, resolution, and healing. We recognize that we all make mistakes, often sincerely regret them, and yearn to be able to apologize and to be forgiven. We see punishment tends to damage goodwill and self-esteem, and shifts attention from the intrinsic value of an action to external consequences. Blaming and punishing fail to contribute to the motivations we would like to inspire in others. Restorative Justice also empowers the community to resolve its own conflicts by acknowledging that disruptions occur within community, and thereby invites and encourages those voices of the community to be heard.

The roots of Restorative Justice come from indigenous peoples worldwide. It can be said they were the first practitioners. The format we currently use was developed by the Maori people in New Zealand in the late '80s. At that time in Canada, a disproportionate number of indigenous people were being incarcerated, but since the early '90s, when the RCMP studied and learned the New Zealand model, Restorative Justice has been part of the RCMP policing strategy. Municipal police forces, not having had the RCMP training, are often less eager to use the Restorative Justice model.

In Victoria we receive referrals from the police and the Crown. We assign a three-person team of trained volunteers, to undertake a case and work with it to completion. A facilitator, co-facilitator, and mentor, initially meet with the person or people who have caused the harm, those that have been impacted by the harm, and any other salient person in the community

that has been affected. We explain the process of Restorative Justice, and explain how the process of a Community Forum or Family Group Conference will unfold. A date is set for the circle-gathering which brings together all the people mentioned, along with the arresting officer, and any friends, relatives, or people involved with the incident who want to have their voices heard. In the circle, a respectful process is followed which, allows everyone the time they need to speak. Gradually the event in question is clarified, understood, and discussed with respect. It may involve a lot of emotion. It often unearths underlying factors, which add to a deeper understanding. When that phase is completed to everyone's satisfaction the group comes to consensus about appropriate restitution. It takes time, it takes patience, and most of the time it works and a significant healing transformation occurs. All participants sign an agreement, which includes a timeline for completion. A Restorative Justice mentor will track the achievement of the tasks agreed upon and will deal with any problems that may occur during the process.

Critics may say that RJ is soft on crime. We and many others, including offenders, many police officers, and quite a few lawyers and judges, consider it much harder to sit across from someone you have hurt, hear their story, and genuinely apologize; harder than to utter a few words in court or do time in prison.

We are not however Pollyannas. Some cases, we know, will demand a trial in court and perhaps a prison sentence. Yet RJ can be inserted into any kind of case, given the agreement of all parties.

We all know Margaret Meads words: "A small group of thoughtful people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has". There is even a graffiti rendition of that quote on a wall in Vancouver, so deeply has the thought become ingrained in our consciousness! Martin Luther King said: "The hope of a liveable world lies with disciplined non-conformists who are dedicated to justice, peace and brotherhood".

I guess the hope of our work, under the umbrella of Restorative Justice, makes us all members of that band of disciplined non-conformists.

*Penny Joy is a film maker in Victoria*

[Penny Joy and her husband Saul Arbess are founding members of the Canadian Department of Peace Initiative.]

# Chatamilu - a Community Achievement

Ellen Pye

A Quaker boy from a poor family in a rural village in Western Kenya - now a professor of Curriculum Development at UBC in Vancouver is quite a story in itself. He was one of nine children in an area where opportunities for employment were scarce. His father had to leave for the big city to find work so he could support his family with the barest essentials. Education was not free in Kenya at the time, and the boy was ten before his family could afford to send him to school. His mother, Belisira Midika, determined in her conviction that education was as essential as food, and worth every sacrifice demanded of her, found farm work to pay for his school fees. As there was no school in his village he had to walk five miles to a neighbouring village and home again.

He did well. He was one of the few in his village to pass High School and to go on to University. Initially he was supported by his community in whatever way possible, in spite of their very limited means. To them, he was a beacon of hope for a better future. Later, scholarships allowed him to achieve advanced degrees.

That boy was Samson Nashon, now living in Vancouver as a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting, and a professor at the University of British Columbia. Though away from Kenya, he has remained very strongly connected to his home village of Chatamilu. By the time Samson arrived in Vancouver, Chatamilu had a school, but it was in appalling condition. It was in worse shape than anyone in Canada could possibly imagine, lacking even the most basic equipment. Besides, it was on land belonging to a church that wanted it back for church use. In Kenya, the government pays for teachers' salaries but does not fund the construction of school buildings. The community has to finance construction - an impossible task for a small money-poor, rural community like Chatamilu. This was of great concern to Samson, who felt that the children of Chatamilu should have the same opportunities he had been given.

Samson brought his concern and vision for a new school in Chatamilu to Vancouver Monthly Meeting. He asked for our help in raising the funds needed. On the recommendation of a Clearness Committee that explored the feasibility of such a project, the Meeting

gave its approval and appointed a committee to raise the needed funds over four years. The committee consisted of people who were deeply committed to the project but had little experience in fundraising, and people who had lived in Africa or had other experience that gave them an understanding of the culture in Kenya. Samson acted as an essential go-between, as he knew the people and conditions in Chatamilu and often had to return home for personal or professional reasons.

Most of the *real* work was done by the people of the village. A committee led by the local head teacher worked closely with Samson to develop a budget and coordinate the project. It proceeded in stages as funds became available and weather cooperated. Most of the funds received went toward necessary building materials, while the community provided the labour. Local male volunteers did most of the construction work, unless specialized expertise was required. The women cooked daily meals for the crew.

Public music events were organized in Vancouver with the generous cooperation of local choirs. Smaller, more intimate *Soup, Bread and Entertainment Evenings* were held at the Vancouver Meeting House, revealing a wealth of culinary and musical talent within our community and Meeting. A guest, who happened to be on a board that administered a charitable fund for educational programs, encouraged the committee to apply for a grant. Fortunately the result was positive.

Often, as the Vancouver Monthly Meeting's committee looked ahead at the amount needed for further phases of the project, it had no assurance that the money could be raised. As each new stage came up, funds became available when needed. Out of the blue, a journalist approached the Meeting, and proposed to write a story about our efforts for the school in Chatamilu. This resulted in a two-page spread in the Vancouver Sun, complete with photographs. This coverage brought in a great deal of money. The young children of one donor included pictures they had drawn for the children of Chatamilu.

As the school buildings rose in Sampson's home village, the school children were motivated to work harder and exam results improved noticeably. Some of them wrote to the Vancouver committee to express their gratitude for the prospect of being able to attend a school where they didn't need to bring water and mud to reinforce the grouting between the bricks when it rained, and a classroom where they wouldn't become afflicted by *jiggers*.



The project attracted many visitors to Chatamilu, including a group from Samson's academic home: the Education Faculty at UBC. They were amazed at how much the community itself had learned in the process of managing and executing the project. They had acquired skills that would stand them in good stead in creating new economic opportunities. Other Kenyan school boards flocked to the new school to learn from its example how their own efforts could be improved. Once local politicians became aware of this winning enterprise, they were eager to come on board with funds and promises of future improvements for the community.

Within four years, the school was completed and officially opened. Not a penny was wasted or unaccounted for. Ninety-eight percent of the total monies collected went directly into construction and furnishings.

Samson's mother's sacrifices, and later on those of his community, proved to be a blessing that kept on blessing. Working together on this project helped to heal fractures within Vancouver Monthly Meeting, strengthened the bonds of community in Chatamilu, and welded together the geographically distant locales of Kenya and Vancouver into a new human family.

The work continues. A new project is underway to provide dairy cows and chickens for the women who are caring for the many orphans in the Chatamilu area. There is also a scholarship fund to enable orphans who do well in their elementary exams, to attend some of the better Secondary Schools. We now support seventeen youngsters. Surely, this story will continue.

*Ellen Pye*

*Vancouver Monthly Meeting*

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## Healing and Rebuilding our Communities: a Gift from Africa

*Gianne Broughton and Sheila Havard*

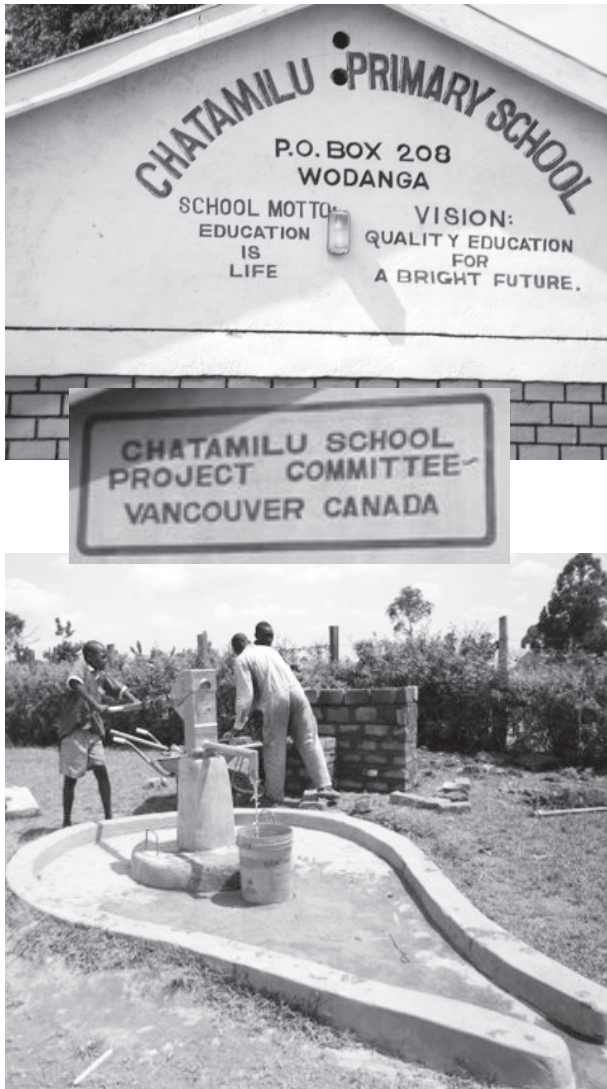
Enthusiasm here was immediate when we learned that Florence Ntakarutimana would be coming to Canada from Burundi on a speaking tour in October 2009. Florence is the coordinator of the African Great Lakes Initiative of the Friends Peace Teams (AGLI). They are committed to healing the wounds of violence in the Great Lakes region of Africa. Quakers across Canada were excited to learn of her visit.

It was wonderful to work with such enthusiastic people, organizing a schedule of events for schools, universities, East African diaspora groups, Quaker gatherings, and even a prison. But in the flurry of arrangements for the impending tour, I sometimes wondered why everyone was so excited about a visitor from AGLI's Healing and Rebuilding our Communities (HROC) program. This was a venture most of us were totally ignorant of. This was the first time an AGLI representative had come to Canada and very little was known of the trauma healing, reconciliation, and community rebuilding work that has been quietly going on in Burundi since the late 1990s. Would interest be sustained?

I need not have worried. Florence's warmth bubbled over and she took everything in her stride. She charmed her audiences with her firm conviction and proved adept at answering even awkward questions in her third language! She related to people on an individual and group basis immediately, despite the great cultural divide. All this talent is nurtured by her experience and work with HROC, which is primarily active in Burundi and Rwanda, but has recently expanded into eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Florence works in all three of these countries to bring reconciliation and healing.

Let us look for a moment at the history of strife in these countries. Burundi and Rwanda, though governed by different royal families, were very close culturally before colonization, first by Germany then by Belgium. In a vicious application of the *divide and rule* maxim, the Belgians designated the minority Tutsi population (thirteen percent) to be educated, given government positions, and recruited to the army, while they denied social advancement to the Hutus (eighty-six percent) and the Twa (one percent). Quaker evangelists from the United States began working in the region in the 1930s. After independence in the early 1960s, Rwanda became a Hutu-controlled military dictatorship, and in a vengeful fashion, the Tutsi population was suppressed. In 1994 when a primarily Tutsi army, fleeing to Uganda invaded the country, the Hutu government retaliated with a program of genocide. They mobilized Hutus to kill their civilian Tutsi neighbours. After independence, Burundi became a Tutsi-controlled military dictatorship. Formerly, Hutu aspirations were violently repressed with killing times also in 1964 and 1972. In an effort to obtain an education, some Hutus went to other countries.

*Continued on page 14*



Postscript from Evans Sumara of Chatamilu 2008  
We view Shirley Buchan (Vancouver MM) and Beth LeBaron as God-sent angels, to rescue Chatamilu women out of poverty and put infectious smiles on their faces and unbelievable thoughts in their minds. Pass the womens' sincere appreciation to everyone who donated to this worthy cause. This partnership will continue to make more women breathe out a sigh of relief. We hope one day this initiative will translate into a big village economy. A big thank you.

Peace, Evenas Sumara, Chatamilu, Kenya



Janet Ross, of Atlanta Monthly Meeting (presently living in Toronto) on the left, and Sheila Havard of Coldstream Monthly Meeting on the right with Florence Ntakarutimana, Programs Manager of the Burundi Healing and Rebuilding our Communities Program.

In 1991 when many factors led to an opportunity for change, those who returned demanded and worked for the establishment of a democratic state. This resulted in a Hutu becoming president in the election of 1993. As part of a Tutsi-led military putsch, he was killed after three months in office. This sparked attacks from both ethnic groups. Tutsis fled their homes to take shelter near army camps, while many Hutus fled to join rebel armies that began to form in remote areas. Ten years of ethnic war followed.

In the late 1990's, in this extremely tense environment, the now 6,000 members of the Friends Church in Burundi, and 2,000 members in Rwanda, asked their leaders to work with Friends worldwide to find ways to break the cycle of violence. Connections began to develop around the concept of trauma healing. One of the directions taken, supported by African Great Lakes Initiatives, was to develop a program on the model of the Alternatives to Violence Program (AVP), with a focus on healing trauma. The result is HROC. Joyce Halwerda describes the program based on what she learned from Florence:

"This program brings together ten Hutus and ten Tutsis for a three day basic workshop. Often people find themselves face-to-face with those they have hurt, or have suffered by. The first day is spent discovering some symptoms that people might be experiencing, such as depression, fear, anger, headaches.... They discuss the losses and pain they have experienced, using a variety of channels of expression. One exercise is to put stones into a container that represent these losses and what happens to the container when the stones become too heavy. They learn about the healing process of grief. They are then encouraged to describe someone they have lost. This process makes the participants realize that both groups have suffered and it helps them see each other as human beings. Although the program does not demand confession and forgiveness, individuals often spontaneously ask forgiveness, and receive it. The final part of the workshop discusses what kind of a world the participants want to live in - continued distrust or increasing participation with each other. At the end of the workshop a party is held and the public are invited. At that time the participants talk about what they have learned and how they plan to continue to live. This gives them a chance to change their practices and allows the community to understand and offer support. It also helps to reinforce the participants' decisions. Some of the participants follow up with a three week program which teaches them to become healing companions and prepares

them to lead basic workshops. So far about 2600 people have participated in the basic workshops. Each basic workshop costs about \$400 US to run."

Vince Zelazny reported: "The day-to-day tenor of the six days Florence spent with Martha McClure, Meredith Egan, and me in Fredericton was characterized by informality spiced with a little gentle teasing and humour. On October 30 we attended a gathering organized at St. Thomas University to celebrate the legacy of John McKendy on the anniversary of his sudden death. John's trips to Burundi in 2007 and 2008 as an AGLI volunteer were his first trips ever overseas. Florence remembered how John would pour himself into the work of the building of the HIV-AIDS clinic in Kamenge, and the messy, bare-handed vigour with which he applied himself and inspired others to the work with mud, bricks, and mortar. She spoke with gentleness but firmly, and with an empathy whose authenticity was born of her own experience of losing loved ones to violence. The day was made less difficult by the grace we received from this gathering.

"A visit to Dorchester Prison for an evening meeting with the AVP group rounded out our time together. The inmates were completely fascinated by our guest and her story of forgiveness from a faraway land where the perpetrators of genocide were free on the street, working for forgiveness, and healing in a circle with their victims - in a circle that looked a lot like our AVP circle! Spontaneous applause broke out several times during her presentation."

Linda Foy remarked, "Florence spoke to a Grade 12 Political Science class, and my daughter who's in that class said the students were more attentive than usual. That's high praise I'd say!" Julie Berry summed it up: "We heard about the healing work she does with people who were either victims or perpetrators of brutal killings during the Rwandan genocide. It was hard to comprehend the horror her friends, family and neighbours had gone through, but it was even more difficult to accept that the two sides could come together in true forgiveness and reconciliation. Truly, the work that Florence does, and the vision and dedication of all the people who make up HROC are reasons to rejoice. What an inspiration!"

*Gianne Broughton, Kitchener Monthly Meeting*  
*Sheila Havard, Coldstream Monthly Meeting*

[Florence's tour was organized by Canadian Friends Service Committee.]



## Reports:

### ***Quaker Renewal Funding Update***

In August 2008 Canadian Yearly Meeting committed to raising \$65,000 to hire a Quaker Youth Secretary and Adult Quaker Education Coordinator. At that time a Contributions Committee was established to generate enthusiasm and the financial commitment for this project among Canadian Friends.

The committee has taken on a number of initiatives including: leading a fundraiser on the floor of CYM; providing input, and supporting the clerk's Annual Appeal Letter to all Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups; leading a Special Interest Group at spring Western Half Yearly and St. Lawrence Valley Regional Gatherings.

The total raised as of December 31, 2009 is \$51,000. However, it is important to note that \$22,000 of this total came from two individuals. We can not rely on such large donations if we expect the program to be viable over the long term.

Commitment to the project is growing slowly. In 2009 we averaged \$132.50 in monthly donations to the program. As of March 2010 we have \$205/month in pre-authorized cheque (PAC) donations. Currently over one hundred individual Friends have contributed.

We are grateful for the donations from the following Monthly Meetings: Coldstream, Ottawa, St. Lawrence Valley, Yonge Street, Thousand Islands, Annapolis Valley, Vernon, Vancouver, Edmonton, Hamilton and Pelham Executive.

Let us keep this enthusiasm growing. If your Monthly Meeting has not discussed contributing to this program we would greatly appreciate your putting it on the agenda for your next Meeting for Worship for Business. Ottawa Monthly Meeting has agreed to a yearly commitment by increasing its annual donation by fifty percent. We hope that other Monthly Meetings will also be willing to commit to the project on an annual basis.

Also we encourage you to consider making a personal commitment to the program by way of the monthly PAC donations. Even \$10.00 per month can help. We need to see the funds to be able to plan. We are seventy percent of the way to our start-up goal. We can do this Friends!

*Carol Dixon, Ottawa MM, Wesley Glebe, Edmonton MM, Madeline Campbell, Calgary MM*

### ***How do Friends do Service?***

*Maggie Knight*

In March at the Spring General Meeting of the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) Friends from Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting to Halifax Monthly Meeting gathered to explore just what it is that epitomizes how Friends do service, and particularly, how Friends do service through CFSC.

We have our ongoing projects. Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee (QAAC) continues work on the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted in September 2007; is working on a film and editing a book on the realization of the Declaration; will participate in the Permanent Forum of Indigenous Peoples; is organizing a trip for youth of the Lubicon Cree to travel to New York to meet with UN experts. Quakers Fostering Justice (QFJ) is producing fact sheets on current issues in criminal legislation that are of concern to Friends; supporting Friend Elaine Bishop in her service at North Point Douglas Women's Centre in Winnipeg; helping staff, students, and Friends in Fredericton with a proposal for a John McKendry Peace Centre at St. Thomas University; rejoicing in a recent successful Jamaica Project trip to Happy Grove High School, and subsequent news of a Peace March comprising more than eighty students. Quaker Peace And Sustainable Communities Committee (QPASC) continues to foster a myriad of projects such as Dale Dewar's recent *Care to Care* trip to Iraq; hopes to bring Florence Ntakarutimana of the Africa Great Lakes Initiative on another speaking tour next year; and is contemplating a Turning the Tides workshop on the Tar Sands at CYM. The Quaker International Affairs Program continues work on the commons; has provided technical assistance to Quebec Native Women, regarding the UN Convention on Biological Diversity on Access and Benefit-Sharing; is progressing with Spanish and Arabic translations of QIAP's award-winning book *The Future Control of Food*.

These projects could be taken up by any concerned group. Yet many Friends spoke of their belief that it is not precisely what we take action on, but the way in which we conduct our service, which makes CFSC truly unique in Canada. We spoke of the Quaker process of discernment and the importance of integrity, honesty, and compassion. We spoke of the importance of leadings, and of allowing enough time for ideas and projects to season. We spoke of Friends' commitment to seek to truly understand the needs of

our partner organizations, and to work with them to forge collaborative visions to move forward. We spoke of our commitment to finding low tech and low cost solutions, rather than glitzy new interventions. We spoke of seeking the Light in everyone. We spoke of living out the Quaker testimonies through our service.

In my experience working with different non-profit organizations, my time with CFSC has been by far the most spiritually nourishing. For me as a Young Adult Friend, coming together with Friends from coast to coast is not only a chance to receive news from my home Meeting and of other YAFs and YFs, it is the time when I most deeply connect with what it means to me to be Quaker. To me, being Quaker has always been about living according to my conscience. I feel truly blessed to be part of such a quietly inspirational and conscientious group of Friends.

You can learn more about CFSC at <http://cfsc.quaker.ca/>. I ask Friends to hold the work of CFSC in the Light this year as we cope with a significant decrease in donations caused by the economic downturn.

*Maggie Knight, Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting*

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### ***Sexual Ethics Report***

The ad hoc committee on Sexual Ethics brought a substantial document to CYM in 2009. This will be considered at CYM 2010. Meetings and Worship Groups are urged to review these guidelines and respond to Bruce Dienes before CYM 2010.

The document is a draft of guidelines on how to address issues arising between adult members - not a protocol nor an authoritative statement. It is not intended to address child abuse or incest in the present. Another document is in preparation regarding the protection of children. Inevitably, there are some parts that are controversial, and some that may touch people's buttons - including my own - and set off uncomfortable reactions. I believe that our best hope of moving forward is to try to lift the issue out of our past history and set it down firmly in a climate of worship, informed by Quaker values. This document goes far to move us in this direction, and draws on the experience and wisdom of Friends in other Yearly Meetings. Friends strive to deal with conflict under guidance, in openness, and with love. This spirit will serve us well in the area of inappropriate or abusive sexual behaviour as it does in addressing other issues.

As we address this concern I hope that the following queries may be of some use to individuals,

Worship Groups, and Monthly Meetings.

Do we remain aware of the need for continuing vigilance and for tender care where sexual abuse or harassment is reported? Do we make sure that someone who experiences abuse or harassment knows where to go for help? Do we, as Meetings carefully consider where responsibility should lie for responding to reports of abuse? In setting up structures or facilitating listening, are we careful to observe the Quaker practice of accountability? Do we accept Meeting responsibility rather than leaving the issue constantly in the hands of the same few dedicated Friends?

Are we ready to acknowledge the limits of our competence? Do we recognize that at times our role must be limited to offering non-judgmental compassion, and to advising a troubled Friend to find appropriate professional care? Are we clear about the process by which we seek resolution? Are we prepared to set aside, as far as possible, our own prejudgment?

Are we at risk of defining victims of sexual abuse or harassment by previous experience? While offering support, do we also honour their integrity and strength, respecting their hope of moving on? As in other conflict situations, do we offer support to keep doors open to communication? Do we give them credit for sharing in our common sense of justice? Do we avoid light or premature use of the term *forgiveness*, understanding that while it may be healing for the forgiver even more than for the forgiven, to forgive does not mean to condone?

Do we take care to recognize the humanity of those who offend? In what ways can we address their needs, while offering protection to all members of our community?

Are we careful to distinguish between acknowledged or proven offenders and an accused person who claims not to be guilty? Are we careful to avoid the abuse of confidentiality, which may lead to a refusal to present the accused with full knowledge of the allegations? Do we avoid the use of the prejudicial term 'in denial' which may inhibit the full hearing of what the accused has to say? Do we allow a voice to those who may have been wrongly or mistakenly accused, either openly or by innuendo, and either within our Meetings or in the larger society?

When we are confronted with painful issues and decisions, do we take the time to bring worshipful discernment to bear, if necessary calling on other Friends to help test our leading?

*Jo Vellacott, Thousand Islands Meeting*

# Worship Sharing on Conflict in Meetings

The following record of ideas and concerns will help our CYM Community build our capacity to work through conflict together. At CYM 2009 we separated into small groups to consider the following points, and experienced rich sharing together. We discussed approaches, steps, and resources which have contributed to positive conflict resolution in our Meetings or in other parts of our life:

- Hold self and others in the light. This reduces stress.
- It helps to act quickly to work through conflict. Go and talk to the person immediately. That is basic.
- When I have been wounded, I need to work on myself first, before I go to see the person.
- How do I answer that of God in the other person? We need to go deep and trust.
- Listen well and speak your truth.
- Listen for the common ground – ideas, emotions, overtones.
- When there are very difficult situations like marriage breakups, sometimes we need confidential places to vent. In some British Meetings, every person had an overseer to check in with.
- Matthew Eighteen – “Speak to your brother in private.” If he doesn’t listen go to M & C. It is a matter of spiritual health first.
- Sometimes just passage of time will help.
- Consider when a mediator might be needed, or perhaps a witness, or a listener
- We may need to agree to disagree.
- Alternatives to Violence Project has ground rules in sight all the time.
- If we’re not ministers but we ‘minister one to another’, what does that mean?
- Consider what *Advices and Queries* say about realizing that others may express themselves differently. Try to learn what that person has to offer. Try to do sometime positive towards the other.
- Practise patience; watch for little openings; wait for way to open.
- Think it possible that I may be mistaken. Find a sensitive f/Friend and seek a second opinion.
- Focus more on the process and less on being attached to an outcome. As humans we will have conflict. It is ours to *be in* and trust that it will be resolved.
- Let it be. Hold matters in the Light. Sometimes words don’t serve.
- Work on empathy and impulse control; self-management.
- Have respect and tolerance for each other.

Thanks to all Friends who participated.

*Open Meeting of Yearly Meeting Ministry and Counsel*

*Submitted on behalf of CMMC by Lesley Read of New Brunswick Monthly Meeting*



# Living in a Cohousing Community

*Steve Fick*

Cohousing is a concept that was brought to North America by the Quaker architects Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett in 1988 from Denmark where it had emerged in the 1970s. It describes neighbourhoods that intentionally combine the autonomy of private dwellings with the advantages of shared resources and community living. Some people call it a return to the best of small-town communities or traditional villages. Futurists call cohousing a creative new response to the social, economic and environmental challenges of the Twenty-first Century.

Several years after Signy and I moved to Ottawa, we joined the Terra Firma cohousing group. The original impetus for the group came from Anthony Leaning (son of John Leaning, Ottawa MM) and his wife Rebecca Aird. In the five years between the early meetings and buying property, the group explored a number of possibilities ranging from rural Quebec to downtown Ottawa. Though country living was attractive, we eventually chose urban living for convenience and to minimize the environmental impact of commuting. The prize of our long search was two adjacent, very run-down three-door row houses in one of Ottawa's older core neighbourhoods.

We renovated our units to varying degrees, and combined the six small back yards into one large, beautifully landscaped green space. An extensive common space is essential to the cohousing concept. A number of years later we built an infill between the two buildings to house a seventh unit and our common space. Our common house includes a guest room, kitchen, bathroom and sauna, and a large open space. There we have weekly Tai Chi classes, painting classes, birthday parties, dance events, music and theatre gatherings, meeting of community groups, and a great variety of other interesting events and activities, in addition to twice-a-week shared dinners. Our large common back yard has many shared amenities - play structures, a treehouse, gardens, a quiet sitting area, bicycle and storage sheds, composting bins, and a wood pile.

Terra Firma members range in age from four years old to seventy-one years old, and occupy many different stages of life. In a community where people know their neighbours, there is

considerable opportunity for spontaneous connections and support, from car-sharing to informal childcare, to snow shoveling. Cohousing is especially appealing to people as they age. The little things that make living independently a challenge for elders can be supplied naturally in a cohousing community, reducing the need for outside support.

We make decisions through a form of consensus. As Quakers will understand, from the standpoint of their process of seeking unity, this can take time. However, we trust that our decisions are better ones in the long run because all concerns have been heard and addressed. By going through the consensus decision-making process we have formed the bonds that provide the foundation for ongoing community. We have used outside mediation a number of times to clear up issues which we couldn't resolve ourselves. A testament to our ability to build community together is the fact that the original ten members who purchased the property together in 1997 are all still here. New members have been added through marriage, birth, adoption, and the construction of one new unit. We have attracted additional members living nearby in the neighbourhood who participate in social activities and meals but are not part of the condominium.

Cohousing promotes environmental sustainability. Access to shared resources allows individuals to decrease material possessions without reducing the quality of life. With a shared guest room, for example, it's not necessary for each home to maintain a space for visitors. A solar hot water installation provides heat and hot water to the common space and four units. Over the years we have shared camping and sports equipment, freezers, and tools. Bulk purchasing and coordinated running of errands are natural parts of daily life. Our family went for two years without a car because of car-sharing arrangements with two other families. Exchanges of knowledge, skills, expertise and time, makes all of our lives richer.

Living in community can be frustrating at times; it requires flexibility and a willingness to question previously held assumptions. However, Signy and I have never felt that it was not worth the effort. We have grown in ways we would not have otherwise; and overall, the richness of our lives in cohousing has surpassed our expectations.

*Steve Fick, Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

[With permission, this article drew freely from an article written by our friends and fellow "cohousing" Bob and Marlene Neufeld, in *Rhubarda*, a publication of the Mennonite Literary Society.]

# Social Justice Work in Community

*Marge Reitsma-Street*

Social justice is created by working together and by making choices. I wish to highlight four choices by telling the following story:

Twenty years ago, early on a cold January morning I received a call from a reporter. She asked for my reactions to a national CBC radio item aired that morning. It quoted me as saying Sudbury had the highest child poverty rate in the province. I did not know what this news story was about. The previous year I had completed a substantial child poverty study in North Bay, with students and social workers. There had been good media coverage as part of the early efforts of Campaign 2000, to eradicate child poverty in Canada by the Twenty-first Century. I started to worry about a background conversation that I had a few months earlier with a reporter who was doing a follow-up story on the North Bay project. He had also asked about poverty rates in my new hometown. I said 'I didn't know, but I estimated there would be over 5,000 children living in low-income families according to what I had learned since moving to Sudbury'.

This speculation was reported as fact, and my phone began to ring. The President of Laurentian University called to say a top ranking local politician was demanding that I be fired for the negative and false portrayal of Sudbury. Now I was worried, new to the community, and without job security. Yet, I knew I needed to do more than worry or justify myself. I faced the first choice in all social justice struggles: act, flee, or wait.

My husband, Harry Street and I discussed the options. I decided to act on this issue that landed on my doorstep. There are times when it is best to not take up a particular campaign or issue. However, it is wise to make a conscious choice whether to take action, wait, or take no action.

But what action? I needed help to make sense of the situation. I phoned Marion Dewar, an astute woman with whom I had worked when we both lived in Hamilton and who had been the mayor of Ottawa and a Member of Parliament. Marion helped me to see the second choice I had to make. "You can choose to worry about your job and academic reputation", she said, "or you can choose to focus on your concern: the injustice of child poverty." She warned me to get the

facts right, and invite others to become curious about the nature of child poverty in their community.

Although the advice was helpful and inspiring, I was still baffled how to proceed. I called Pat Rogerson, Assistant Director of the Native Friendship Centre. She had recently invited me to join a group that was working on a funding proposal for a community prevention project in low-income neighbourhoods. Pat and others demonstrated the third choice that is fundamental to social justice struggles: the selection of a community to stand with, and the importance of making decisions together. Pat called a meeting of all those committed to fighting child poverty. Everyone at the meeting agreed there was child poverty, and that my speculative estimates were too low. We also agreed to create a process for engaging with the media.

Finally, there is a fourth choice to make: the choice to move beyond the general intent to act; to take responsibility for a particular task, project, or direction. I chose to join a child poverty coalition and to start a project of gathering the *facts* about child poverty in Sudbury, and debating its consequences. Months later, once the project was completed, the media reported over 9,000 children were living below Statistics Canada's low-income cut-off: far more than I had estimated, and far, far too many for any community.

Today, we know that life on the streets, in homes, and organizations, has become even more challenging for many, and the future is worrisome. Thus, we continue to speak the truth about poverty and inequality, and to imagine new policies and practices relevant to today's world. There are those in Ontario who worked on the successful campaign to enact an anti-poverty law in May 2008, and many others in Quebec who pioneered poverty eradication legislation. In British Columbia, a fledging coalition to reduce poverty is working on a provincial strategy to change policies and laws that negatively affect so many children, families, and single people. Many others worldwide are working on *The Global Action Against Poverty* in order to reach the Millennium Development Goals of the UN by 2015. I wish all of us courage as we seek to make choices about how to respond to these challenges, and how to stand together to create a more provident world.

*Marge Reitsma-Street, Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting*

[Excerpted from a speech to the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto, October 14, 2009, upon acceptance of the national Dick Weiler Award for a lifetime of contributions to building community partnership and social justice.]

## House Rules of Planet Earth

*Bert Horwood*

**Me:** Beth, you're looking down in the dumps today?

**Beth:** I'm grounded. They won't let me go to my friend's sleepover tonight.

**Me:** My goodness, that sounds bad. What happened?

**Beth:** Oh. I broke one of the stupid house rules.

**Me:** Which one?

**Beth:** The one about putting away food. And the cheese went all mouldy and Mum is disgusted with the mess and Dad is mad because it was his favourite kind. I didn't even like the cheese when I ate some.

**Me:** Well I'm sorry you're in trouble. You said it was a stupid rule. Do you think that all rules are stupid? That maybe there should be no rules?

**Beth:** I don't know. It's unfair to keep a person from a sleepover because they made a mistake with some old cheese. Maybe some rules are okay, like looking both ways before crossing the street. If you break that one your punishment is maybe getting run over.

**Me:** Yes. Some rules are more important than others. A wise man once wrote that when you make rules you also make rule-breakers. So perhaps there is some sense in not having too many. Now I feel a little story coming on. Do you think, since you're grounded anyway, that you could listen to it?

**Beth:** I suppose so. I'm not allowed to watch TV either.

**Me:** OK. Here goes. Living here on earth is like living in a great huge house. A sort of do-it-yourself boarding and rooming house. It turns out that this big house has rules, too. They aren't meant to be mean, or to teach anybody a lesson. They come with the house because it's the way the place works. They tell how all the roomers and boarders in the house get along.

**Beth:** What roomers and boarders?

**Me:** Well since the house I'm talking about is the whole planet earth, the roomers and boarders are all the living plants and animals. Maybe, it's more like a space ship than a boarding house, and the house rules are the operating rules of the space ship's life-support system; just like on an airplane the pilot has to do certain things to make the plane fly and land safely. The rules apply whether anyone knows about them or not. And there are natural consequences for any creature that tries to break them. Your mum and dad

make house rules out of love to make a home where everyone in the family can get along. The Universe is driven by love, and the house rules of the planet are meant to give every member of the family of life a home. The first house rule is "everything goes somewhere," or, "nothing ever goes away because there is no 'away'." If cheese doesn't go in the fridge covered, it stays out on a shelf or somewhere. It can't disappear.

**Beth:** Mum made that cheese disappear pretty fast, right into the garbage.

**Me:** But that's the point. It has gone somewhere else. If the mould keeps growing on it, the cheese will turn into fungus and spores in the garbage and they will go wherever your garbage goes. By the way, where does your garbage go?

**Beth:** Some goes to the compost, some goes to recycling and some goes in the garbage can.

**Me:** Right. Lots of people think that the garbage can disposes of garbage. But it really moves the stuff somewhere else. And it sits there and keeps on getting mouldy or rusty, or whatever else could happen to it. Some garbage, like plastic, lasts for years and years, just sitting there wherever the garbage is put. But it never disappears. I remember seeing plastic diapers that someone "got rid of" floating on the Arctic Ocean far away from any people. We used to take canned food on canoe trips. After eating the food, we'd whack the cans with an axe and drop them into the lake when we were paddling. When we could scuba dive some of the boys went down into the lake and couldn't believe the mess of old cans and other junk spread out on the lake bottom along our canoe routes. We thought we were "getting rid" of cans, but we actually were storing them in our lovely lake. Everything goes somewhere.

**Beth:** What about electricity? It doesn't keep going.

**Me:** Well, that's good thinking there Beth. But the rule is true for electricity and other kinds of energy. Energy turns into heat in the end, just little whimpers of heat; not enough to make toast or light a candle. I think it would be a really good idea if everybody asked themselves a key question about this rule before they made or bought anything. What might the question be?

**Beth:** Maybe, like, "where will I put this?" Or "Where did this come from?"

**Me:** That's pretty good. Where will it go when I'm done with it? And then where? There are three other house rules for the planet. They each deserve some thought so I'll just tell you what they are and we'll talk about them another time:



- Everything is connected to everything else.
- There is no free lunch.
- Mother Nature knows best. Nature is an independent Great Power and does not negotiate.

*Bert Horwood*

*Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting*

[Thanks to Barry Commoner for his Four Laws of Ecology]

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Excerpt:

## *The Servant as Leader*

by Robert K. Greenleaf

[Editor's note. During recent discussions in our Meeting of Greenleaf's book, I was engaged by the following quotes:]

"All that is needed to rebuild community as a viable life form for large numbers of people is for enough servant-leaders to show the way, not by mass movements, but by each servant-leader demonstrating his own limited liability for a quite specific community-related group." (pg.40)

"The future society may be just as mediocre as this one. It may be worse. And no amount of restructuring or changing the system or tearing it down in the hope that something better will grow will change this. There may be a better system than the one we now know. It is hard to know. But, whatever it is, if the people to lead it well are not there, a better system will not produce a better society.

"Many people finding their wholeness through many and varied contributions make a good society. Here we are concerned with but one facet: able servants with potential to lead must lead, and where appropriate, they must follow only servant-leaders. Not much else counts if this does not happen." (pg.46)

(*The Servant as Leader* published by The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, USA. Originally published in 1970 and Revised in 2008)

## Discerning a Quaker Perspective on Israel and Palestine

*Dave Greenfield*

Over the past three-and-a-half centuries Quakers have developed testimonies on both peace and social justice. Both arise out of a belief in the dignity of all human beings. Our peace testimony tells us that a state of peace and nonviolence is preferable to a state of physical violence and warfare, as means for achieving a just end, and as an end in itself. Our testimonies of equality and community tell us that a state of oppression, physical violence, and humiliation, being carried on against a population by an oppressor, and states of vast inequalities of wealth and power, are fundamentally morally unsound. This two-pronged call for peace and nonviolence on the one hand, and just and equitable community on the other, challenges us to stand with oppressed groups, and live with a deep thirst for justice, while acknowledging that the ultimate outcome that we seek is one of well-being for everyone, including the oppressed and the oppressor.

When Quakers look at Israel and Palestine, we are, in a sense, confronted by the question: to what extent is this a peace issue, and to what extent a social justice issue? Of course there are elements of both, but over the past four decades, as progressive nonviolent people of spirit have become involved in these issues, and in some cases, visited occupied Palestine to see for themselves, it has become clear to most, that this is a justice issue. The so-called conflict between the Israeli and Palestinian people is not a war between two equals. It is a brutal military occupation by the Israeli state, backed by western arms, against the dispossessed Palestinian people, who have an equal right to self-determination and land, in what was formerly called British Mandate Palestine.

When examining this topic it is useful to understand the concept of peoplehood, the rights of peoples, and particularly the rights of Indigenous peoples. In 1947 when the U.N. General Assembly allocated some fifty-five percent of British Mandate Palestine to the Jewish people and allocated the remaining forty-five percent to the Palestinian people, they were acknowledging a basic truth which international law has been in the process of recognizing over the past one hundred years - namely, the rights of peoples. They acknowledged

in effect, that both the Jews and the Palestinians are peoples with a history indigenous to the region, and that they both have a right to land, statehood, and self-determination on substantial portions of British Mandate Palestine. The concept of the collective rights of a people was stated the following year in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in greater detail more recently in the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples - a document which Canadian Quakers played a major role in helping to see adopted.

Despite the fact that both international law and the U.N. General Assembly have acknowledged that the Jews and the Palestinians have an equal right to self-determination, and a land-based state, the Israeli state has been trying for decades to drive the Palestinian people from land that is rightfully theirs; to erase all memory of a Palestinian history in the region, and to destroy the possibility of a viable Palestinian state. When Israel became a state in 1948 it not only took the fifty-five percent of the land the U.N. resolution had given it, it also took another fifteen percent by force. This brought its portion of the land to seventy percent, leaving the remaining thirty percent potentially for a Palestinian state. In 1967 when Israel invaded and occupied the remaining thirty percent (the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip) they were in violation of international law. From 1967 onward the Israeli state has been involved in a constant program of bulldozing Palestinian homes, and entire neighbourhoods, to make way for Jewish Israeli settlements. These settlements, built on Palestinian land are illegal under international law. Even during times of supposed peace negotiations (namely the negotiation of the Oslo accord of 1993, and in the months immediately following its signing) the state of Israel continued to bulldoze Palestinian homes and to expand settlements. The destruction of Palestinian homes, and the building of Israeli settlements in their place has nothing to do with the security needs of the people of Israel, and everything to do with a program of ethnically cleansing the Palestinian people from the region. Israel's more recent project of building the separation barrier, or apartheid wall, is designed to enable Israel to permanently annex a further eight percent of the original land, leaving the Palestinians with twenty-two percent, a little less than half of the original forty-five percent they were allocated. In small separated enclaves on this final twenty-two percent, the Palestinian people will be expected to exist and possibly forge a state. With Israel controlling

the gateways, one wonders if Israel's current blockade of Gaza is a foretaste of what Israel's policy will be on the West Bank once the wall is complete. In the case of Gaza, Israel officially withdrew in 2005, but has since imposed a blockade effecting medical supplies, food, and other necessities, making Gaza an open air prison that houses one-and-a-half million plus Palestinians. These are the underlying facts of a ruthless, unrelenting, machine-like process bent on destroying the ability of the Palestinian people to live on their land. Their houses have been bulldozed, and their olive trees uprooted; their land has been stolen to build middle class suburb-like Israeli settlements. In general the Palestinians are made to feel unwelcome on land that has been theirs for thousands of years.

The Palestinian people have responded to this expansionary onslaught by Israel in a variety of ways, from complete passivity and despair, to armed resistance, to creative nonviolent resistance. The fact that some Palestinians have used armed resistance is something that often comes up in discussions about Israel and Palestine. As Quakers, we recognize that violence from among an oppressed people is a result of despair and desperation. It results because violence seems to be the only way out of a horrible and frustrating situation. Over the past one hundred years Quakers have often worked in broader social justice movements. In these there were some individuals or groups who advocated, or used some type of armed resistance. The abolition movement, the movement resisting the Nazi genocide, the movement against the Vietnam War, and the movement for an end to apartheid in South Africa are all examples. Our general approach in such situations has been to work with nonviolent elements within a given movement, and to help create and strengthen nonviolent space, in the hope that armed resistance would become unnecessary.

The nonviolent strategy to pressure Israel to withdraw from the occupied territory, which has evolved over the past decade or so, involves several different aspects. It includes grass root Palestinians organizing nonviolent protests, and human blockades against the construction of the separation wall. It also includes international nonviolent activists / observers of the realities of the occupation, who participate in nonviolent protests. The International Middle East Media Center communicates to the world that there is an active nonviolent resistance movement in occupied Palestine. Palestinian products such as olive oil are promoted to help strengthen a Palestinian people's economy. The promotion of a boycott, sanctions,

and a divestment program, encourages individuals, companies, and nation-states to boycott and divest from Israel. These are the makings of a Ghandian nonviolence campaign.

At CYM this past August some Friends viewed the Israel/Palestine situation as a conflict between equals, and stressed the need for dialogue rather than organized opposition to the occupation. There are a few points that should be made in response to this perspective.

Canada, the US, and other western nations, are not neutral observers to a conflict between two cultural groups. Since the late 1960's, when Israel proved that it was one of the 'big boys' by occupying the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, and by developing nuclear weapons during the same time period, Washington and her allies have chosen Israel as the western world's regional proxy. American and other western foreign policy toward the Middle East has increasingly been shaped around the needs and wants of Israel. Over the past forty years, the west has supplied Israel with all the arms it wants, from tanks and guns to F16 fighter jets. Recently the Palestinian land seems to have become a place for Israel and the western military complex to experiment with new, hitherto unknown weapons, against a captive civilian population.

Most western countries, including Canada, have made it illegal to supply arms to Palestinian groups such as Hamas. Meanwhile the West continues to supply Israel with all the latest arms available. Perhaps we should be consistent and make it equally illegal to supply Israel with arms.

On the question of dialogue, it is worth noting that in the years following 1993, western governments spent some twenty-five million dollars a year funding so-called dialogue sessions between ordinary Palestinians and Israelis. It is debatable how effective or sincere these dialogues were, since the bulldozing of Palestinian homes and the uprooting of their olive trees continued during this time. For many Palestinians these dialogues felt a lot like fiddling while Palestine burned. It is not dialogue that is needed. International pressure is needed. Only an increasing international awareness about the realities of the occupation, and the possible resulting pressures of world opinion, boycott, sanctions and divestment, will force Israel to withdraw from occupied Palestine.

As Quakers, the path we have chosen is that of supporting Ghandian nonviolent resistance. This path acknowledges the problem - Israel's occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem and blockade of Gaza - and seeks to end these acts of systemic violence through means consistent with the end. Our support

for the Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement Between People (PCR) and the International Middle East Media Center (IMEMC) [both of which have played a significant role in building a nonviolent resistance movement in occupied Palestine] are a proud continuations of our history of support for nonviolent movements against oppression. As well, Canadian Quakers who have traveled to occupied Palestine to observe the realities of the occupation, stand for our tradition of nonviolent witness for peace with justice.

*Dave Greenfield, Saskatoon Monthly Meeting*

## Book Review:

*Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*

By Paul Farmer

Paul Farmer is Professor of Medical Anthropology at Harvard Medical School and Founding Director of Partners in Health. He has worked as a physician in under-developed countries for over twenty-five years, including Cuba, Haiti, Peru, Mexico, and Russia. He tells the stories of some of his patients and uses their experiences to question our understanding of international human rights, and exposes the relationship between political and economic injustice. The huge increase in poverty, epidemic diseases, and suffering among the poor is a direct result of the structural violence imposed by governments and the elite classes through land appropriation, political oppression, and lack of adequate medical treatment. These undermine the basic human rights of our most vulnerable people. He adopts a liberation theology approach to the empowerment of the poor whose numbers are growing precipitously.

This book is not an easy read. Anyone with a heart will shed tears. It shines a clear light on hypocrisy inherent in our institutions and those professions supposedly designed to alleviate human suffering, not to mention the commodification of life itself. Farmer urges his readers to "think about human rights in the context of global public health" and believes these issues "should be of fundamental concern to a world characterized by the bizarre proximity of surfeit and suffering". I believe all f/Friends who are concerned about social justice, be it local or international, should read this book.

*Kirsten Ebsen, Vancouver Monthly Meeting*



# Quaker Book Service



*The following titles have been added to our stock. For a complete listing of QBS books, see our 2009-2010 Quaker Book Service Catalogue, which was included in the July 2009 edition of The Canadian Friend and is also available on the CYM website, [www.quaker.ca/qbs](http://www.quaker.ca/qbs).*

***Christianity and the Inner Life: Twenty-First Century Reflections on the Words of Early Friends*** by Margery Abbott, Pendle Hill Pamphlet #402, Wallingford, PA, 2009.  
The author searches her inner thoughts and early Quaker writings to explain her understanding of the Light of Christ in her life. (36 pp \$8.45)

***In the Love of Nature*** by Steve Smith, S.E. Yearly Meeting Publications, Melbourne Beach, Florida. The Annual Michener Quaker Lecture, 2008.  
Treating the current ecological crises as insufficient love for the earth and all life, the author draws from activists such as Keith Helmut, Aldo Leopold, Henry Thoreau, Rachel Carson and Marshall Massey. (36 pp; \$5.20)

***A Hidden Wholeness: The Journey Toward an Undivided Life*** by Parker J. Palmer, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 2008. New paperback edition.  
Dr. Palmer offers spiritual insight and guidance for finding what we seek – within ourselves and with others. Included is a DVD which illustrates the author's "circles of trust". (260 pp; \$23.95)

***Journeying the Heartlands, Exploring Practices of Quaker Worship*** by Elizabeth Brown and Alex Davison. The Kindlers, London, UK, 2003.  
This booklet helps newcomers and members to understand and participate in Quaker worship. An excellent source for study sessions. (41 pp; \$7.50)

***The Night is Full of Stars*** by Friedrich Schmitz-Hertzberg. Translated by Kathleen & Evelyn Hertzberg, Sessions of York, 2009.  
A remarkable account of a German physician as a prisoner of war, 1945-49 in the Soviet Union. He later became a Quaker. (178 pp; \$25.00)

***Occupied with Nonviolence: A Palestinian Woman Speaks*** by Jean Zaru, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2008.  
A moving account of the struggle for peace by a Christian Arab, a teacher at the Friends Ramallah School, clerk for many years of their Quaker Meeting, and international lecturer. (144 pp; \$26.00)

For orders from North America Please add the following mailing costs:		For orders outside North America
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Over \$60	\$10.50	

## Around the Family Around the Family Around the Family

**Hamilton Monthly Meeting (HMM)** held a weekend retreat in February where community was both lived and discussed. The planning and depth of discussion were such that other Meetings may use this format for future gathering.

Friday evening began with the game *Two Truths and a Lie*, a most interesting way to understand each other as we took turns presenting our life and guessing at the lives of others.

Saturday morning we focused on *community within* and in the afternoon on *community without*. We answered how we contribute to our Quaker community and beyond. In small groups we mapped - on large pieces of paper - our affiliations and the larger networks these linked to. One member offered to use software to combine with an HMM to map and understand where power for change existed.

Though silence was a lovely intention of the weekend, there was reason for the overheard gleanings: "this is the funniest silence I have ever heard".

After supper we planned a future HMM project as experience led all to believe this was an excellent way to bind generations and reach into the larger community, to neighbours and neighbouring churches. The evening closed with union songs and peace anthems accompanied by guitar. Sunday morning, using craft materials, we individually worked on a word, symbol, or construct to represent community. These we shared and hung before closing with Meeting for Worship, lunch, and a last look at the hills of Crieff.

**Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting** notes the death of Mikio (Mike) Miyake on November 29. A Memorial Meeting was held at the Victoria Meetinghouse on Jan. 23. Mike had recently transferred from Vancouver Monthly Meeting. His wife Yoshiko has returned to Tokyo.

Victoria Friends appreciated a six-part leadership series on *Servant Leadership* led by Carolyn Crippen, based on the work of Robert K. Greenleaf.

We are represented and engaging in action with five outreach groups: AVP, Restorative Justice, KAIROS, Aboriginal Neighbours, and the Federal Dept. of Peace Initiative.

### **Friends of Maison Quaker de Congenies**

"Live adventurously! Vis ta vie comme une aventure!" French Quakers have taken Advice 27 seriously by supporting the brave development of the Maison Quaker in Congenies, near Nîmes at the edge of the Cevennes Mountains, the only purpose-built Meeting House in France. There is a feeling of excitement as the programme for 2010 is developed.

In 2003 France Yearly Meeting received a generous, interest-free loan to purchase Congenies Meeting House which had been in private hands since 1905. Equally generous donations have made possible reconversion and refurbishment of the House, with a large meeting room - now a real delight! - and the provision of guest rooms for those attending retreats, conferences, or visiting for holidays.

The Languedoc local Quaker group meets once a week for Meeting for Worship, usually followed by a sharing time and often by a meal together. At the December Monthly Meeting that we attended, there were over 20 indigenous and British Friends present. Every two or three months the group organizes meetings where people from the village are invited. In October each year there is a conference for Friends from several European countries. The group is also involved with local churches around Nîmes, in caring for Afghan refugees seeking asylum. Six refugees are to be welcomed this Spring to give respite to the long-term hosts. Congenies Friends have also been instrumental in setting up a monthly vigil, first Friday at 11:15 am in the centre of the village in support of asylum seekers.

I invite you to visit the new accommodation in the Meeting House.

Richard Thompson, Mid-Thames Area Meeting and Groupe Languedocien de l'Assemblée de France

**Ottawa Monthly Meeting** announces member Allan Colville (Mike) Sinclair, died on 25 February 2010, at the age of 83. Mike and his first wife Felicity, and their two children, Johanna and Ian, were regular attenders during the early 1970s when he worked as an arbitrator for the federal government. The family held a funeral at Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa on March 4, 2010.

**House sitting opportunity - Sunshine Coast**, Powell River, BC. Large house inhabited by three cats and an eager Great Dane. Indoor plants. June 25 - July 23. Would suit couple experienced with animals.  
awmuma@shaw.ca or 604-487-1766

# Notice Board

Quaker Center in Ben Lomond, CA (90 minutes south of San Francisco)  
Personal retreats/Weekend programs  
(831) 336 8333 or visit [www.quakercenter.org](http://www.quakercenter.org)

## General Secretary Job Opening at Friends General Conference beginning summer 2011

Candidate must be active in Religious Society of Friends, have mid to senior management experience, and be supportive of FGC mission and goals including promoting diversity in many dimensions. For complete job description go to [www.fgcquaker.org/jobs](http://www.fgcquaker.org/jobs).

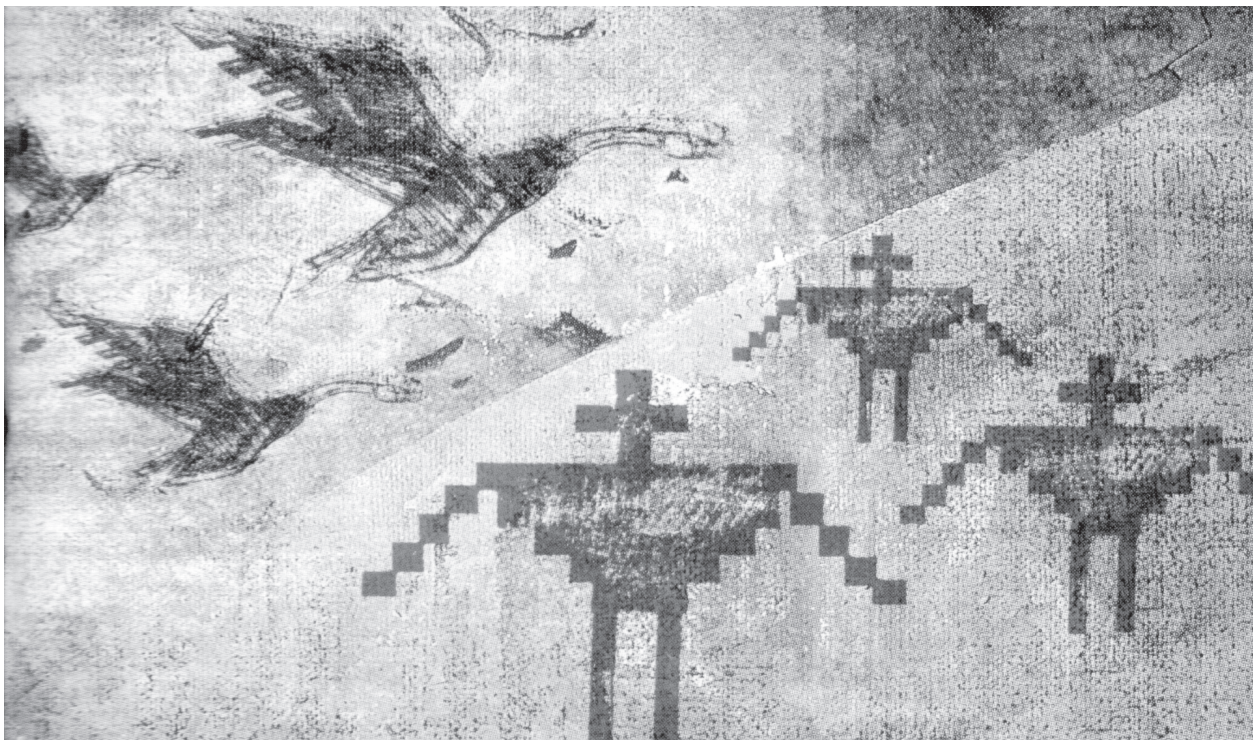
Applications and resumes to be sent to:  
Rich Van Dellen at [fgcsearch@charter.net](mailto:fgcsearch@charter.net).

Friends General Conference  
1346 Arch Street, 28, Philadelphia, PA 19107  
215-943-1708 / [www.fgcquaker.org/jobs](http://www.fgcquaker.org/jobs)



## Opening For Resident Friend at Ottawa Monthly Meeting

We seek a Friend or attender to serve as Resident Friend for a one year renewable term beginning September 1, 2010. The Resident Friend cares for the Meeting House and garden, books the facilities, and handles telephone enquiries. A salary is paid for about 12 hours of duties per week (equivalent to the cost of renting the Resident Friend apartment). Detailed guidelines are available upon request. The apartment is a modern one-bedroom unit on the second floor of the Meeting House - Glebe area. Send your resume by post or e-mail, outlining your relevant past experiences and the contributions you feel you can make to Ottawa Monthly Meeting. Please include at least two references. Submit by June 1, 2010 to: Resident Friend Search Committee c/o Ottawa Monthly Meeting, 91A Fourth Ave., Ottawa K1S 2L1 or e-mail: [anne.caza@gmail.com](mailto:anne.caza@gmail.com). Telephone enquiries: 613-236-2834 or 613-236-8724.





## Last Words:

# Utopian: John Bellers

*Sybil Grace*

John Bellers, this strangely forgotten seventeenth century English Quaker, friend of William Penn and Robert Barclay, was a focus of Keith Helmuth's talk at 2009 CYM. Praised by Karl Marx and acknowledged by Robert Owen, his many carefully worded tracts were a foundation for the Utopian movements of following centuries.

Born into a prosperous family, and as a Quaker unable to attend university, he was educated through apprenticeship. Perhaps this allowed his writing and plans for social betterment to be practical, concise, and strongly based on self-help. He believed that the poor could be raised without lowering the rich; indeed, that profit would encourage the rich to be virtuous.

"The poor, thus in a college will be a community, something like the example of primitive Christianity that lived in common, and the power that did attend it bespeaks its excellency."

An early Utopian, he saw labour, not money, as the measure for society. He believed that a fully employed populace was as valuable a resource to England as mines were to Spain. He believed the same amount of money spent on almshouses and hospitals, could benefit ten times more people through self-help and education.

"However prevalent arguments of charity may be to some, when profit is joined with it, it will raise most money, provide for most people, hold longest, and do most good. For what sap is to a tree, profit is to all business. This College-fellowship will make labour and not money the standard to value all necessities by . . . and it is as much more charity to put the poor in a way to live by honest labour than to maintain them idle, as . . . to set a man's broken leg that he might go himself rather than always to carry him."

Bellers wrote this College of Industry proposal in 1695 and circulated it widely through his contacts in parliament and the Royal Society. Robert Owen, coming on it after building his New Lanark, republished Bellers' proposal and acknowledged a parallel thinker: Karl Marx. Marx spoke of Bellers as an influential economist in the early pages of *Das Kapital*.

"The plan was a residential community for the

unemployed, where all including children would be educated in trade and crafts, as well as books; where children might be raised with kindness despite death of parents, where health was available for all. The product of their industry would create profit, and offer founders payment in cloth and shoes as well as money.

"The poor, thus in a college will be a community, something like the example of primitive Christianity that lived in common, and the power that did attend it bespeaks its excellency. This College of Industry was promoted in parliament and proposed as a joint stock company by many leading Friends including William Penn."

The above quotes by Bellers are from Anne Ruth Fry's collection of his writings, published in 1935 by Cassell, and found in Ottawa Monthly Meeting's library. We know John Bellers essentially through his writings. He believed that only thus could he be heard after death, and left instructions in his will, sadly ignored, to bind and circulate all his tracts.

Keith Helmuth drew from George Clarke's 1987 biography. Tim Hitchcock also has an article in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. The 1915 Journal of the Friends Historical Society provides a full source.

Only today are we realizing some of John Bellers' proposals: a European law and state which would do away with war; a 1714 public health plan; an epistle concerning prison reform, and many more on educating children. Further writings were close to his life as a cloth merchant: reform of money; manufacture; fashion, and foreign trade. He stretched the spirit with tracts on prayer and anger, and pondered the death penalty.

Clarke's faint shadow in Quaker annals may be due to his manor-house lifestyle, continued to his death in 1725. As persecution of the Society of Friends lessened by the end of the century, Quaker sensitivities shifted from preaching in the George Fox mode, to containing growing prosperity in a framework of austerity. The colour grey became their identity. Theatre, music and the social life John Bellers espoused might have been an embarrassment to them, but his writings should be revived, to speak as he wished.

*Sybil Grace, Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

Editor: Sherryll-Jeanne Harris  
Editorial Support: Steve Fick, Gerald Harris, Diana Mitchell, Michael & Lynne Phillips

**Please Note:** You, the reader, create this journal. Your submissions and suggestions for themes are necessary for *The Canadian Friend* to thrive. **Do not delay!** Send articles, poems, art, photos, and thoughts today: [cf-editor@quaker.ca](mailto:cf-editor@quaker.ca)

### Themes & Deadlines for upcoming issues:

Summer / July                      Young Adult Friends Speak  
(Submission deadline - May 15)

Fall / October                      CYM

Winter / December              Celebration - Joy - Wonder

March 2011                      Interpretation of Scripture/Holy Writings

View The Canadian Friend online at: [www.quaker.ca/cfriend/cfriend.html](http://www.quaker.ca/cfriend/cfriend.html)



### Notice from the Canadian Friend Business Manager

*Dear Friends,*

*Please note important change mentioned on the coloured donation slip inserted in this issue:*

*Cheques are to be made payable to Canadian Yearly Meeting.*

*As I approach a full year as Business Manager for The Canadian Friend, I wish to express my gratitude for this opportunity to be part of bringing Friends together across the many miles. My heartfelt appreciation for all your contributions. Whether financial, or through submissions to the Journal's content, your support inspires and encourages us in our work, as well as keeps our 105 year old Canadian Friend alive and well.*

*In Friendship, Beryl Clayton, Business Manager*

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