

The Canadian Friend

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'From the Heart of Darkness - Hope'

Stories of Wonder and Transformation

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Dear Friends,

Transformation occurs within and without every day, in our Meetings and our lives. These are occasions of wonder. During *Experience of the Spirit in our Lives* at CYM, Mona Callin recalled a time during worship when she received a message - through Ministry - to be generous. It transformed her attitude, and the situation she was struggling with resolved beautifully as she approached it with a generous heart. I was reminded of a quote of Tulku Thondup Rinpoche, that Bill Curry (Prairie) passed to me. "Even if you have a lot of work to do, if you think of it as wonderful, and if you feel it as wonderful, it will transform into the energy of joy and fire, instead of becoming a burden."

This issue, while not as lengthy as others, is packed with marvelous stories of *enLightenment*. Perhaps, as you read through, you will recall moments of wonder and transformation in your life. Consider sending them to me so that they may be shared with Friends in future issues. Experiences such as these are important stories that have strength and power to change us. One cannot help but be moved by the letter from Paulina Southwick, dated in 1900. Hers is a lesson of deep Faith, and concern for others despite her personal grief.

As Steve Fick recalled his dream, I was reminded of a very important moment when I was four. My dad died suddenly and his chosen faith group claimed he was a lost soul; he wasn't a true believer. Following the funeral, as I stood on a balcony feeling devastated beyond words, an angel appeared face to face with me and Dad was nestled under a wing. This was truly miraculous; such peace filled me, as I understood that he was in God's care, and I need not worry or fear. Throughout my life, during times of despair, that experience anchors me in the certainty of God's presence.

In Falcon O'Hara's song I hear the call to change, to be open to the new enlivening essence of the Spirit and, recently at Canadian Yearly Meeting when I heard John Calder say "we need an evolution of the heart", I thought of Romans 12.2: "... let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect" (New Living Translation). I would add *freeing*, as well.

I am happy to include an article from Margaret Slavin again and hear the new voice of Darlene Kennedy singing another song to life. The sense of wonder is certainly found in diverse places! Thank you to all Friends who contributed to this issue.

Blessings and joy,
Sherryl Harris





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Western Half Yearly Meeting

Epistle

October 4 – 7, 2011

Greetings to Friends everywhere, from Western Half Yearly Meeting at Shekinah Retreat Centre, near Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Arriving in a persistent prairie rainstorm, in the dark, we began our transition from individual Friends and families, to a community.

In the morning, Spirit blessed us with an enchanting sunrise on the golden hills along the river valley. We celebrated the Divine in our midst by sharing in worship, witnessing circles of joyful children, hiking, berry picking, balancing, and by connecting deeply through one-on-one conversations.

Many heeded the advice to live adventurously by attending Meeting for Flying Fox zip line.

We listened attentively to stories of work with claimants in residential school cases, with agricultural workers in Ethiopia, with healthcare workers in Iraq, and met in Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business.

We were especially joyful as we connected across generations with the delightful pair of nine-month-old babes; the active boys; the energetic, tuneful and inseparable young men; the respected elders in their eighties; and all of the rest of us who filled in the spaces. Some of us experienced the joy of witnessing the growth of those we knew as babies, into parents caring for babes of their own.

We were at times serene, peaceful, musical, playful and worshipful. We were reminded in many ways of the glory of the natural world: coyote howls, northern lights, a full moon, and the wide valley visible from our spacious gathering place.

Any small friction that rose among us was easily absorbed in the light of the good and supporting atmosphere of our community.

We departed with spirits replenished, trusting that we would meet again in this magical place.

[Submitted by Susan Starr]

Everybody Knows



You can have a lot of dough,
you can know the cats to know,
you can ride in style with babes
on both your arms
and have nothin' but an ache
no one laughin' at your wake
though you dazzled half the world
with all your charms.

Somethin' special, somethin' true,
what you love is what you do.
All the honour, all the pride
won't make up for what's inside,
no one sings your song but you.

Find the dream that makes you smile.
Walk that long and lovely mile.
Fill the world with all the love you have to give.
Runnin' scared is in the past.
Take your time and make it last.
Everybody knows the magic they can live.

Somethin' hidden, somethin' free;
find the lock and be the key.
Give your body, give your soul.
Hear the thunder, let it roll.
There's no tellin' who you'll be.

Touch the flowers, taste the sky.
Learn to dance and learn to fly.
Somethin' special, somethin' true,
what you love is what you do,
no one sings your song but you.

Somethin' special, somethin' true,
what you love is what you do,
no one sings your song but you.

*Falcon o'Hara, Winnipeg Monthly Meeting
Attending Victoria Meeting*

[Song from *A Summer's Tale* (2001) by Falcon o'Hara.
Falcon sang this in Meeting recently. Imagine Leonard
Bernstein's musicals]

Treasure from the Archives

This is a wondrous letter from my Great-Great-Grandmother. Long ago, perhaps around the year 1900, my maternal grandmother, Alice Lossing Estabrook, transcribed the following letter from 1832 in the possession of her grandmother, Augusta Malvina Southwick Marshall. It was written by Paulina Southwick (1786-1864) Augusta Malvina's mother who was a Quaker, and tells of the sudden death of her beloved husband George Southwick. It presumably was sent from the Quaker settlement at Norwich, Ontario, to her husband's relatives in the United States. Norwich had been founded in 1810 by Paulina's father, Peter Lossing, and his brother-in-law, Peter De Long.

I find this letter, passed down to me, to be full of wonder. It reveals Paulina Southwick as a person of deep compassion, reaching out to those who mourned with her as she coped with the worst tragedy in her life. Hers is an authentic voice from our Quaker past.

*Kyle Joliffe
Yonge Street Monthly Meeting*



Paulina's daughter
Kyle Joliffe's great-great grandmother,
Augusta Malvina Southwick Marshall

Dear friends:

I wish I could communicate something that could afford comfort to you. But this is from one who is bereaved of a beloved partner and endeared husband. I can truly say this is the greatest trial I have experienced. It has caused me anguish of soul. I have made several attempts to write but could not bring my mind to the undertaking. I requested his brother Marmaduke to write the next week after. He said he would and afterward said he had written concerning the death of your dear brother who departed this life the 14 of 5th month 1832.

He went from good health so suddenly. The day before his death he and I had walked as mourners to the grave of my stepmother whom I held in affection. My heart and pen are incapable of expressing my feelings but I thank our Heavenly Father for his merciful protection to me and my fatherless children.

Such a kind husband and father I have a consolation that the Heavenly Father had been preparing him for the mansion in the heavens. He often expressed how necessary it was to be prepared to die and to live in such a manner there would be no fear. He had also been concerned for the cause of truth and righteousness. I never saw a man who governed his disposition so well. He was making preparations to go and see again his dear relatives and his Mother in particular. He often expressed these wishes. Time and distance had not erased precious memories of his time with you.

My own father often expressed his satisfaction having George as a beloved son-in-law. I have much more to say to you but time will not permit. I would be pleased to see any of my husband's connections in this land. I cannot visit you as my children need a parent's care. My youngest will be four years old the 18th of 8 mo. 28.

My four children are well at present. Mary Ann, Henry W., Caroline Elizabeth and Augusta Malvina all desire to send their love to their relatives and I most heartily join them. With my best wishes for your preservation I bid you an affectionate farewell.

Paulina Southwick

There is Wonder *Margaret Slavin*

Joy comes hard. Easier is Anger. I am angry about the rising tide of hatred against Muslims seeping into discourse at all levels. Then at another moment, another day, on my way to a jail, anger scalds me again as I revisit the punitive, humiliating approach taken toward people we call *criminals*. The two issues connect for me as two examples of our need to find scapegoats for all our own dark stuff. Once we laid it on the Irish, then the Jews, Communists, and now on the Muslims. Yet I can tell you this: it was a joy and a celebration when, three weeks ago, Kevin* came out of jail. I baked his favourite molasses cookies. I tend to burn them, but he claims to like them burnt. Brings out the flavour, he says.

We drew up at the curb. Suddenly about a dozen men were walking along outside the walls of the prison. Kevin spotted us and got in. I'd moved into the back seat so that he'd have a view of the highway as our mutual friend drove us back to Peterborough. He arrived steaming - they had asked him what clothes he needed, and he'd requested running shoes. It's August, and when he went in he was wearing winter boots. So when he picked up his belongings, he inquired about his boots. "It's one for one", they said. They'd given them away to a thrift store two weeks ago.

I passed the tin of molasses cookies up to the front. We both could hear him start to calm down. I don't mean that it was just the cookies.

So there is a wonder. Not the wondering why the system took his boots, gift of a friend last winter when his shoes were literally falling off him. The prison system is intended to humiliate and make ya crazy. I already knew that. No, the wonder was to have him back with us, the vigor of his stories and insights, and by the time we got back to Peterborough, his recovering sense of humour.

As for the Muslim thing, two celebrations here, one easy and sweet, although still complicated, the other wry and ongoing.

Just after 9/11 when I realized that Muslims were now going to be attacked, and I didn't know one single Muslim, I set out to rent rooms. Along came an Arab guy with those dark liquid eyes, and a perennial five o'clock shadow. Mohammed* was a lab technician who had found work here after his world fell apart. He'd gone back to Jordan to seek a wife and had married there. Huda* was finishing university.

Mohammed returned to Canada only to find that his job had been given away and his house overrun by renters who had trashed it. On the day I met him all his remaining possessions were outside in his little red car. Mohammed moved in that evening and over time we got to know one another. He saw me doing stretch exercises and meditation before a lighted candle, and he said that it didn't matter what the words were - we both were worshipping God. I felt the same way. I enjoyed our discussions, his earnestness, his increasing hope. He spent hours on Skype with Huda.

Fast forward to last month and they are now in a little house they've bought here, and Huda has given birth to Sebgha, which means *unique creation of Allah*. The baby is swaddled in a blanket, such a small warm bundle in my arms. He opens his dark liquid eyes and he smiles, twice. His parents and I sit in adoration, in celebration. Oh, there is such a long road ahead. Huda refuses to leave the house without her husband. Inside she wears the same clothes as anybody else, but downtown she covers her skimpy summer blouse and skirt with the long black gown and the hijab covering her brown hair. This exotic black bird. They come to my house, always bearing some gift: a little cake, often, with almonds set on the top. When a young man in my house enthusiastically holds out his hand, she smiles but does not take it: "My wife does not shake hands", explains her husband. It may take thirteen years. When Sebgha becomes a teenager. "Make that eighteen", says somebody who knows.

Meanwhile, what a wonder, what a joy, what a celebration is this astonishing bundle, this being who was not and now is!

I hardly want to mention the other wry moment. It's not a joy, but right now a small satisfaction. It turns out that here in the township next to us, running for council, we have our own wannabe Koran-burner, complete with a personal website full of hatred. "Oh my", said the Friend who first told me about it. Then came the all-candidates meeting last Monday. The topic of the evening was a proposed highway extension, but our Friend raised the awkward issue of the candidate's private site. Our local paper reported the exchange and published the site's address. Yesterday it was gone. Too soon to celebrate, but at least someone raised a little wonder.

Spirit calls. Spirit moves. When I try to imagine strategy to stop the bad stuff or transform it, I can become paralyzed. But when I follow, however imperfectly, the joy, at least here and there in the torn social fabric, a thread gets woven back in.

[*Names have been changed]

*Margaret Slavin,
Wooler Monthly Meeting.*

Celebrate the wide diversity of religious beliefs within our Monthly and Yearly Meetings, not as a liability, but as an opportunity to develop our skills of listening, spirituality, mediation, conflict resolution and peace making

[Excerpted from *What do Friends Believe?*
by Richard Barnes dated 1999]

Experience of Birth and Death *by Darlene Kennedy*

On September 8, 2010, my granddaughter Kaia was born, and also it was the twelfth anniversary of my mother's death. As I sit in Meeting holding all of this in the Light, I am full of gratitude and I feel like I am bursting with joy. It seems like an ocean of richness in this experience of life and death.

My daughter, Tanya, was to be induced and I knew that since I had to travel for my work on that day, I would not be able to be there. A part of me was deeply sad that I couldn't be with my girl as she would go through the pain of giving birth. As I shared this loss with my husband Bob, I emptied out my tears.

On September 8, during lunch break in Swift Current, I took some time to hold my daughter in the Light. As I lay on the floor in my office, I opened into breathing deeply as if I were right there sitting with Tanya. It felt as if I were present with her, breathing in sync with her, and that the physical distance did not matter. Later in the day, as I was driving several hours across the prairie, I remembered being at my mother's deathbed. The family stood around her bed, and I remember so clearly being at the foot of the bed and beginning to sing. I sang and I sang. It felt like the song was being pushed out of me. Gradually the song softened and floated away and my mother was gone. It felt like we had given birth to her, like we had been in labor with her until she was set free from her body.

As I drove toward home, I started to sing again, a new song but one with similar intensity. Again I sang and sang and this time it felt like the song was pulling my granddaughter through. I sang until the song fell away. When I glanced at the clock it was 4:00 pm. Later I was told that Kaia was born at 3:48 pm. What a joy it was to greet this new little one, to hold her close, and to whisper in her ear "you are welcome here". There was a picture that her father took soon after Kaia's birth, in which she is still covered with

birth fluids. He spoke of his experience of awe and surprise at all the blood and afterbirth that came out of the birth canal.

I am seeing that the many ways we come together in Meeting is like a birthing room. Sometimes we hold the space for others as they labor through the pain of whatever is being born in their lives. Other times, I am the one who is to be born. If the change and growth is to happen, I will have to be willing to expose myself with all the mess that comes with me. It will mean being willing to be uncomfortable and to let myself be helped and supported. There will be times when I may be asked to surrender and allow myself to depend on others. Who knows what wondrous things will be birthed in our Meeting and in our world, as we do the work of supporting each other, and at times take the risk of exposing ourselves as the Light leads.

The song that was given, I call *Kaia's Song*, although it is not just for Kaia, but for any time something or someone is ready to be born.

Kaia's Song

*Child of light and child of joy
Wend your way and come on through
There is love and warmth to welcome you
So come sweet child, come on through*

*Child of light and child of joy
Wend your way along life's road
For this love and warmth will cradle you
So live in this ocean of love
Yes live, sweet child live and love*

* * *

*Darlene Kennedy
Saskatoon Monthly Meeting*

Reflection *Joy Belle Conrad-Rice*

The Anglican Retreat Centre at Sorrento, BC, has for decades welcomed Friends for Western Half Yearly Meeting. On these grounds is a labyrinth. It is conducive to thinking, meditating, contemplating and waiting. It is a place to combine our various aspects of being, so that they can better function in harmony. I have found this to be so.

Years ago I attended some evening events at a Friends' church in Seattle where there was an experimental practice of walking meditation. A small group walked in an oval pattern in the presence of candlelight, with occasional bell ringing. That too was a place conducive to centring.

Presently I am playing a lot of tennis. In doubles when one stands waiting for a partner or for the team on the other side of the net to do something with the ball, there is opportunity to let that same centring fill one with the recognition that one is experiencing that of God within oneself, the other players and the place.

For me, the physical and the spiritual are indivisible, if there is that of God within us all then God is within our body, let's say our foot. God is at the molecular, chemical, neuron, soft tissue, muscle, tendon and ligament level, and the vital organ level. God is within and without the entire body, hovering around the outer layer of skin in various intensities of energy (a la Kirlian photography).

To experience the perfect functioning of the foot, or of the foot in cooperation with the leg, torso, arm, and brain, in a sport or any feat of functioning - ordinary or extraordinary - is to be beset by the experiential knowledge of our personal unity. So to say that I need to set aside a time each day to focus on my spirituality, to let my spirit rise, to be in touch with the God within, and then to say I need to set aside time each day to exercise my body - go to that exercise class, take that walk - is an artificial separation. That we are essentially indivisible we know in some way.

To centre means to be in closer touch with God; inwardly present all the time, whether we are walking the labyrinth, walking an oval inside a church, stretching, or sitting in silence. Living in the manner of Friends means to broaden and deepen the moments of consciousness when we are aware of our God within; minimizing the artificial linguistic-based characterization of our body and Spirit as separate.

For me it's important to see *experience* as layered rather than sequential. When I talk or sing to myself silently while I am doing something, when I whisper a little phrase of gratitude, I can reinforce awareness of the God within and without. *What canst Thou do?*

Joy Belle Conrad-Rice
Vernon Monthly Meeting

Guest Writer: *Tina Coffin*

Epiphany

It was one of those glorious Sunday mornings in spring of 1973. We were sitting on the patio of Rachel and King Baker's home looking out over the beautiful valleys and ridges of northern Tennessee. Rachel and King lived in the middle of an apple orchard near the town of Erin. Thirty of us, all Friends from Nashville, had come here to hold our silent Quaker Meeting with the couple that lived too far away to be with us every Sunday. I had been going to Quaker Meeting for over a year, and I had come to love that weekly hour of silence with all my heart.

The silence was deep this morning; there was no traffic noise. The distant voices of our children playing in the creek reached us through the light, cool air.

My thoughts wandered away from my friends, away from religion. The trees, the lovely trees held my attention. They were light green. Those on the other side of the valley seemed darker; the most distant ones gray-blue, and where the sky touched their tops, earth and air were of the same color. Three weeks before, the trees had been bare, now there were leaves where there had been nothing. Yet they had not appeared by some magic touch. The leaves had not been created out of nothing. Their matter had come from the earth underneath the branches of the trees.

Suddenly I realized that the matter from which the leaves were made had not only been there this winter, but as long as the earth had been in existence. It had been there in the soil, in other plants, or in the bodies of dead animals. From the beginning of the earth there had been substance, matter, and the amount of it had not changed. Many animals had walked over the distant hills, many people had lived there. They all had died and their bodies had become part of the earth again. The molecules of their bodies were alive in the cells of the lovely trees and plants I was looking at.



And in *me!* I suddenly realized my body was built with matter that was as old as the earth. It was as if I expanded in time. I was not only myself, physically. I was also, partly the woman who had lived seven thousand years ago; the bird that had flown over the hills of beautiful Tennessee. I was part of them and of the world I saw around me.

I was deeply moved. Only once before had I experienced the same kind of emotion. Visiting the British Museum ten years before, I had suddenly come face to face with the works of the people of Mesopotamia. Men who had lived three thousand years ago had made the friezes and had chiseled the reliefs. Their hands had touched them; their feelings were expressed in them. Surreptitiously - I had been alone in the room - I had laid my hand on one of the statues. I still don't know how to describe the deep emotion I felt when I touched what they had touched.

This morning I realized I had much in common with the men and women who had lived so long ago. Together with the plants and animals, I shared their bodies, and I would share mine with all the living things that would come after me. I was thirty-seven years old, and for the first time in my life I could think about my own physical end without horror and without fear.

Tina Coffin

Member of Little Rock Friends Meeting

Editor of The Carillon.

[Edited from a piece Tina wrote in 1973]

Gorgeous Fluttering Attire

I go each day to the Public Gardens
to sit under the tree, and stare up into the leaves
and limbs and sky above

Sometimes she is a manly woman to me, with her gorgeous

fluttering attire given out to the world,

as she holds up *her* world

through storm and night and the full stop of winter

and sometimes he is a womanly man,

with his gorgeous fluttering attire given out to the world

through storm and night and the full stop of winter

Roger Davies

Photographer and poet

Halifax Monthly Meeting

[Photo of the tree in the Halifax Public Gardens]

Transformed by Fire Steve Fick

One morning in the spring of 1987, a few weeks after our house burned to the ground, my young family and I were camped out under donated blankets on the floor of my studio. I looked up and saw the image I had recently drawn to promote the upcoming *Stein Valley Survival Gathering*, organized by a coalition of native groups and conservationists, to protest the proposed logging of the Stein Valley. This valley, the largest undeveloped watershed in southwestern BC, was the subject of unresolved native land claims. The Provincial government, heavily populated by forest-industry allies, was seemingly deaf to our concerns. I had created the image - smoke rising from the heart of the darkness into four prayerful hands reaching toward the eagle - as a symbol of hope rising from despair. I now considered our family's situation: insurance coverage denied, no home, money, work, and only a few possessions. I believed that the Spirit was telling us, through this image, to take heart.

The night before the fire I had a dream. I am wandering through a huge room of office cubicles, feeling utterly alienated and alone. Then I am wandering through a vast classroom of students at desks, and then through a huge supermarket of endless aisles. I see a couple I think I know, and try in vain to catch up to them as they rush off through a maze of hallways and stairs. Suddenly I come face to face with a being that I know is an angel. She is speaking to me; but in spite of straining to understand, I cannot make out a word. Finally, I hear her say, "Courage is the key". The dream melts away, and with it, the feelings of alienation.

The next morning we drove our normal hour-and-twenty-minute trip to Meeting for Worship in Vernon, BC. I started settling into the silence by closing my eyes and *looking* at each person in the small circle. I knew them all well, and in my mind's eye I could see the challenges that each one of them was facing - sick children, financial concerns, the difficulties of aging. I went around the circle a second time, and this time I had a sense of the unique form of courage that had arisen in each person to meet her or his particular challenges. The third time that I scanned the circle with my inner eye, I saw but one large circle of Light.

On the highway, going back home after Meeting, we passed the entourage of *Rick Hansen's Man in Motion World Tour*, a wheelchair ride around the world to raise awareness and funds for spinal cord injury research.

We placed our two young children, Reykia and Galen, on the hood of our car. As Hansen approached, his head was bent low, focused on the physical effort required. As he passed, he looked up directly at us and smiled. The entourage passed, and as we drove on I said to our children, "do you know what that teaches us? It teaches us that with courage, we can do anything".

We arrived home shortly afterwards to find our home reduced to smoking ashes, and within a week or two we learned that the insurance companies were refusing to cover us. The story of our struggle to survive over the next months is a long and complicated one, and I would be happy to let a lot of the details fade from my memory. For me, the real story is what happened to us on the inside.

1987 happened to be the *International Year of the Homeless*, so we felt in good company. I recalled that many Indigenous groups had some form of the give-away ceremony. In one culture, if parents experienced the loss of a child, they gave away everything they owned except for the clothes they were wearing. We had not intended to give everything away, it just happened. But I came to see the stripping away of all our possessions and of our sense of security as a deeply spiritual event, and the teachings we gained were ones that transformed our lives.

Because of things in my upbringing, giving and receiving often felt confusing and messy. Gifts received often seemed to come with emotional strings attached, and could encumber me with reciprocal obligations. Offering of unwanted help could be taken as an insult to the other's sense of self-sufficiency. At the same time, I remembered the disappointment I had felt in years past when my offers of help to a struggling sibling were refused. How can there be giving, I had asked myself, if there is no receiving? I remembered how gifts I had recently given to friends in the aboriginal community had been received with a simple and sincere word of thanks. How clean and friendly it felt!

If one's house burns down, and one has nothing - no means to feed, clothe or shelter one's family - when a gift is offered, there is no use in rebuffing it by saying everything is fine. The situation is an open book for all to read. Again and again I observed the happiness and relief people felt when they could help us out. I realized that being a good receiver was in fact another way of giving - a role to be fulfilled with dignity and grace. This time I tried to just say thank you and honour the gifts we received by letting them lift me up, not weigh me down.

I also saw my reaction to different styles of giving: the single box full of thoughtfully assembled emergency items, contrasted with multiple bags and boxes of old and musty clothes, nowhere near our size, pulled out of the attic and placed by our door. I observed how different I felt when I was offered expressions of pity rather than compassion. It helped me become clearer about how I might try to give support to others in the future.

Perhaps the most transformative event was the birth of our third child, Lilia. She was conceived four days after the second insurance company notified us that we had been denied coverage. Even prior to the fire, we had been living in considerable poverty. Now our poverty was compounded by the losses from the fire, and I struggled to imagine how we could support a third child.

Some months later, still before her birth, the weekend of the *Stein Valley Survival Gathering* arrived. I was at an early morning-prayer-circle led by Thomas Banyacya, a spokesman for the Hopi elders in Arizona. I looked across the circle at the people on the other side and saw the drawing from my studio wall, reproduced on the festival T-shirts they were wearing. The shape of the four hands reaching up towards the white eagle reminded me of a lily, the symbol of hope and rebirth. The Spirit seemed to be assuring me again everything would work out.

Lilia was born to us not long after, with an exuberant sunniness that mocked our pain and anxiety. Her courageous spirit still inspires us, and her name reminds us that our family was pulled up from the ashes by the helping hands of many people. The prophetic drawing, the dream of the angel, the circle of Light in Quaker Meeting, the smile from Rick Hansen - these memories intimate that the world is a deep and mysterious place, and that we are given both the challenges and the strength we need in order to learn what life wants to teach us.

The Stein Valley, by way of footnote, was eventually protected by the creation of a Provincial park.

Steve Fick

Ottawa Monthly Meeting

[Note Steve's expression of transformation on front cover. This image appeared in *The Canadian Friend* in a previous decade]

Representative Meeting Report

We met in the welcoming space of Ottawa Friends Meeting, at the dark time of year, when all those killed in wars are remembered (November 11 - 12, 2011). At the end of a full weekend, Youth Secretary, Katrina McQuail, facilitated a wonderful hour of games from the *Build it Toolkit*. All Meetings will receive this Toolkit and we heartily recommend its use.

Pelham Executive Meeting read a minute telling of its work along with Hamilton Monthly Meeting, to commemorate the part played by conscientious objectors in the War of 1812. We regret that this centenary is being glamourized by government commemorations.

- Program Committee told us that a Food Co-op coordinator must be found by December 31 for our Camrose CYM.
- We approved Keith Barbour as Youth Program coordinator for three years.
- CYM Nominating Committee is searching for an incoming Clerk for CYM.

The Yearly Meeting received a bequest of \$335,000 from the Estate of Joseph Ross Rogers. Finance Committee will entertain proposals for projects that have the broad support of Friends and will enable growth into the future. Well-detailed proposals must be received by March 10 and will be brought to Spring Representative Meeting.

Katrina McQuail asks Meetings to send contact information for inactive Young, and Young Adult Friends, so that she may reach out to them.

We heard of the continuing poor situation in Ramallah, and the request to *Boycott, Divest and Sanction*. We asked Canadian Friends Service Committee to let us know what actions we may take to end this conflict. Also we noted with thanks, Jennifer Preston's fifteen years of service to CFSC.

There will be a 2012 conference focusing on *Countering the Militarization of Youth*, and we would like to assist two Young Friends to attend.

The Clerk's letter to Friends has been mailed out. CYM, the central heart of our Canadian Meetings, cares for the following areas: our publications, our website, the annual Gathering, and many activities and causes. Consider giving financial support at this season and through the year.

We thank our generous hosts in Ottawa.

Spring meeting: April 27, 28, 2012, in Toronto.

Media Explosion in the Seventeenth Century Jo Vellacott

True as it is that e-mail, the internet, and social media are changing our world, not everything is as new as we think. In my own work I was faced with ploughing through the letters of Bertrand Russell to Ottoline Morrell. For several years he wrote to her two or three times every day, letters faithfully delivered within a few hours by the British Royal Mail. In London in 1911 you could send someone an invitation in the morning to join you for that English institution, the leisurely afternoon tea, and be confident of receiving a reply by lunch time. Not so different from e-mail (but what became of tea-time?).

The media explosion of the seventeenth century is certainly of more interest to Friends than the mixture of ideas, political comment, and romantic fervour that were of use to me in Russell's letters. Indeed, it was central to the early development of Quaker faith, as it was to the broad section of the population.

It is a pallid truism to say that the availability of the printed bible in the sixteenth century opened up religion to the people. Printing presses caught on, springing up in small premises in large and small towns, offering speedy and inexpensive service. An increasingly literate and engaged public rushed to use them - not so much to spread news as to declare opinions and take part in controversy, doing battle with the pen when they could avoid being compelled to pick up the sword. Many more men and some women eagerly bought what came hot off the press.

For those who, like myself, are not going to be doing primary research in the many, many documents which have survived, a good way to get some inkling of the sheer output of seventeenth century polemicists, is to flip through the footnotes of, for instance, Christopher Hill's *The World Turned Upside Down* (Penguin, 1975). Throughout much of the book, Hill cites on every page, anything from two or three to six or seven of the contemporary broadsheets, pamphlets, or volumes that were pouring off the presses at the time. The phenomenon is closely analogous to the internet media of our time. The new media, like the social media in the Middle East now, enabled an amazing new width of participation in debate and verbal conflict during a revolutionary time. This began early in the century with the lead-up to the Civil War, and some half-century before the emergence of Quakers.

Because of our interest in Quaker history, we tend to winnow out and focus on the religious element

in the ideas that were circulated. Early Friends contributed an immense volume of material, publicly working out many of our still-held theological principles and testimonies. However, religion was just one of the areas up for grabs in seventeenth century England, and the interests of Seekers and Quakers were eclectic. Parliament refused certain taxes; the king was overthrown and ultimately beheaded; the constitution was experimental; landholding and property owning hierarchies (including those of the church) were threatened by a previously ignored class of people; the north was proving to be a hotbed of independent thought; the extent of social inequality was forcing itself on popular attention; Cromwell's army briefly held the right to debate philosophy and process publicly. The entrenched class system was being shaken. Diggers were moving on to common tracts of land and cultivating it for the common use (meanwhile exploring coherent theories of common landholding) and capitalist wool production was in conflict with the need for increased food production. In every direction, the future was uncertain. No wonder radical ideas multiplied and at times spun out of control.

Religious, social, political and economic themes of the era are inextricably mixed, and it may be misleading to try to distinguish between them. Christianity, specifically the bible, provided the vocabulary of the time. Few ideas within the very broad frame of Christianity and Christian Universalism of the twentieth and twenty-first century, current even on what is seen as the fringe (be it left or right) were not foreshadowed or articulated in writings of the seventeenth century. These ideas meshed with, rather than gave rise to, radical political thought that arose directly from social and economic conditions, and were passionately explored by a growing class of independent and literate people. Almost all claimed a basis in religious thought, often beyond the actual biblical text.

Quakers, at least as noisy in this maelstrom of ideas as any other group, and engaged in all areas of controversy, proved to be one of very few sects to survive the period in significant numbers. The Society of Friends owed its survival in large part to its development of the faith and practice of seeking in silence, of finding a method and structure that enabled it to move beyond the insight of the individual into

the wisdom and guidance of the wider group, and beyond, to seek a transcendent Light.

I began this writing with no clear message in mind, just the thought that present-day Friends might find it interesting to think of the founding of our Society as coming about at a time when there was an explosion of media comparable to that of the present. But as I write, it comes to me that perhaps this is the time when we should be recognizing the fundamental inseparability of our theology and our method, our faith and our practice, from our political, economic, and social thinking and action. It is no time to be timid about the ramifications of our convictions.

Jo Vellacott
Toronto Monthly Meeting



Canadian Friends' Service Committee Eighty Years of Quaker Service

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Technologies Change Quaker Service is Constant

Book Review *by Richard Preston*

Mennonite Peacemaking: From Quietism to Activism by Leo Driedger and Donald B. Kraybill, Herald Press. 1993.

The first 158 pages of this book trace an overview of the ways that the changing life experience of North American Mennonites, during the twentieth century, has given rise to profound changes in their attitudes and actions relating to what they, and we, refer to as the *peace witness*. There are close parallels to the Quaker experience, moving from a tradition-oriented, rural, small-group quietist sect, to a modernity-oriented, urban, educated, globally aware peace church denomination. Like Quakers, they aided the shift from rural to urban, by encouraging post-secondary education that helped many to bypass blue-collar work in favour of professional work. And like Quakers, the activist or peace and justice side of their worship-led life entailed a good deal of sensitive explanation, to reassure those less engaged members that the central tenet of the peace witness has not been violated, or rejected, in the process of leading an activist life.

In brief, the shift or transformation was from a doctrine of mainly inward-looking *non-resistance* that was modeled after the position of Jesus at the cross, to a mainly outward-looking nonviolent activism, taking responsibility for peace and justice for all humanity; a political engagement modeled after the intentional oppositional actions of Jesus that led to his arrest, and thence to the cross. This truly radical transformation of theology moved from Matthew 5:39 and the doctrine of non-resistance, to Matthew 5:9 and “the politics of Jesus”. This happened under twentieth century pressures that arose from the realization that we cannot continue to quietly, humbly, avoid the nature of evil, when we find ourselves in the presence of Hitler, racism, Vietnam, and now of weapons of mass destruction.

The magistrate’s sword of the 1600s is transformed into enormous, twentieth-century crimes, and the continuous potential for even bigger crimes. To build a nuclear bomb is a sin of a different kind than to take up a sword. The morality in both cases is difficult once we are disabused of the alternative of living isolated in the imagined security of an intellectually absolute principle like nonviolence. Some very impressive examples include a Mennonite relief administrator in China at the time of the communist take-over, confronted with an “authentic moral dilemma” when

the last plane out was crowded with more refugees than it could take off with. The pilot handed Burkholder a pistol and told him he must threaten to shoot those who could not be taken. Burkholder refused, but stood by while the pilot made the threats until enough people got off and were left behind. In this dilemma, it was necessary to leave many in peril in order to save many others. He was “forced to use force” rather than abandon the plane. He saw this action as the lesser of two evils.

In the theological debates there were also dilemmas. Engaging the world’s conflicts directly, is easier to intend to do than to actually do. It is one thing to be led to go into the heart of darkness, and another to know what to do there. Again, the lesser evil may sometimes be the only choice for those who *engage the world*. “Peace is not merely a theology and a vision. Peace is for the human situation. Peace is incarnated in people and becomes alive in interpersonal and communal situations” (Lapp, 1992, cited on p.144).

An update on the twenty years since the book was written would be very worthwhile.

*Richard Preston
Hamilton Monthly Meeting
with granddaughter Claire*



The Transition to Peace

Don Alexander

The bicentennial of a war is also a time to mark the history of Conscientious Objection to War.

The first Quakers who came to Canada did so with the promise that their objection to war and war-making would be respected by the colonial government of the Canadas. An undertaking by Governor Simcoe in 1793 ensured that Quakers and members of other *Peace Churches* would have a way to practice their peaceful ways.

Quakers settled in Niagara and in the Prince Edward County areas of Ontario. Mennonites and Brethren in Christ were also led to leave the new United States and were attracted to Canada.

Members of the three *Peace Churches* later came together during World War Two to form the *Conference of Peace Churches* and achieve a way of providing useful and peaceful work as alternatives to military service or unproductive incarceration.

Now some members of those three peace churches are gathered together again in a committee: *The 1812 Bicentennial Peace Committee*. The committee introduces peaceful and conscientious objections to war, into what appears to be undue attention to war engagements by organizers of the bicentennial of the War of 1812-14. Battle re-enactments have so far dominated public awareness.

Members of the *three peace churches committee* have organized to install plaques honouring the history of their objections to war as a matter of conscience. The wording of the markers also recognizes that the colonial government of the time established the precedent of respecting the peaceful practices of faith communities.

The following plaques/markers will be installed before next Spring when they will form a *peace-tour route* in the Niagara Peninsula.

Historic Peace Church War of 1812 Bicentennial Historical Marker Texts

Quaker Granite Walkway marker at the Peace Garden in Rennie Park, Port Dalhousie, on Lake Ontario. A similar plaque is being located at the archives and museum in Port Colborne on Lake Erie:

Since 1660 Quakers have been guided by their Peace Testimony to reject war and practise nonviolence. In 1793 the government of Upper Canada recognized the right of Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren in Christ, to conscientious objection. During the war of 1812 many Quakers refused to serve in the armed forces or provide material support. "A good end cannot sanctify evil means; nor must we ever do evil, that good may come of it... Let us then try what Love will do." William Penn, 1693.

Brethren in Christ Plaque, Bertie Church Cemetery, Stevensville, near Fort Erie:

To honour the memory of the pioneer Brethren in Christ (Tunker) Anabaptist believers, we establish this marker. Seeking land grants and exemption from military service, from 1788 onwards, they came to Upper Canada: Niagara, York and Waterloo. Because of loyalty to their faith, they courageously objected to military service in the War of 1812-14, based on conscience and scripture. In lieu of service, they paid a militia tax. This non-resistant stance demonstrated their desire to live as part of the Kingdom of God. Brethren in Christ now, as then, commit themselves to the non-violent resolution of conflict.

Mennonite Plaque at the memorial site of the 1786 Pioneer Bicentennial at The First Mennonite Church, Vineland - the first Mennonite church established in Canada:

During the War of 1812 the Mennonite congregation meeting on this site included members who followed their conscience and refused to serve in the military. Other Mennonite settlements in Niagara, Rainham, Markham and Waterloo faced the same issue at that time. As members of a historic peace church, Mennonites believe that Jesus taught and lived love of enemies, and that following his example does not allow taking up arms. In 1793 the government of Upper Canada had recognized the right of Mennonites, Quakers and Brethren in Christ to be Conscientious Objectors to war. The War of 1812 was the first testing ground of this right.

Don Alexander is a member of the 1812 Bicentennial Peace Committee; Pelham Executive Meeting in the Niagara Peninsula, and the Canadian Friends Service Committee.

[Don is seen in the photo on page 13]

Wonder and Hedgerows

Gerald Harris

"Say: Nature in its essence is the embodiment of My Name, the Maker, the Creator. Its manifestations are diversified by varying causes, and in this diversity there are signs for men of discernment." Bahá'u'lláh

Old hedgerow, diverse and wild, ranks as my preferred church, temple or synagogue. Finding it in the urban environment, preserving, planting and generally promoting it could become a serious hobby. Heaven knows, I log plenty of hours in more standard places of worship with walls and roof, but for access to wonder and transformation, hedgerow habitat tops my list.

Overt worship there, I cannot recommend, or any worship in the usual sense of the word. Only children and the most senior seniors can get away with standing, rapt, staring at the bushes. The rest of us need a pretext. A walk with Sherryll provides my most common pretext, and hers. Photography is good. Best though is participating in hedgerow process by picking and eating berries, planting, pruning - joining its community.

By hedgerow habitat I mean strips, approximately two to six metres wide, of bushes and small trees given time to evolve into complex systems. It may spring up on its own, such as along untended edge of parking lot, or we may purposely plant it, such as in urban greenway. It may develop without human interference, or with attention from a referee with loppers.

The linear strip shape of hedgerow makes it a corridor along which creatures may travel for water, food, and new homes. It also makes a wonderful route for a walk. Non-linear patches of brush, however, can be equally enchanting. A thicket ten or twenty feet across, surrounding a stump, broadcasts birdsong. Our friend Caroline calls these little thickets "twitter bush". Recently I notice twitter bush habitat developing in rain gardens beside city streets and buildings. Between hedgerow and twitter bush, the common factor is complex community.

Over years and decades hedgerow allows networks to form among plants, birds, insects, reptiles, mollusks, fungi, bacteria, mammals and countless creatures I am too ignorant to name. Life, immense in variety, rushes forward at full tilt in elegant balance. Hedgerow vibrates. That's what draws the children, elders and some of us in between. Spirit emanates, powerful yet symphonic in interplay and interweave. We may experience hedgerow vibes consciously or unconsciously, faintly or with hair standing on end, but they influence us.

"...the world of being... is endowed with a power whose reality men of learning fail to grasp. Indeed a man of insight can perceive naught therein save effulgent splendour of Our Name, the Creator." Bahá'u'lláh

Visit hedgerow and encounter wonder. Birdsnest, anthill, garter snake flicking out of sight, bumblebee clambering inside a blossom – action, beauty, drama, all here, all the time. Children in particular find wonder, which may be vital to our future on the planet. The childhood experience affects us as adults. When I meet an adult who actively cares for and loves our living earth, I usually find that she or he as a child played and idled amid everyday, small-scale wonders of nature such as hedgerow provides, and has never forgotten.

Hedgerow and twitter bush help us adults remember. Amid coarse energies of city life, ugliness that becomes normal, survival in the kingdom of fear and greed, an adult may hear a tree frog, scent cottonwood, or notice a flicker foraging on white berries and snap out of the trance. Diverse, complex, evolved community of hedgerow in the midst of city provides access to wonder.

Wonder opens us to transformation. Our severe global human pickle challenges us to learn ecological living. We enter an *ecozoic era* (as Thomas Berry calls it) in which the pronoun *we* becomes more important than the pronoun *I*. The transition is not easy. We make the effort willingly however, when we already love an ecological system. When wonder in twitter bush, marsh, or wild meadow has revealed ecological understanding within us, we already long for humankind to step forward into participation in the wonderful community of earth life.

"...cooperation, mutual aid and reciprocity are essential characteristics in the unified body of the world of being..." Abdu'l-Bahá

The term *unity in diversity* points out the direction in which transformation calls us. "Unity in diversity" is also the model of society that we absorb while staring at mature hedgerow. Need for unity of humankind, is already evident to most of us. We can hardly help but grasp that humankind must unite for survival and wellbeing, must recognize one human family in one living earth. The need for diversity has been less obvious to us. Human habit has been to unify by dominance and conquest. We have valued industrial conformity. Now we are called to maintain glorious diversity while giving ourselves voluntarily into the greater being of humankind within the greater being of earth. We are called each to value individuality and individual responsibility, unique and inviolable, while serving the *we* rather than the *I*. For us, this is a new way of walking. Hedgerow teaches us. Individual wonders of song and blossom there arise within and contribute to the whole glory of hedgerow community.

As we allow strips and patches of brush into all parts of the city, as we allow them to evolve complex, diverse community, we bring ourselves into daily contact with an ecological energy; we gift our children with moments of wonder; we assist ourselves toward transformation.

"...cooperation and reciprocity are essential properties which are inherent in the unified system of the world of existence, and without which the entire creation would be reduced to nothingness." Abdu'l-Bahá.

Gerald Harris, Victoria Friends

Flower arranger and gardener at Fern Street Meeting

A Love Letter to Tom Findley

Dear Tom,

How we missed you at Western Half Yearly this fall! It just did not feel the same without your beloved presence. Our time spent together at Shekinah was filled with anecdotes and Tom stories.

We were at a loss as to how to spend our spare time now that we no longer had to go picking high-bush cranberries for your (infamous) syrup. We competed as to who was most grossed out by the smell of them cooking. To our surprise and delight, the cook had also come to think of your syrup-making as part of a tradition. If we picked the cranberries, she offered to make syrup. Young and old, headed out with buckets

and bags to collect berries. Three-year-old Finn didn't really understand the ceremony of it all, he just thought it was really cool to tromp through the bush, pick berries and have them magically turn into syrup.

Tom, I'm not quite sure of your alchemical methods, but Cook's syrup preparations did not smell half as bad as yours did.

Monday morning, our breakfast was laid out. Mountains of pancakes (some gluten-free, of course), whipped cream, assorted fruit toppings, and Tom's high-bush cranberry syrup. Another round of Tom-stories made its way across the tables as people ate their breakfast.

Ritual and ceremony add a richness and complexity to events, a sense of history and continuation - the comfort of the familiar. Although you were not physically with us, you were with us spiritually and emotionally. Your contributions were deeply felt and appreciated.

Dear Tom, I love you, I miss you, but I still didn't eat any of that stinky syrup!

Patty Lembke,

Prairie Monthly Meeting

Affirmation

I wonder at beauty,
Stand guard over truth,
Look up to the noble,
Decide for the good.
My path is my journey;
I choose and I follow.
May life fill my doing,
May peace shape my feeling,
May light shine in thought.
May I learn to trust
My self-nature's guide
And all that there is
In the wide, wide world,
In my deep, deep being.

Ann-Lee Switzer, Victoria Friends

[Adapted from Bells by Rudolf Steiner]

Illumination

Keith Helmuth

When the coyote passes so close we can see the expression on her face we are in a situation of presence. When the tall walking rain comes over the mountain and down into the valley it is a situation of presence. When I meet Paul Stone, a Paiute artist in his Bishop California shop, and he tells me he really doesn't understand how he makes the images that inform his work, and then adds, "It's the gift of the Creator", I am in a situation of presence multiplied. All around me are paintings, drawings, and carvings emblematic of his culture, and a profound attunement to the creatures and landforms of this region. Every item, every piece of creative work is a real presence. In conversation, the artist is ever concerned that we recognize the wellspring, that we meet the source, that we honour the presence behind presence. He sees, and wants us to see his work, and the world around us from which it comes, in a certain light - the Light of presence and the presence of Light.

So much has been written among Friends, and in the wider world of other traditions, about the place of light in spiritual experience and religious discourse, that I do not imagine saying anything here that adds to the richness of this layered dialogue. What has come to me, however, is a kind of sidebar that makes a connection I have found illuminating.

In the part of the continent I call home, the Abenaki people, who practise traditional ways, have a ceremony celebrating the coming of the dawn - *the first light ceremony*. Although this ceremony is also practised by other Aboriginal peoples, it seems to have special significance for the Abenaki. Perhaps because Mount Katadhin is a sacred site, and its peak is the first spot, each morning, touched by the sun in this region, *the first light ceremony* has a special potency for the Abenaki peoples.

Over the past several decades Quakers in Atlantic Canada and New England have had a continuing association with Aboriginal people of this region. The annual Atlantic/New England Friends Gathering, in particular has been the occasion of this meeting. The Quaker sense of being held in the Light, and our Aboriginal friends' sense of attunement to the circle of Creation through attentiveness to first light, have created mutual recognition and sharing. At the initiative of our Aboriginal guests, *first light ceremonies*, from time to time, have been a part of our Gathering.

A sense of being present to the light and of being in the presence of the Light have become a feature of these occasions.

A few years after becoming acquainted with the *first light ceremony*, I was engaged in a study of seasonal affective disorder - the SAD syndrome. In the course of reviewing the research on the relationship of light exposure to the onset and treatment of winter depression, I encountered an interesting fact: research findings show that exposure to dawn and early morning light has a distinctly different effect with regard to alleviating seasonal depression. Compared to light exposure later in the day, early morning light produces the beneficial effect needed in a shorter time at lower intensity. Light received in the early morning hours triggers a higher level of bio-active response. Why this should be the case is unknown. But we do know that every bodily function, including those that are responsible for emotional and mental states, are directed and regulated by chemical signals produced in that part of the brain called the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus functions in response to the flow of light coming through the eyes. It is literally the case that every cell in the body is directly affected in its function by the ebb and flow of light. As organisms we have emerged within the diurnal rhythms of day and night and our entire state of being, including the mental and emotional states which cradle our spiritual life, are keyed to this reality.

The *first light ceremony* stands as a remarkably central practice for human wellbeing. Imagine all those generations of Abenaki people, as well as others, who around the fire circle have offered their prayers of gratitude to creation, and then faced into the dawning of a new day. I suspect the recent scientific information about the benefits of such practice would be met by Aboriginal peoples with a tolerant smile, and perhaps the slightly teasing question, "How else did you think the Creator worked?" Nor should it come as a surprise to Quakers that the central metaphor of our collective spiritual experience has a grounding that truly unifies body, mind, and spirit.

Keith Helmuth

New Brunswick Monthly Meeting

[Presented as part of Quaker Studies, CYM 2009
Kemptville, Ontario]

The Clerks Report

At their September Meeting for Business, New Brunswick Monthly Meeting (NBMM) approved a request from the Musquodoboit Valley Friends to become an Allowed Meeting under New Brunswick Monthly Meeting. We join NBMM in welcoming Musquodoboit Valley Friends as an Allowed Meeting to be known as Eastern Shore Quaker Meeting.

On June 20, 2011, Carol Dixon as clerk of CYM, joined with KAIROS, church leaders, and First Nations' representatives, plus about twelve other Quakers from Ontario, in the KAIROS *Roll with the Declaration* culmination event in Ottawa. Three hundred banners from across the country promoting the United Nations *Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples* were linked and carried by the many participants from Victoria Island, a First Nations centre in the Ottawa River, to Parliament Hill, and on to the *Human Rights monument*. In both places stirring speeches were given that admonished and exhorted Parliamentarians and Canadians in general, to become informed and become engaged in implementing the declaration. Jennifer Preston of CFSC's Aboriginal Affairs committee, along with Craig Benjamin of Amnesty International, were given special recognition for their unfailing commitment over the years to achieve the passing of the Declaration by the UN General Assembly.

Both your clerks, Anne Mitchell and Carol Dixon, joined the September 26 demonstration on Parliament Hill against the Keystone XL pipeline, that is planned to carry bitumen from Alberta to refineries in Texas. A number of Friends from Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa and Peterborough were in attendance, and several who *went over the fence* as an act of civil disobedience, were arrested (some said, politely) by the RCMP, processed and then released with a \$65.00 ticket and warning to stay away from the Hill for one year.

Mary Corkery, KAIROS Executive Director, has announced that she will retire from her role on January 31, 2012. We have written to express our appreciation for her deep commitment and leadership through some very trying times for KAIROS.

David Greenfield and Bill Curry will represent CYM at the upcoming meeting of the World Council of Churches - on the theme of *Linking Poverty Wealth and Ecology* - in Calgary in November. We look forward to hearing more from them.

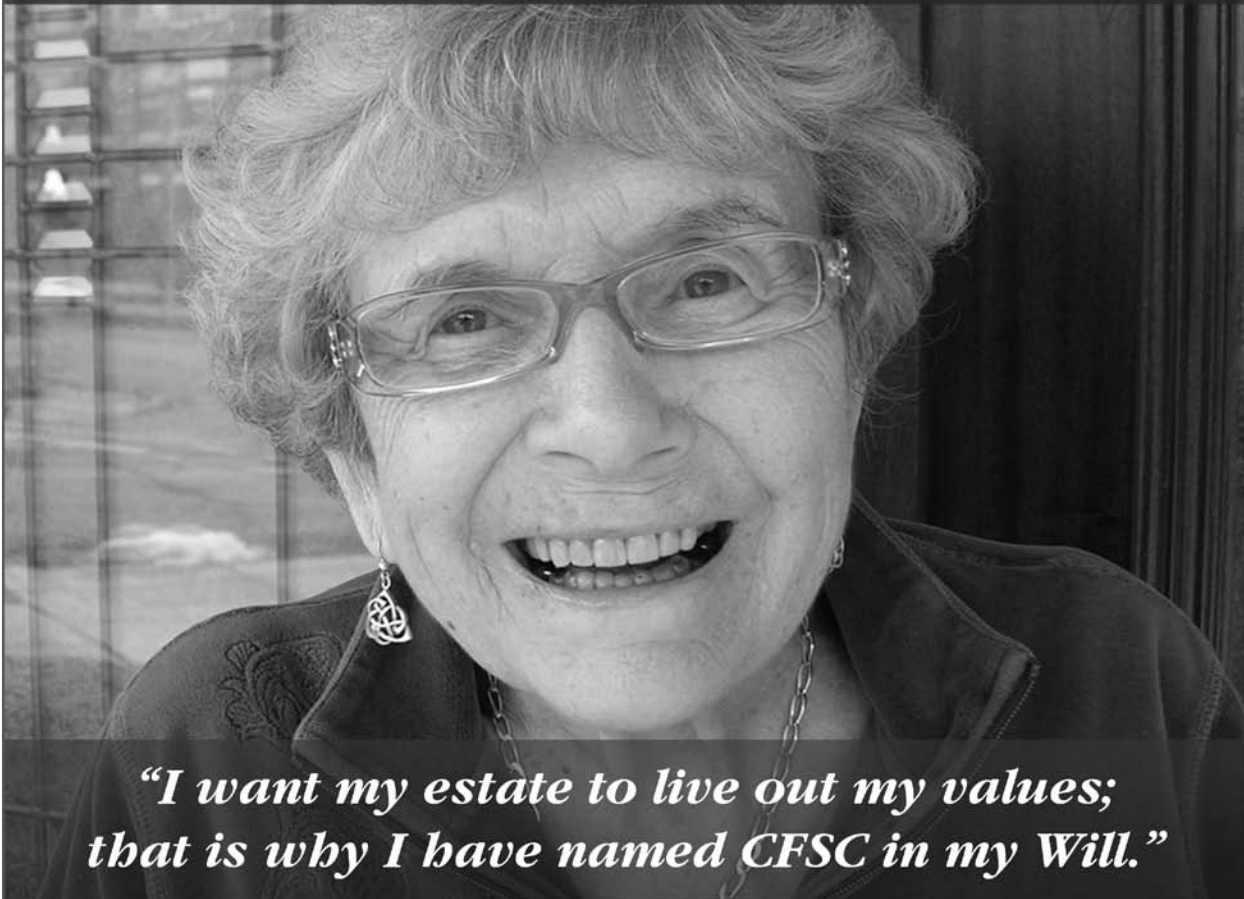
Carol Dixon - Presiding clerk,

Anne Mitchell - Mentoring clerk

[Ruth Kuchinad (centre) of Waterloo Monthly Meeting is holding the Canadian Friends Service Committee banner on Parliament Hill]



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that is why I have named CFSC in my Will.”*

Mona Callin (Hamilton Meeting) has faithfully served Friends in many roles locally and nationally. Mona's legacy of service will continue through long-term support of Canadian Friends' witness for peace and justice.

Please contact Jane Orion Smith or Jennifer Preston to confidentially discuss how your bequest can help create a sustainable future for CFSC.

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For further details, please contact Ben Pink Dandelion.

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African Workcamps Summer 2012

The African Great Lakes Initiatives of Friends Peace Teams

sponsors intergenerational workcamps in Burundi, Kenya, and Rwanda. Orientation begins June 23 in Washington DC. Workcamps end July 28. Workcampers will build or repair peace centers...no skills needed. All ages welcome - including families. Go to:

[//www.aglifpt.org](http://www.aglifpt.org)
or dawn@aglifpt.org.

QUAKER COUNCIL FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

APPOINTMENT OF TWO REPRESENTATIVES/HEADS OF OFFICE

- We invite applications for two full-time representatives to run its Brussels office. The task is:
- raising Quaker concerns with the institutions of the European Union and the Council of Europe;
 - keeping Friends informed about European policies and issues which they would wish to influence.

The posts are based in Quaker House, Brussels.

For full details please see: <http://static.qcea.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/QCEA-Representatives-Vacancy-Announcement-en-Oct2011.pdf?9d7bd4>

Application obtained from the Clerk of the Search Group, Jethro Zevenbergen, jethro@zevenbergen.antenna.nl

(Closing date for applications: 31 Jan 2012; start date Oct/Nov 2012 to be agreed)

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Around the Family Around the Family Around the Family

St. Lawrence Regional Gathering met at Waupoos Family Farm south of Ottawa 14-16 October 2011. Guest Mike Nickerson presented stimulating ideas which brought together problems of population, pollution, debt crises, and climate change, in a hopeful and inspiring way. Attendance peaked at about thirty, with a smaller number of intrepid Friends enjoying overnight stays, rich evening discussions, stories, and song.

Thousand Island Monthly Meeting runs this ad once per year in the Kingston paper:

REMEMBER ALL THE DEAD
IN ALL WARS

●
Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting
Society of Friends
(Quakers)

www.kingston.quakers.ca

Hamilton Monthly Meeting: Several members are involved in various peace groups in the area which have combined their resources to ensure that a Peace Garden is part of the newly-designed grounds of our recently-renovated City Hall.



On the grounds of Hamilton City Hall, at the corner of Bay and Hunter Streets, the Hamilton Peace Garden was dedicated October 24. Joining with others who have installed peace poles in more than 180 countries globally, we will also dedicate a new Peace Pole, and we are very proud to have this located on the grounds of Hamilton City Hall, where visitors to the city can pause in this peaceful place.

Montreal Monthly Meeting recently hosted the editor of the Canadian Friend. A large group gathered to worship, enjoy a delicious potluck, and brainstorm ways they may support the Canadian Friend. [I greatly appreciated the care, hospitality, and very thoughtful ideas. Sherryll Harris]

Publications and Communications Committee News

Greetings from the Publications and Communications Committee, to all around the Quaker Family. We are Friends charged with oversight for The Canadian Friend, the Canadian Quaker Pamphlet Series (with Friends of Peterborough Allowed Meeting doing the legwork), Quaker Book Service (with Ottawa Monthly Meeting acting as the worker-bees), and not least, our website: quaker.ca

You will notice a change in subscription rates, the first in over ten years, due to increases in postal rates and costs of supplies. Yet the rate hardly covers the cost of getting the magazine to all Canadian Quakers. If you are the clerk or treasurer of a Meeting, please check that folks who receive the magazine "free" do enjoy it, read it, and pass it on, and also please consider increasing your Meeting's donation to CYM, earmarked for the CF.

You will notice also that all mail concerning subscriptions is now directed to the CYM office in Ottawa, where the Office Administrator or Bookkeeper will handle it. Over the years you will have often received notes from The Canadian Friend's Business Managers, Sean Hennessey, and latterly Beryl Clayton. We thank them for loving Quaker service and wish them both well in deserved retirement or/and new projects.

Do you read The Canadian Friend on-line? Let us know how you find that experience! We will continue to publish and mail a hard copy to as many Friends as wish to receive it, and hope that Meetings remember to add new members and attenders to our list

Carol Bradley

*Clerk of Publications and Communications Committee
Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting*

“It’s no accident that we all lie nestled together in the curves of the universe. We are tugged by the forces of celestial tides. Time folds in on itself and outward again in gladness as we spin around, each of us an utter miracle in a sea of tiny white stars.”

Quote by Jamien E. Morehouse,
Found in Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland, Maine.

Just before Christmas: a gift of a sharp, bright day! The sun, though near its weakest point, is brilliant this cold morning, and although there is no snow to glisten and reflect the sunlight, every low-lying object, leaf, stone or stick, is lined with thick, sparkling hoar frost. The lake is entirely frozen over, too, and all across its black glassy surface the frost has formed miraculous little clusters of stars on the ice.

Yesterday I discovered the ice was strong enough to walk on, and today I have brought my skates. At one of my favourite openings, where the path comes down to the big smooth log on the edge of the lake, I carefully straddle its frosty bulk. I feel almost wicked, marring the crystal frost patterns there: a finer, more transient surface than bark. Warily, I step onto the ice, but it is solid and sound, and sit down on a seat-size round rock to wrestle with socks and skates and laces. Even more cautiously I push off, first one blade cutting into the pristine black ice, and then the other. I stick close to the shore, but the ice is quite safe - and magnificent! Slowly I build up speed and confidence and skate through spread after spread of the miraculous ice stars, noticing cloudy bubbles frozen deep below me, crossing pressure cracks that look like hard grey ribbons.

It always amazes me to be on top of the water I so often only look at from the shoreline! How delicious to shoot along the ice so effortlessly, feeling free and unlimited. In no time I have skated half way round the periphery of the lake! Now where? Into the swamp end, where thin saplings grow up through the shallow water-now-ice, and there’s a natural obstacle course to try out? I skate in between and around stumps, trunks and small muskrat mounds, delightedly exploring. This is an area where there are also plenty of dead trees that the herons roost on, in their season, but where it is very hard to walk or canoe to watch them. Now I can be a winter visitor to their summer territory.

Skating out again onto a wide expanse of ice, where next? Shall I go nearer to the middle of the lake and carefully check on the beaver lodges there? The busy beavers have still kept some open water around their constructions, so I must beware of that, but I am glad to be able to examine their habitat more closely than the shore view permits. How I love to sample the space where herons often stalk or wait! Perhaps I am partaking in the freedom of wild things as I skate so joyfully. Certainly the saying *free as a bird* makes complete sense!

Everywhere I skate frozen things sparkle and shine. Back along the shoreline, but on the far side of Mud Lake, where I seldom venture, I stop to admire frost asterisks all along a piece of dark wood held in the ice. The sun catches the frosty edges of dry grass leaves, making each line of icy embroidery twinkle. My spirit feels as bright and special as the day. Oh thank you Great Spirit, for all this cold creation, for all that I seem to see as new!

Caroline Balderston Parry
Ottawa Monthly Meeting



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Michael Phillips, and Margaret Vallins

Please Note: 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

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Note: If you have a paid subscription it is time to renew for 2012

Appreciation to all of you who have given generously over the years.

The CYM Publications and Communications Committee

Themes & Deadlines for upcoming issues:

March 2012 Submissions:	Living Sustainably January 5
May 2012 Submissions:	The Influence of Quaker Writers - historically and currently, in our lives and the world. March 1
Summer 2012 Submissions:	Youth Issue April 15



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