

# The Canadian Friend

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*Aspects of Sustainability*

# The Canadian Friend

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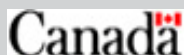
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## Letter from the Clerk:

Greetings from the Clerk of the Publications and Communications Committee. On behalf of Canadian Yearly Meeting, this six-member committee acts as oversight for The Canadian Friend, the Canadian Quaker Pamphlet series, the CYM website, and Quaker Book Service.

Welcome to the first issue of 2012, and to the first issue printed by Island Blue and distributed by Aristos Mail Services, both of Victoria, BC. This move will enable CYM to make savings and increase versatility. It will also improve efficiency for the editor who lives in Victoria. Michael Phillips, our committee representative in Victoria, will oversee production of the magazine. Subscription questions should go directly to the CYM office in Ottawa. The Editor will handle advertising queries and ad set-up, with invoicing from the CYM office.

We give much thanks to Argenta Friends Meeting, a small Meeting, that oversaw production and business management staff in a very small community in rural British Columbia. They kept a 1965 offset press running well, and the magazine going out five times a year for over thirty years. Their contribution was important and much appreciated.

If you have any questions or comments please contact the Committee (pubcom@quaker.ca) or the Editor.

In Friendship,

*Carol Bradley, Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting  
Clerk, Publications and Communications Committee*

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*Top left to right clockwise: Carol Bradley, Michael Phillips, Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting, Mark Stanley, Saskatoon MM, Chris Hitchcock, Vancouver MM, and Adam Newlands, Ottawa MM. Photos are missing for Michael Kaufman-Lacusta, Vancouver MM, and Chris Barfitt, representing CYM and Young Friends Yearly Meeting (YFYM).*





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Cover Credit: Photo of interior of Yonge Street Meeting and exterior (above) by Evelyn Schmitz-Hertzberg. This is Evelyn's Meeting for Worship.

## Editor's Corner:

Sustainable. That is a forest named Wildwood. My family has spent quite a bit of time at Wildwood – a true forest north of Victoria. Merv Wilkinson, recently deceased at ninety-seven, took much of his livelihood from that forest, yet left it as vibrant and diverse as he found it. Pests? Merv said that his mixed-species, mixed-aged forest had all the pests and all their predators. It thrives in a state of equilibrium - a state of grace.



Many of us have come to accept the propaganda from pesticide companies that some bugs must be poisoned. Whereas permaculture teaches that some plants strategically invite bugs, such as aphids, in order to attract ladybugs as pollinators. Smart plants. Blind to the symbiotic connection between plants and bugs, we ignorantly meddle with nature's innate wisdom. If a plant is sick or devoured by predators it indicates an imbalance in the soil. When bugs get the better of plants we think they need to be eradicated. But, build complete nutrient-rich soil and plants will resist damage. Bugs take the weak and the ailing.

Studies in Homeopathic Medicine teach that physical symptoms and chronic diseases flourish when our vital force is out of balance. Symptoms are useful messengers alerting us to imbalance. Depleted and chemically processed substances do not nourish us or help us resist disease. We wouldn't dream of putting anything but gas and top-grade oil into our machines, yet we think nothing of ingesting degraded substances incapable of sustaining our physical and mental health. While we are coming to understand that killing bugs with poison is the wrong approach, we are slower to recognize that zapping and suppressing physical and emotional symptoms does not sustain healing.

Cycles of poverty and violence also have their roots in the unhealthy soil of imbalance and inequity. Our conversations about sustainability barely scratch the surface. We miss the point when we box it up as an external environmental issue. Imbalance is chronic and wreaks havoc with every aspect of life: spiritual, emotional and physical. Imbalance affects our inner lives, our interpersonal lives, our actions toward the environment, and toward each other. We need to apply principles of sustainability to all levels of our existence, including and particularly to nurturing Spirit.

It appears that we struggle with our unsustainable lifestyles, and worry over an ailing planet because we gave up honouring spiritual laws, and listening to spiritual guidance. Matthew 6:24 states: "No one can serve two masters....You cannot serve both God and money." Greed for money is dictating corporate and government strategies that are destroying the planet. Worldly power structures have no desire to celebrate Creation or learn the ways of spiritual harmony. Hermit priest Cynthia Bourgeault says: "The great mystics and masters have pointed consistently to another way of doing business, another way of orienting our consciousness...from the dynamic and flowing stream of compassionate Presence itself."

Equilibrium and sustainability will only be realized when we are willing to be instructed and listen to the *compassionate Presence*, when we act from a wise and humble heart, one willing to love and value the gifts of this earth. Let us see what we can do to turn things around. As the song says: "God's counting on me, God's counting on you" (Pete Seeger and Lorre Wyatt).

*Blessings, Sherryll Harris*

## HMAC Notice

### Education Grants and Loans

Home Mission and Advancement Committee (HMAC) offers various types of grants and loans, or supports referrals to other funds. HMAC oversees the disbursement of grants and loans for members of Canadian Yearly Meeting (and, in exceptional cases, attenders). Applications are normally reviewed at the next scheduled HMAC meeting. However, applications may be fast-tracked when time constraints dictated by circumstances outside the applicant's control require a decision before the next HMAC meeting.

Friends may be awarded educational grants or loans only once in any three-year period. A combination grant and loan may be awarded. A Friend may only receive the Pendle Hill Scholarship once.

Loans are interest-free. A loan repayment schedule is drawn up, tailored to the ability of the individual to repay. A repayment period of up to three years is the norm. Friends struggling with repayment obligations may apply to the HMAC Grants and Loans Officer to restructure their repayment schedule.

For comprehensive information click on: Education Grants and Loans for printing

*Submitted by Chris Boyer  
Home Mission and Advancement Committee*

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# A Declaration of Dependence for the United States of Earth

by Michael R. Miller

For everything in Nature there is a purpose  
And Nature's world supports the common good.  
But humans lost their way through Nature's garden,  
And now must turn away from pride and greed.

Success has made us blind to our great failing -  
That we don't see how we all depend  
On one another for service, goods, and bounty,  
On parents, on children, on friends, and from where  
we hail,  
On every cell in brain, in body throbbing,  
Our heart in constant beat unquestioning.

High time to heed the cooler heads of science,  
Embrace a new instruction: Don't disturb  
In massive ways how Nature's gifts relate  
One to another - water or air to coal  
And oil, or soil to plants or fish to sea,  
Or farm to woods. Respect these our relations:

We all can help to balance our world.  
If we follow Leopold's advice, "A thing  
Is right when it preserves, and wrong  
When it destroys the Commonwealth  
Of Life, its beauty, integrity,  
Resilience" of things and beings

Of earth in rhythmic moves of give  
And take for the sake of that Great All.  
That Great All,  
The present, past, and future All,  
Whence all come, to where all go.

And so say No to growth without  
Discernment. But keep the Golden Rule.  
And give a fair share to all of us people  
And to all our relations who keep us alive.

Give a fair share to all of us peoples  
And creatures of Earth, to all of us children  
Of Earth, and give a fair share  
Back to Mother Earth.

*Michael R. Miller  
New Brunswick Monthly Meeting*

[Michael is a member of the Canadian League of Composers  
and the Atlantic Canadian Composers' Association]

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## Insight by Ann Jacob

We are nature. We are transformed by nature and  
we transform those around us by our natures. We are a  
part of the great weather systems that characterize our  
planet. The seasons, place and time of day, colours in  
a scene, movements and sounds of that scene, stillness  
- all are our teachers.

The strength of an ancient oak tree is found  
somewhere inside of us. The brightness of a lightning  
flash enlightens us. The denseness of a bog grounds  
us. The dictator, to whom we are opposed, to can live  
with the same ferocity within us as our inner self-  
critic. Places on the planet are overused, overworked  
and only partially valued - just as we are overworked  
and overwork and devalue aspects of our own nature.  
We may fight the miners who come in, move a village  
aside to dig for gold, and yet move aside from our own  
little village of neighbours and families as we mine  
projects of personal interest.

Communities have within them great diversity:  
parts that we love, parts that we marginalize, parts we  
wish would go away, parts that get nourished, and parts  
that we cherish. We are a part of the atmosphere of the  
Great Community with all its diversity, issues, needs,  
responsibilities, wisdoms, wonderments, breezes, rain  
showers and sunshine. We are one amazing, diverse,  
hurting, and beautiful planet being.

We can't throw anything off our earthship. We  
can't cross out anyone or anything. We are not separate  
nor different from all of life. Can we embody our  
nature and take a moment to find ourselves in the  
other?

Our inner life community needs to connect to our  
outer world community. We need to take the time to  
find the disavowed, disliked, disturbing aspects of our  
lives, communities, and planet, then go deep inside to  
the core centre, sacred place, the silence within, and  
find what place in nature that core reminds us of. We  
need to go to nature actively in our imaginations - take  
in its scenes and surroundings, then become its scene;  
embrace and embody this as a part of our own nature.  
Let it influence the way we think and feel. Let us allow  
nature's mind to inform our mind and lifestyle.

*Ann Jacob  
Victoria Friends Meeting*

All my life my guide and teacher has been Nature. Living in different climates has shown me that the *Divine Creative Force* is ever present. It exists in all matter, all living things including all creatures. As a human creature I have to find my proper place within Nature and, in finding that place, I learn to live in harmony with the local environment; live sustainably.

*Waste not, want not* is an old adage learned early in my life and reinforced during World War Two. The updated version is known to all of us: Re-think, Reduce, Re-use and Re-cycle. Much of this has been my practice for decades. Now in a time of climate change we need more car-pooling and less flying unless it is to a distant family event. (I do miss going to CYM!) Sustainable living, for me, includes an ethical and moral use of land, thus I adopted a vegetarian diet thirty-three years ago.

In Southern BC an emphasis is now placed on buying food, locally produced, where people have access to a garden or allotment to grow some of their own food. There are also local farmers' markets to encourage farmers to sell local produce to the general public. Out-of-season produce shipped from faraway places is not on my shopping list! I believe that all this helps our environment and our health.

When, and where possible, I support organizations that strive to save, conserve and protect agricultural land and forest, and restore local streams and rivers. My support may include helping members in the Meeting who put more native plants in our Meeting-house garden, fundraising, attending educational courses that enhance my knowledge of local habitat, and restoring native habitat.

To encourage and offer hope we are blessed by the Quakers. Through their varied writings they share their spiritual experiences of Nature, along with their wisdom on the moral and ethical aspects of the changes that need to happen, so that all living things may survive and live in a sustainable world. This is the natural, Divinely created world that we all depend upon.

*Fran Grady  
Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting,  
Victoria Friends*



## Live Adventurously

*Laureen van Lierop*

Several years ago, shortly after coming to Quakers, I had a leading to consider what we ate and where we bought it. From the first dilemma of buying local eggs, over organic come-from-away eggs, to the recent decision to go without a car, we regularly added to our sustainability checklist. My husband Steve's and my ideas of sustainability have widened and deepened considerably. Steve is Director of the College of Sustainability at Dalhousie University.

There are many aspects of a sustainable lifestyle, from a local diet to protesting the tar sand development. Ultimately our choices depend upon our peace testimony and our commitment to community. Our peace testimony is at its richest when we consider a global awareness of issues around sustainability and our own actions in relationships and communities. For us, issues around fair trade, justice, environmental degradation by things we consume, and regional economic practices, all factor into our definition of sustainable living.

There are three recurring road blocks to sustainable living: time, self-awareness, and life-style. All three are driven by fear: that time is too short to invest in making change; that if one examines one's personal practices then something difficult might have to be changed; that one's personal lifestyle sacrifices may be insignificant in light of the unsustainable lifestyles of others.



Sustainable lifestyle ideals directed us to live off the grid, farm or grow vegetables, bike, leave the car alone and use the clothes line. Going car-less (over two years now) was a challenge at first. We rent a car from time to time, and rarely miss owning one. We've discovered by living in a city that we are able to make fairly easy choices. It is easy to walk and the more we walk, the further we find we can travel. The time spent walking allows for conversations or for mulling things over. It is a great time for silence. It is a great time for smiling at passers-by.

Eating local foods can be a challenge for a lot of people, yet it is one of the easiest of all changes to make, if only we look. Steve and I are currently exploring issues around clothing and personal care products. We are struggling to find Canadian-made clothes that two middle-aged bodies won't look silly in. Then we struggle with the cost. A winter coat made in Newfoundland was hugely expensive, but it fit all the criteria: local or fair trade and long lasting. The longevity of the coat will offset the initial killer price.

Very little beyond food is locally made. If it is locally made the materials are often from far away. We prefer to support local entrepreneurs and keep our dollars in our own community but as with the coat, it is often the more expensive option. Fair trade locally means that we must become willing to realign the budget so that we pay more for a book sold by our local bookstore, compared to a big box store. If we must buy from away, then the first person in the chain of production receives a fair wage, and lives with dignity and health. This requires a close examination of who says it is fair trade and who benefits from our purchase. It may mean going without.

Our leisure pursuits are a new area of exploration. Do we really need to drive to a hiking trail, or can we load the rental car up with other folk to walk with us? Should we be satisfied with the local parks? Do we really need to get on a plane for a trip away, or can we rent a car and borrow a friend's cottage? Do we really need to drive to the mall for a movie or can we pay better attention to the papers and walk to the local cinema?

One of my leisure activities is knitting, another is spinning. I knit only with locally produced yarns, except for sock yarn. I also spin only locally-produced fleece. This means spending a few hours in the basement washing yuck out of the sheep's fleece, carding it and storing it before I can spin it. It turns out to be rather a lot of fun.

Everything to do with a kitchen gives me the shivers but as we have explored our original leading for local food, we have had to spend more time in the kitchen. Now I bake cookies or muffins instead of buying them. Even better, I found a student who wants to make some extra money baking. We re-discovered the radio and audio books, as well as downloadable lectures. Making chili to freeze for the winter when the tomatoes are fresh, turned out to be a fun time listening to Sherlock Holmes; and we explored a wide variety of bluegrass music over the summer, as we made all the jams and prepared fruits for the dehydrator.

I remember getting pretty angry when Rick Mercer was on a commercial challenging us to reduce our waste a few years ago. Why did I have to reduce my waste when the cookie company puts three layers of wrapping around its cookies? It is the corporation's responsibility to figure that one out but it is also my task to call the customer service line and complain. That insight made me angry too. Why did I have to spend time on the phone complaining to large corporations about their packaging? Why can't they use their brains in the first place? Then I'd sigh and pick up the phone. They know that for every customer they hear from, there are ten or a hundred that share the same concern and want to call.

What is sustainable changes with each circumstance. Once we tried to reduce the impact of a certain committee meeting that required much driving but the efforts to have meetings by e-mail and conference calls failed. Ultimately the committee had to agree that it was unsustainable not to drive. A sustainable practice in one aspect of life conflicted with sustainability in another.

Now dear reader, to the final ingredient of living sustainably: resting. There are times when it is needful to say, "That's enough for now, I'm doing the best I can." There are times when we feel ill, so we use a pre-packaged soup mix. There are times when there is a houseful of guests, so we the dryer. There are times when we need the dentist and thank god she uses electricity to drive the drill and not a foot treadle. There are times when we need medicine. It may not be natural or it may be prepared with a toxic process, or it supports a greedy industry. Sometimes we can't make a good choice and we have to learn to live peacefully with what cannot be changed.

*Laureen van Lierop  
Halifax Monthly Meeting*

# Living Ecologically

*Keith Helmuth*

Simplicity is often regarded as the testimony most directly related to an ecologically sound way of life. We believe simplicity includes a functional approach to the arrangements of life and work: non-acquisitive, frugal, unadorned, spiritually centered, and attentive to direct experiences and relationships. Simplicity, in large part, is about focusing on relationships and processes that are fundamental to a well-balanced life. In practice, this can be a fairly complex way of living, but attentiveness to the discipline of basic relationships and life maintenance processes, creates a sense of wholeness that connects with simplicity at a fully rounded and deeply satisfying level.

We have to bring personal, community, and civic activities into direct relationship with the resources and processes that provide access to the means of life and life development. We need to anchor life and livelihood to local and regional communities. We need to produce, use, and recycle goods and services within local and regional economies. We need to be attentive to decision making and problem solving regarding issues of public interest at the local level. It is true, of course, that some activities and problem situations require being addressed at national, international, and global levels. But the more of our life that can be centred in local and regional ecosystems, the more resilient and well-balanced our personal activities, our household arrangements, and our communities will be.

Integrity is perhaps the most easily understood of Friends' testimonies. Some folks see it as a kind of linchpin testimony, the presence of which vitalizes and validates all the other testimonies. At the first level it encompasses truthfulness and ethical consistency. In a widening perspective it includes devotion to right relationship, valuing direct experience in the formation of knowledge and judgment, and a commitment to accurate information.

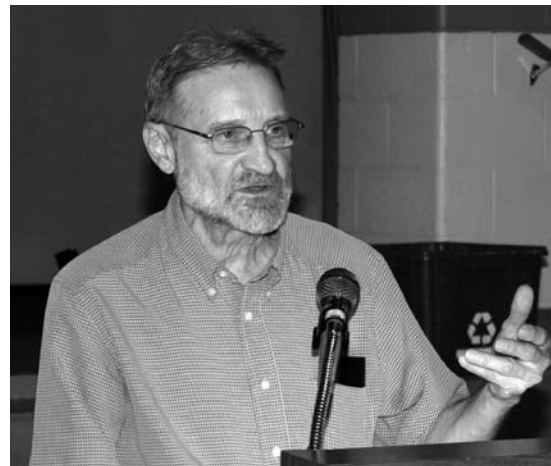
The corollary for integrity is *Ecologically Sound Adaptation*. This means ways of life and means of livelihood that are congruent with the resilience and functional integrity of the biotic environment. It means working in concert with ecosystem enhancement and resilience. It means recognizing the ecological worldview and the integrity of Creation as the essential operating platform for advancing the great work of justice and peace.

Service is the way in which Friends' testimonies come together in coherent expression. A high value on service is obviously not unique to Friends, but Friends characteristically do not put service in a compartment of practice. For many Friends, service is life and life is service. Without deep reflection we seem to know from daily life that we exist for other people and they for us; that at our best we are bonded together in service to the common good and human betterment. This orientation to life often finds expression in some form of human service work, or in the provision of useful goods and services. It can include the arts, public policy work, civic and political engagement, and working for social justice, peace and economic security.

Stewardship is necessary in the full ecological context of our lives and work. We can see that stewardship means building a mutually enhancing human-Earth relationship into our lives and work. Stewardship examples include: ecosystem restoration, energy use conservation, transitioning from non-renewable to renewable energy and materials, local production for local use, green building, environmental education, and ecological footprint reduction.

*Keith Helmuth*

*New Brunswick Monthly Meeting*



[Excerpted from CYM presentation 2009]



## Sustainability as Applied to Personhood

The topic of sustainability usually makes me question how I relate to my external surroundings. In that I have leased my twelve-plus acres to biodynamic community-supported agriculture (CSA) for the past nineteen years, I sure can feel covered and even smug about having done my environmentally conscious bit for the earth. The concept of sustainability has become so popular that college courses are being offered in Permaculture. According to the Oxford English Dictionary: "Permaculture is the development of agricultural ecosystems intended to be sustainable and self-sufficient". Right! This is about living in harmony with the land and animals and all of nature; practising the conservation of finite resources; applying wisdom to the means of distribution while we think globally and act locally.

Permaculture is a process, not an object or goal. If I want to apply the concept of sustainability to my life then I will need to shift from focusing solely on goals to being process oriented. Instead of striving to find the right career or my *true calling*, I will consider that I am *called* to acknowledge the seed of God in every person that I meet and in whatever I am doing. Whether it be teaching, caring for children or the elderly, mothering my adult children and all the while being a helpmate to my husband, the *what* I do is not as important as the *how* I do it.

In addition to being applicable to how we relate to our surroundings, sustainability should also be applied to how we relate to our family, friends, work and play. Living sustainably might mean committing to and doing only that amount of activity that we can continue on into the future while avoiding burnout.

Does life need always to be about the unending striving for more, yearning for, and seeking contentment, satisfaction and joy? Are joy and sorrow flip sides of the same coin? Is life about balancing the yin and the yang? Is learning how to receive as important as learning how to give? Can we only pause when we are balanced half way between full or empty? Can this place where we pause be called "reaching sustainability"? In our ever-changing universe where nothing is constant, is it possible for this pause or state of balance to remain for more than a moment? These questions lead me to conclude that living sustainably requires constant adjustment to our inner selves and outer surroundings.

If we were intended to think of ourselves as finite and needing to be entirely self-sufficient, then we wouldn't rely upon mortal beings and certainly not on God. Often some of us see everything as being *ours to do*. As the trite saying goes: "We carry the weight of the world on our shoulders." For whatever reason, I haven't faith that a job will get done if I don't do it.

In contrast to this isolated bulwark position that humans sometimes take on, I am encouraged by what Isaac Pennington says about our purpose in life: "Our life is love, and peace, and tenderness; and bearing one with another, and forgiving one another, and not laying accusations one against another; but praying one for another, and helping one another up with a tender hand..."

Twenty-plus years ago, when my previous marriage was in trouble, my husband complained to our counsellor that I took up so much space that he felt there wasn't room for him. I was incredulous. In my perception I saw a big empty hole of things that had to be done for our family of four young children, and no one except I who could do them. So I was filling up the hole. In retrospect, I can clearly see that I couldn't imagine how we might have filled the hole together. To be able to do that would have required faith in my partner and in myself.

Is sharing a prerequisite of sustainability? Should we live as though we are sharing a see-saw? Given that the fulcrum is fixed, for the teeter-totter to balance, each side would need to adjust a bit. In my own experience of becoming *super-mom*, the taking on of more tasks and responsibilities was easy to do; I couldn't see that sharing my load, shedding some of my weight was what it would have taken to begin to balance our lop-sided marriage. Sharing the weight and the space might have been one and the same.

In sharing our burdens and our wealth maybe we get an increased sense of well-being. Trial and error might be a way to figure out what one can do oneself and what one leaves for others. It might come down to knowing one's portion. Not signing up for more than one's share of things to do might be a considerate, community-minded way of living. If I were to liken God to that fixed fulcrum, and if I were called to learn how to serve God, then the process of working toward balance might be my life's work.

Is living into the Light about discernment? Does "living into that which is our portion" perhaps entail the ongoing art of discerning the seasons? When is it time to take on more work and when is it time to do



less, or even sit back and watch while trusting that this time is not for me to take on a task simply because I can see that it needs doing? Sustainability is limitless and comes from tapping into our Inner Source. “Now art thou here, in the living power, in the divine life, joined to the spring of life, drawing water of life out of the well of life with joy? Or art thou dry, dead, barren, sapless, or at best but unsatisfied, mourning after what thou wantest?”

It’s Pennington’s experience, that in being alive, we are already joined to that spring which sustains our life. Our choice is in the process, the *how* we live. We can either know the joy of fullness, or the “mourning” of emptiness.

The well is infinite, not finite, but to be joined, as Isaac Pennington has suggested, implies that constantly relying upon God’s limitless strength and wisdom is necessary. In the Bible, Matthew, chapter seven, verse seven: “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and the door shall be opened unto you.” I am noticing that there is no number of times expressed that I can expect to receive, find, or be granted entrance. So it just might be this limitlessness of the “living power”, or “spring of life”, or “well of life” that accounts for the inherent sustainability of living.

*Isabelle Joy Yingling,  
Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

## A Better Understanding

*Anne Mitchell*

*Understanding Sustainability* was the title of a Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) flyer from ten years ago! Then, we said that sustainability was the challenge of our times. It still is. Although to many, *ecological justice* is a more apt term.

What does sustainability mean to Friends? In 1998 QEW, then called *Friends Committee on Unity with Nature*, approved a minute on sustainability:

“Rapid growth in population, technology and industry has been accompanied by resource depletion and environmental pollution. These societal changes lead us to express our deep concern for ecological sustainability, or sustainable living, as an emerging testimony, and to seek the Light as to how to carry it out in the details of daily life.

“Sustainability as a concept has recently acquired a new spiritual depth of meaning to include a resolve to live in harmony with biological and physical systems, and to work to create social systems that can enable us to do that. Our challenge is to transform our culture and our personal lives by recognizing and nurturing the Spirit in all Creation. And our challenge is to change our actions and habits to enable the Earth to heal, for the benefit of ourselves, and future generations. Our challenge is to find common cause with others, to be the change we want to see, so that we can live sustainably on this Earth, our home. We have a responsibility to support a just transition to a more sustainable way of life, as individuals, as members of our Meetings, as a Society, and as members of the wider world. This means that we in North America need to radically change the way we live. We need to reduce our unsustainable consumption by every means possible. We need to challenge our political and corporate leaders to change the paradigm from economic growth, to ecological sustainability. We need to engage with each other in conversations, research, and discernment on how best to move forward. We are on a journey of transformation.”

The QEW minute from more than a decade ago ended with an invitation to all Friends and Meetings to join in this transformation. “Let our Lives speak”.

*Anne Mitchell  
Toronto Monthly Meeting*

## How to Market Canadian Organic Garlic

The Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) is a standing committee of the Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends. Its mission as the national peace and service agency of the Quakers, is to work to ensure that: the vision of living in peace and justice will prevail; the causes of war and oppression will be removed; the whole of Creation will be treated with respect; individuals and communities will be freed to reach their fullest potentials. CFSC exists to unify and expand the concerns of Friends in Canada. These concerns come from Friends and their Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups and CFSC helps them address their concerns. This does not mean that all peace and justice concerns must go through CFSC, but that the committee supports the leadings of Friends in Canada.

I attended the three-day, intense CFSC fall bi-annual meeting in Toronto - also our Annual General Meeting. Participants included employed staff (five) and the summer intern, Hannah Ivanoff. Our main business is to review the work of the committee. As a registered charity, CFSC is also a not-for-profit corporation. All committee members are both members of the corporation and of the board of directors of CFSC.

There are three program committees: the Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee (QAAC); Quakers Fostering Justice (QFJ); the Quaker Peace and Sustainable Communities Committee (QPASC). I serve on the latter committee.

What about garlic you may ask? Rick Juliusson of Vancouver Island grows organic garlic on his farm in Duncan. The garlic is of the hard-stem variety and has an intense flavour. Since using it in my cooking I can vouch that it is the best garlic. The garlic is grown in a sustainable organic way, and Rick stands behind his product. The question is: would you or I spend extra dollars to buy this garlic?

Rick is clerk of the revived Fundraising Committee of CFSC. As well as growing garlic, he works in the field of fundraising for non-profit organizations, and led two CFSC board-development activities in March and October of 2011.

CFSC depends on fundraising to pay staff, pay overhead expenses, and to fund its work. An important part of fundraising is to generate the interest and enthusiasm of those who can give, and to encourage them to choose CFSC and spend their dollars on organic, sustainable, hard-stem garlic grown in Canada! Rick's enthusiasm is infectious and we all have been inspired to promote the work of CFSC and to encourage donations.



PAWS stands for pre-authorized automatic withdrawals. This is the best way to donate to CFSC. It is easy to set up an automatic monthly withdrawal from your bank account to CFSC. It does not cost bank charges for CFSC. It also means that your giving is budgeted over the year in a more acceptable way for CFSC and for you. Please consider this donation method. If you have any questions contact Jennifer Preston ([jennifer@quakerservice.ca](mailto:jennifer@quakerservice.ca)).

All Friends should look at the new website: [quakerservice.ca](http://quakerservice.ca) which is the CFSC presence on the web. It is very attractive and user-friendly. There is an amazing amount of information about current concerns and past work, available with a click of a mouse. Friends may also follow CFSC on Facebook and Twitter. Friends who do not have Internet may look at the site when they are in their local library.

New to CFSC is the CFSC Liaison Network. It was set up over the past summer (one of the tasks of CFSC intern, Hannah Ivanoff\*). There are over sixty-two names on the list of liaisons across Canada from most Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups. You should therefore be hearing more about CFSC in your Meetings, as the liaisons receive monthly e-mails with information to pass on.

*Evelyn Schmitz-Hertzberg, Yonge Street Meeting*

[\* Hannah is Evelyn's daughter. Ed.]

## HMAC Report by Marilyn Manzer

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Home Mission and Advancement Committee (HMAC) met in November 2011. It has been tripping over itself while undergoing a transition initiated by the Consultation and Renewal (C'nR) recommendations approved by CYM in 2007. The committee is making extreme efforts to accomplish these goals in spite of a short complement of members. Thanks to all those who helped hold things together during this transitional time.

The year 2011 saw the hiring of the Quaker Education Program (QEP) Coordinator, Sue Starr of Prairie Monthly Meeting. The QEP Employing Committee set up the administrative portion of the program, and maintained contact with Sue through monthly Skype meetings.

During the first year she was very busy visiting Monthly Meetings, Regional Gatherings, and the Yearly Meeting session held in Windsor, NS. Sue's visits to thirteen Monthly Meetings were reported to the fall meeting of HMAC as follows: Sue conducted learning sessions and became acquainted in truly spiritual ways with members throughout the Yearly Meeting. She is also gaining insights into the great diversity among Canadian Friends, what issues and concerns they deal with, resources and gifts that they cherish, and the spiritual needs and hunger that warrant further attention. Sue is considering:

- What attracts new members?
- What keeps them coming?
- The need for learning Quaker process
- The need for discernment regarding conflicts
- Understanding diversity among Friends: activist and contemplative Friends.

This is very valuable insight as we seek to further the bonds of our faith community. It provides a basis for more learning and sharing among Friends. It also provides a basis from which to envision the next steps for the QEP Visitation Program

Full reports of QEP activities during the year can be accessed on the QEP portion of the HMAC website on [quaker.ca](http://quaker.ca). The committee is grateful to Sue for her service to Friends, and to Yearly Meeting Friends, who helped through their generous donations to bring this program to fruition

At our fall meeting HMAC outlined some priorities for our work in addition to the Quaker Education Program. These include: revitalising and

advertising the travelling library; offering funding for programs organized by the Youth Secretary; making more funds available for youth across Canada to attend Camp NeeKauNis; encouraging and funding those who attend Quaker workshops to travel and share their experiences among Friends; encouraging more travelling in the ministry and establishing opportunities to share discussions on the web. We invite Friends to apply to us for assistance in participating in these types of activities.

These projects are additional to the grants, loans, and scholarships available through HMAC. The Pendle Hill Scholarship consists of an eight-day sojourn at Pendle Hill between October and May of any given year. The recipient is also able to take advantage of any seminar or workshop available on either side of the sojourning period. The Quaker Studies Program makes funds available for educational pursuits at Friends institutions. The Dorothy Muma Bursary offers funds to Ontario residents to pursue a spiritual leading. Applications for any of these programs or projects can be made at any time, but preferably by March 1 of any given year, so they can be approved at the spring HMAC meeting. Information about all of these programs, including application forms, is available on the HMAC site of the Yearly Meeting web site. [www.quaker.ca](http://www.quaker.ca)

At the rise of Yearly Meeting this year, HMAC has its full complement of eight members and a representative from Young Friends. Thank you Friends. We look forward with renewed energy and commitment, to helping Friends further their spiritual nurturing through these funded programs and expanded mandates. If you need further information, please contact the HMAC clerk, Marilyn Manzer. [hmac-clerk@quaker.ca](mailto:hmac-clerk@quaker.ca)

*Marilyn Manzer*  
*Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting*

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“...we must transform our collective behaviour into higher reverence for the Earth and for each other, or where are we headed?”

*Frederick E. Parent, 1989*

Faith and Practice, Canadian Yearly Meeting  
of the Religious Society of Friends, page 135.

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# The Uranium Minute: Paying the Piper

Bert Horwood

"It is no time to be timid about the ramifications of our convictions," writes Jo Vellacott in *The Canadian Friend* of December, 2011. She speaks my mind. Our *Minute of Record on Nuclear Energy and Uranium Issues* has ramifications which need to be explored and about which we must not be timid.

We call for phasing out uranium reactors to produce electricity. Eventually, people other than Quakers will have to participate in this, but it is incumbent on us, who have adopted the minute, to lead the process. As individuals, and as an organization, we must stop using electricity generated with heat from nuclear reactors.

This is easier said than done, but it is already happening. Some Friends buy electricity from suppliers that use only sustainable sources of energy. Some Meetings do the same for their Meeting Houses. But difficult consequences persist. *Green* energy bills are higher. Friends and Meetings on restricted budgets will find it hard to pay the price. The electricity supply is complicated and some people find difficulty in understanding that their rental homes and businesses can support non-nuclear alternatives.

Ramifications spread even further. Given our commitment to phasing out nuclear energy, how can we do business with merchants who do not buy *green* electricity? If we are to be bold about our convictions we must demand that grocers, bankers, insurance agents and dentists, among others who supply us, go green. Quakers routinely use nuclear-sourced electricity at our gatherings. It will be an added burden on Program Committee, but should we not hold Yearly Meeting at places powered with non-nuclear electricity? Or failing that, register with a sustainable energy provider to put on the grid an amount of green energy equivalent to what we use? This applies to Half-Yearly Meetings and Regional Gatherings as well.

New and creative ways must be found to make it possible for every Friend and every Meeting to pay the premium currently demanded for green energy. Our public commitment to ending the uranium industry demands that we boldly practise, in the broadest context, what we enjoin others to do.

Replacing medical isotopes is an even more difficult ramification of a uranium-free society.

Approving our Minute of Record binds us to refuse treatment and diagnoses which employ isotopes made from newly processed uranium. There are enough stocks in existence to operate small medical isotope generators for years. We should insist that our radiation treatments use materials from existing sources or from alternative technologies. Delaying or refusing nuclear medical procedures is a deeply personal decision. Yet if we are to be true to the Spirit that guided our Minute of Record we must choose that hard sacrificial path.

There are other broad costs that flow out of the Minute of Record. Caring for displaced miners and uranium industry workers will necessarily be a charge which will flow through the economic system, for which we will all have to pay.

We have been led to publish a remarkable testimony for a uranium-free world. It is no time to ignore the implications. It is time to face the ramifications with boldness. We have called the tune; now we must pay the piper.

Bert Horwood

*Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting.*

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## Doing Without by David Ray

's an interesting  
custom, involving such in-  
visible items as the food  
that's not on the table, the clothes  
that are not on the back  
the radio whose music  
is silence. Doing without  
is a great protector of reputations  
since all places one cannot go  
are fabulous, and only the rare and  
enlightened plowman in his field  
or on his mountain does not overrate  
what he does not or cannot have.  
Saluting through their windows  
of cathedral glass those restaurants  
we must not enter (unless like  
burglars we become subject to  
arrest) we greet with our twinkling  
eyes the faces of others who do  
without, the lady with the  
fishing pole, and the man who looks  
amused to have discovered on a walk  
another piece of firewood.

[From *Gathering Firewood*, 1974.  
Reprinted by permission from the author.  
See part II on page 23]

# To What Are We called? Eco-justice

David Millar

To be murderers we do not have to hold a gun. We need only consent to the slaughter. Like Pilate, my hands are clean.

We are literally eating the earth on which we stand. Killing other species – the collapse of wild fisheries and honeybees are only the best known examples. Taking land and food from the poor. We are the comfortable twenty percent of the world population, using eighty percent and more of world resources. Yet our comfort is insecure. Science tells us this cannot continue – we long ago exceeded the planet's carrying capacity and its ability to renew. Waste, excess, greed and inequality have robbed us of our *spirit level*. Bearing the burden are our native peoples, the poor, the homeless, jobless, and our coming generation. On other continents, almost the entire population bare this burden, except a traitor elite who must barricade themselves, buying our arms to beat back their own people.

This can't go on. We know where it will lead. To change the habits that lead us there will require a huge effort, a great spiritual transformation. Faith, prayer and mindful living are essential first steps. But we are called to a higher standard and practice.

Sustainability, green jobs, the Three Rs - reduce, reuse, recycle - are the current watchwords. They only involve the slowing down of the rate of pollution. While this is moving in the right direction, it is insufficient. What will break the trend, on a limited planet of unlimited growth?

Oil addiction is ramped up by plastics, farm fertilizers, and needless travel. Globalization adds thousands of miles of transport to every product. Air and marine transport emissions are left uncounted. Factory farms (concentrated animal feeding operations - CAFOs) send us cheap meat while breeding super bugs, torturing animals, polluting earth, air and water. Dirty energy uses the atmosphere as a sewer and asthma rises while islands drown. Native elders cry for help. The wisdom of ages is being violated. Climate chaos has already shifted North American hardiness zones north by hundreds of miles, while millions of people planet-wide suffer in fiercer floods, storms, fires, droughts and famines. Last year an estimated 300,000 died due to human-caused climate chaos. These are the true costs of our *comfort*.

Resist illusions. No technofix will be enough to alleviate the impact of an industrialized, throw-away society. Nuclear power, when its waste is considered, is neither cheap, clean nor renewable. The United Nation's *green economy* campaign for Rio+20 - aimed at rescuing lost millennial goals. Although admirable, it betrays its end by its means: carbon marketing. If realized, such *offsets* would allow the worst polluters to buy cheap licenses to keep doing the same thing - effectively greenwashing *business as usual* - with the final bill to be paid by poor countries and future generations.

CYM's Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN) provides a means for Canadians to communicate and discern environmental concerns and social justice. Quaker Earthcare Witness does the same for North America as a whole, reporting on the UN climate negotiations, finding volunteers from other continents to attend meetings abroad, liaising with QEAN and with the Quaker United Nations (QUNO) staff in New York, Geneva and Brussels. Through CFSC we work closely with other churches in Kairos on Indigenous issues, human rights, and worldwide eco-justice. Quaker Institute for the Future helped bring out the book *Right Relationship*. Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) has just held a worldwide Global Change enquiry to discern a *Quaker voice* on these matters. Its answers are to be brought forward to the world *Salt and Light conference* in April 2012. Members of the World Council of Churches have been working along similar lines for decades. *Alliance for Religions and Conservation* (and many other groups) have built connections between world religions. The spiritual basis of this work has been stated again and again. The good news is that the spiritual message has been joyfully received by a number of scientists, youth, the Third World, the *Transition Town* movement, and environment coalitions. This is the many-sided *eco-justice movement* (see group six in my study of Environmental Networks at <http://tinyurl.com/4dkoj79>).

Can we change the system? Will we succeed? God knows. We cannot. Pray. Have faith. As John Calder remarked at last summer's gathering: "Faith is not what we know, but how we live. Every worshipful act, every little step counts."

David Millar

Montreal Monthly Meeting



# World Council of Churches Meeting

Dave Greenfield

During the week of November 6 to 11, 2011, Bill Curry and I attended a meeting of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Calgary, Alberta. Its theme was *Poverty, Wealth and Ecology*. The sixty or so people assembled represented the progressive activist section of most of the mainline Protestant churches. This was a meeting for the North American region of the WCC, and the last of a series of meetings held around the world. While most of the delegates were from Canada and the US, there was also quite a number from the global south, and over all, a fair amount of gender balance and ethnic diversity.

Bill and I chose to take part in the Aboriginal Immersion option. We participated in a workshop and discussion circle led by a man of Cree descent who referred to himself as a Cree evangelical Christian. He embraced a theology in which the Creator encountered by the Cree is understood to be the same Creator as the God encountered historically by Jews and Christians. He combines a respect for the spiritual traditions of the Cree with an acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

A wonderful songwriter, Paul Rumbolt, played a song he'd written for the event, which begins, "*When life and livelihood are shaken, where is the human right to choice? When theology's corrupted, where, tell me where is God's voice?*".

We heard from members of the *World Student Christian Federation*, several of whom had been involved with *Occupy* groups in various parts of North America. In the discussion that followed, I had the very wonderful experience of realizing that I wouldn't have to say anything, because three or four people ahead of me spoke my mind. Tuesday evening, several participants went to the *Occupy Calgary* site and chatted with the Occupiers.

Roderick Hewit, a Jamaican church-based activist and thinker, read the parable from Luke chapter nineteen about the man who goes abroad to receive royal power, leaving his servants in charge of his treasury and who, upon returning, rewards those who have multiplied the wealth they'd been given. He played a recording of Bob Marley's song, *Babylon System*, and gave his thoughts on the parable from an oppressed people's perspective.

Several participants who had gone up to the tar

sands, reported back to us. Some were aghast at what they saw, and others were somewhat impressed. Two individuals who worked for the oil industry and referred to themselves as Christians, spoke to us about their sincere attempts to address environmental and human rights concerns in some of the countries where they had operations. I asked what their thoughts were on actually phasing out the oil industry and converting completely to a renewable energy economy. The speakers seemed somewhat offended by my question, though I was certainly not intending to be provocative.

At other times during the week, we heard presentations by various progressive theological speakers on topics related to social justice and ecology. Some used a social justice theology approach to the Bible, while others focused more on contemporary concerns. A few people of note were Barbara Rossing, who used both the *Book of Revelation* and the *Book of Jonah* to talk about ecology, social change and our relationship to empire, and Elizabeth Hinson Hasty who called for a *communitarian* vision beyond capitalism, to address both social and ecological justice issues.

On a lighter note, conference participants held a series of half serious, half comical, three-minute debates. I received hearty applause when I proposed that we should shut down all the churches and all the churchgoers should, instead, hold weekly marches for peace, justice, and ecology.

On Thursday evening, I performed a song I'd written for the *Occupy* protests, and a song I'd written many years ago called *New World in the Making*. The people drafting the conference statement decided to use the opening line of the song, *There's a new world in the making*, as the title for the document. I am honoured to have the opening line of a song I wrote in the 1980s used as a title for a World Council of Churches document in 2011.

My overall sense is that this is a group of people as progressive as the best progressive Friends, struggling, like ourselves, to discern the way forward to a just and sustainable future. I am very glad that CYM is a member of the World Council of Churches, and I feel there is a lot of potential for further interaction, collaboration, learning, and spiritual growth between CYM and the WCC.

Dave Greenfield

Saskatoon Monthly Meeting

# Ecology and People of Faith

*Bill Curry*

Do we just pray that the powers of rapacious greed will diminish, that wisdom and compassion will prevail? Are we called to greater clarity and more effective action? What about ecological debt? Eco-justice? Equity?

To put climate justice, poverty eradication, and the relationship between the two, as a priority of its Tenth General Assembly in South Korea in 2013, the World Council of Churches (WCC) has been engaging member churches worldwide, in a process of examining the links between poverty, wealth and ecology. The United Church of Canada:

“...has consistently worked ecumenically and globally on issues of economic justice, ecological justice, social justice, poverty, exclusion, corporate social responsibility, debt, ecological debt, human rights, extractive industries, water and climate change, and has in recent years looked at many of the impacts of human activities through the lens of empire....The connections among many issues, previously viewed as disparate and distinct, are better understood as many facets of an ecological whole.”

“Climate justice is a condition for the eradication of poverty and the eradication of poverty is a condition for climate justice.... Therefore holistic answers to the challenges are required – from the individual person, from the economy, from states and internationally. **The time for fragmented and technocratic solutions is over.**” (*Poverty, Wealth and Ecological Justice Framework Concept*, 2011)

Poverty Wealth Ecology (PWE) consultations have been held in each WCC region, leading to the Global WCC PWE Conference which will meet in Nanjing China in 2012.

We wish to involve more Friends in these concerns, reflections, hopes and actions. Let us spread far and wide the North America Call: *A New World in the Making*, engaging Friends in the growing ecological justice movement.

*Submitted by Bill Curry  
Prairie Monthly Meeting*

# Quaker Principles and the Built Environment:



## Maintaining the Meeting House

*Katharine Logan*

The global demand for energy and materials is upsetting the equilibrium of our planet. Buildings are a primary driver of that demand. The built environment accounts for some forty percent of greenhouse gas emissions in our society, and about seventy percent of electricity consumption.

The stewardship of buildings offers an opportunity to engage with the issues of sustainability in the built environment, and to develop a paradigm for sustainable decision-making. The Victoria Monthly Meeting recently held a workshop to support its Property Committee in doing just that.

“As you do anything, so you do everything” goes the saying, and principles of first resort for Quakers developing a stewardship paradigm include community, simplicity, integrity, and peace. As it turns out, these principles provide a remarkably complete paradigm for a more sustainable built environment.

How does a building matter to community? A building is an aspect of the physical world, that is to say, a building is a thing. In the antecedents of contemporary English, the word *thing* meant a gathering, a meaning preserved in the name of the Icelandic general assembly or parliament; the *Althing*. In thinking about a building, we are - even if unconsciously - thinking about a gathering. We must,

therefore, consider the building not only as a thing that needs a new roof but as a metaphor for the human community it shelters, and whose values and priorities its new roof will manifest.

The vestiges of Quakers' historical doctrine of plainness have led in some minds to a disregard for beauty. Or perhaps it's a sense that with so much injustice crying out for redress, beauty is somehow frivolous, trivial, and indulgent. And so it is worth distinguishing simplicity from plainness.

Plainness was a dogma of drabness in opposition to pride and waste, rooted in the writings of William Penn. By the early twentieth century plainness had shifted in emphasis to simplicity, a more elastic term of moderation and utility. The writings of Rufus Jones opposed plainness outright. If God is immanent in creation Jones wrote, Friends needed to emancipate themselves from the rigidity of a plain style that opposed beauty, and learn to appreciate God in nature and the arts. For Jones, simplicity was a "quality of the soul" and "a joyous companionship with God" (Rufus Jones, *Quakerism and the Simple Life*).

Insofar as we build in this spirit of simplicity the resulting environment will be, in a fundamental sense, sustainable. More than photovoltaic panels, more than fluorescent light bulbs or low-flow shower heads, beauty is sustainable. It inspires us to love and what we love, we sustain.

Integrity connotes wholeness, consistency, and essential truth. Buildings - good ones anyway - have integrity, and respect for a building's integrity can direct its stewardship. Attending to the essential character of this Victoria Meeting House - as a west coast product of the Arts and Crafts movement for example, as a Quaker Meeting House, and more fundamentally as a work of architecture - can direct material selection, renovation priorities and maintenance practices. Stewardship decisions can respect and strengthen the building's integrity and the quality of experience it offers.

To see a building's architectural integrity as having value that transcends users' preferences or convenience poses a challenge to the users of any building; but failing to do so can result in a patchwork of ad hoc decisions than undermine the relationships fundamental to the human experience of place. Overcoming this challenge enables building stewards to make decisions that amount to a coherent and consistent body of work, and imbue a building with a quality of grace.

A building that embodies peace uses materials and methods that spare the earth, that respect the essential oneness of our planet home. A number of rubrics are now available to support building owners wishing to emphasize peaceful stewardship. Prominent among these are the Living Building Challenge, the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program, and Green Globes.

These rubrics have been developed because many contemporary materials and methods fail to preserve peace. Instead they generate and perpetuate a series of harms throughout their production, application, use and disposal. Because workers, building users and the environment involuntarily bear some of their costs, less peaceful materials and methods are often cheaper. Stewardship decisions that choose technologies of peace take responsibility for the true costs of building.

This paradigm of stewardship arising from the application of Quaker principles to the built environment may differ in emphasis from widespread quantitative and technologically-based approaches, and yet hopefully it has the depth to encompass those approaches as well, and to guide the creation and sustenance of places that nourish the spirit while respecting the planet.

*Katharine Logan, Victoria*

[Katharine holds a professional degree in architecture. With her husband and eight-year old son, she has a Victoria-based design/build practice focusing on family-scale projects.]



[\*Editor's note: Katharine gave us specific examples of items in our Meeting House that are not sustainable or in keeping with our testimonies of Peace, Integrity, and Love of the Earth. One that caught our attention was how our seats of vinyl and chrome, are made in a place that is referred to as *Cancer Alley*. Workers in this area between Baton Rouge and New Orleans suffer extremely high rates of cancer, and these products continue to off-gas in landfills.]

## Film Reviews: Lyn Adamson



Can boiling a frog help the environment? Can you take a humorous approach, reach new people *and* motivate them to create change? We decided to find out at a recent Peace and Social Action event. The good news is that lots of people came out, enjoyed the movie, and we are starting a green neighbours group in the city core.

*How to Boil a Frog* is a feature-length eco-comedy that mixes rapid-fire humor and hard-hitting facts to show the consequences of “overshoot” - too many people using up too little planet - and what it means for our future. With an up-front *Everyman* approach, smart writing, world-class experts, and iconoclastic humor, *How to Boil a Frog* gives us the scoop on the imminent end of the world as we know it, and five surprising ways to save civilization while laughing along the way.

What I like about this movie is the personal approach and the lightheartedness of the host when faced with grim information. It takes us on a journey that ends up in a very hopeful spot. I can see this being used as a starting point for intergenerational discussion, or with a youth group, as the approach is creative, fun, and empowering. Currently an eighty-six minute flick, a sixty minute version is in the works.

*Earth: Alive Finite Hurting* [vimeo.com/28701717](http://vimeo.com/28701717). I was very moved by this five minute video which honours the earth protectors. The music and images are powerful. Watch it with friends.

*The Tipping Point: Wake Up, Freak Out, then Get a Grip*: <http://vimeo.com/1709110>. If you or others in your circle do not know about the urgency of climate action, you may not understand the ‘tipping point’ - the point when runaway climate change can no longer be prevented. This animated short video explains why it is so urgent for temperature rise to remain less than 2 degrees. Use it as a starting point for dialogue on action, whether that action is a tar sands moratorium, to stop the pipeline, or build renewable energy in your own community. It may also be to convert military spending to urgent needs, like transit, that can help

us reduce our carbon emissions quickly. The military is responsible for as much as fifty percent of emissions, and is a huge waste of tax dollars that could otherwise help build our future, not destroy it.

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Renewables Can Do It! The world can be powered by renewable energy in twenty to forty years: <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2011/january/jacobson-world-energy-012611.html> Spread the good news!

*Citizens Climate Lobby* is a new North American campaign to influence US and Canadian policy on carbon. The goal is a carbon fee and dividend plan that would put a price on carbon without introducing a new tax. It has elements that can appeal to each political party. With sufficient voter pressure it could become law even with the current government in office. The campaign is based on local groups in ridings across the country. Find out more from Cathy Orlando at [corlando350@gmail.com](mailto:corlando350@gmail.com). I’m a member here in Toronto. I quite enjoy the group and our monthly conference call. It has the feel of a campaign that can deliver results.

Sustainability Resource: British Friends produce the *Sustainability Toolkit: Becoming a low-carbon, sustainable community* (Nov. 2011). It can be downloaded at <http://www.livingwitness.org.uk/Ninety-three> pages of suggestions for action, activities, and dialogue tools designed for Quaker meetings.

*Quaker Earthcare Witness* - <http://secure.quakerearthcare.org/qewnet/node/827> has all the postings from *Earthcare resources list*. QEWnet is in process of migrating to the new QEW web pages.

“When we compromise the air, water, soil and the variety of life, we steal from the endless future to serve the fleeting present.” Dr. Kirsty Duncan, MP.



*Lyn Adamson (R) with friend and fellow activist, Sylvia Grady, Toronto Monthly Meeting*

## Book Review: Gerald Harris

Two books that inspired me most in 2011 were written by an Australian Quaker, Rosemary (Rowe) Morrow: *Earth User's Guide to Permaculture* and *A Demanding and Uncertain Future*.

*Earth User's Guide to Permaculture* (second edition, Permanent Publications, 2006 ) leads the reader gently through a basic education in the permaculture approach to garden, landscape and community. In workbook format, Morrow unfolds the topic clearly in everyday language. Spacious arrangement of text and generous use of illustration make the book pleasant to spend time with. For me it has been an excellent introduction to permaculture, and is now inspiring further study and action at the Victoria Meeting House.

### Quakers "...if they wanted to, could model sustainable living on Earth."

Australia Yearly Meeting published *A Demanding and Uncertain Future* as its *James Backhouse Lecture 2011*. Morrow subtitles the lecture:

*Exploration of a concern for Earth restoration and how we must live to pass on to our children - and their children, and all living things - an Earth restored.*

It recounts her own life journey and discoveries "travelling under concern" as a permaculture educator with Quaker Services International.

The "About the Author" section of *A Demanding and Uncertain Future* asserts that Morrow "considers permaculture sacred knowledge to be carried and shared with others", and that she carries the knowledge to "difficult places, choosing people who have been disempowered and who would not otherwise have access to permaculture". The "difficult" places have included Cambodia, Vietnam, Uganda, Afghanistan, and East Timor.

In her introduction Morrow offers a glimpse of her discovery that: "...permaculture would be more than re-establishing food supplies for starving people. Permaculture, as more than gardening, proved to be a physical and social healer, restoring peace, food, culture and self-respect to damaged people and landscapes. It provided a remembering of how to live again." Also she introduces a challenge to Quakers, who "...if they wanted to, could model sustainable living on Earth."

Opening chapters of *A Demanding and Uncertain Future* trace recent changes in attitude toward Earth, particularly in Australia. Quaker "bioneers" there have

initiated land restoration projects and contributed to evolution in thought that underlies permaculture, which was first started in Australia in the 1970s. The lecture also traces changes in Quaker theology about Earth. Morrow describes a "fundamental change from ownership to relationship" and a change in perception of Australia, from hostile landscape to sacred place.

She also talks of the growth and development of her own concern, which is: to offer relevant knowledge and skills to enable Earth repair, and to transfer that information in ways that are respectful and mindful of people's lives and culture.

Starting in 1973 as a volunteer with Jean Vanier at l'Arche community in France, Morrow's journey led her to study in Reading, England, and to a Quaker Meeting in Jordan, then to humanitarian aid work in Lesotho where she discovered the inadequacy

of her degree in Agriculture. She returned home to Australia and applied for membership in New South Wales Monthly Meeting. Learning horticulture and practical gardening, she encountered permaculture, in which she found answers to issues of environmental and social sustainability. Concepts also from the work of Parker Palmer and from the *Alternatives to Violence Project* have contributed to her work.

The strength of permaculture, for Morrow, is that it starts with ethics: *care for the Earth; care for people; share/distribute everything surplus to our needs*. The ethics expand into principles that can be applied differently across the whole range of climatic and cultural situations.

Another strength is that permaculture is a restoration process, "designing abundance and repair into productive human landscapes". In a permaculture landscape, Morrow notes, "restitution of permanent forests and waterways is a priority." She speaks of permaculture as a way of "gardening the world back to health". It is, she says, "more about biodiversity and one thousand gardens than about one garden for a thousand people".

And it works. From her experience with Quaker Service Australia, Morrow reports that, "in countries with permaculture projects, hunger has always been relieved." Malnutrition declines. "Within 12 weeks farmers and villagers can have about fifty per cent more food on their table."



It works on other levels as well. "As gardens grow," Morrow says, "so do spirits". Gardens are "optimistic signs of regenerative spirit. They restore the makers as much as they restore the landscape". She observes psychological benefits for traumatized people. "Gardening restores cultural integrity and self-respect" and provides a basis for building a new society. Summarizing her experience with permaculture, Morrow says, "As I consciously create gardens in the face of land degradation, war, peak oil and global warming I find that permaculture fulfils most needs of humans, and other species from the most basic to the psychological and spiritual."

While her work in difficult places was producing good results, it was also exposing Morrow constantly to the darkest manifestations of humanity, to corruption, evil and suffering. Morrow developed an overwhelming awareness of the damage humans cause. She found her Quaker beliefs profoundly challenged. "With sadness and fatigue", she says, "I began to lose faith." On one hand she clung fiercely to John Woolman's words:

There is a principle placed in  
The human mind which is  
Pure and proceeds from God.  
It is deep and inward,  
Confined to no religion  
Where the heart stands  
In perfect sincerity.

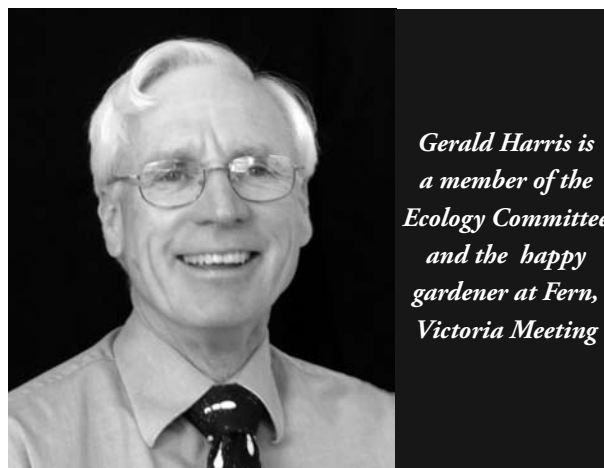
On the other hand, religion no longer offered "an understanding and worldview that made sense of what I had known". Morrow experienced a time of spiritual darkness. Allowing her to emerge from the darkness was her discovery of cosmology, "the scientific history of Earth from its origins through its evolving complexity including the human development". Morrow had found the work of Catholic Earth theologians such as Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry. She gained new optimism and sense of purpose from "the essentially mystical Universe story in which science opens to divine inspiration". She saw a profound spiritual basis for permaculture and also a natural extension of Quaker beliefs and testimonies. "I let go of my small time perspective", she says, "and took an evolutionary one".

The cosmological story, Morrow says, "requires that we forge relationships...of trust, love, sharing and respect with every element of life....our great work (is) to join the web of life as equal members and to engage in a new restorative and reflective role".

She calls upon Quakers to lead. "As Quakers, our history and testimonies strongly support moving to a new witness and relationships. Earth desperately lacks communities of witness to restoration and new ways of living on Earth."

The last words of *A Demanding and Uncertain Future*, Morrow gives to Isaiah (55:12):

You shall go out with Joy  
And be led forth in peace,  
And the mountains and hills  
Will burst into song before you  
And trees of the field  
Will clap their hands.



*Gerald Harris is  
a member of the  
Ecology Committee  
and the happy  
gardener at Fern,  
Victoria Meeting*

## AWKWARD QUESTION

In which we briefly explore the attitude of religions to physical culture.

### Why do Quakers own cars?

This fascinating luxury object, a self-propelled vehicle, has become so embedded in the surrounding culture that many ordinary tasks are much more difficult or impossible without one. The same can be said of the technologies of the last century: things to plug into walls.

Right knowledge tells us that many technologies and especially personal cars are bad for the creation. Right action calls us to abandon them. We don't do what's right because we fear the consequences. The well-springs of action are emotional not rational. John Woolman should be here to show us how.

*Bert Horwood, Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting*



## Book Review: Margaret Slavin

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***Life, Money and Illusion: Living on Earth as if We Want to Stay***, by Mike Nickerson. New Society Publishers, or Seven Generations Publishing, 2009.

I have found *Life, Money and Illusion*, at 442 pages, to be just the crash seminar I needed to finally connect the dots between the economy and ecology.

Among resources on Nickerson's website [www.SustainWellBeing.net](http://www.SustainWellBeing.net) you will find a couple of shorter books for sale, *Planning for Seven Generations*, and *Change the World I Want to Stay On*, as well as *Guideposts for a Sustainable Future* - a multimedia discussion kit and a mini-course which could be useful for eco-study groups.

We live in a society which still believes that economic growth is good and that environmental devastation is regrettable but necessary. Our task is to de-legitimize this common wisdom. To occupy it. Humans explored our planet very much like a child grows and explores. We are like children who have become adults but now the earth is full, we have accumulated enough stuff and enough wealth. Continuing to grow is unhealthy and ultimately fatal.

Right now the destructiveness of this growth is demonstrated dramatically on the world stage in collapsing economies and also in the pollution of our air, water and soil. These two destructive forces feed one another and cross poignantly when they pull us into war: "Once the morality of profit and loss replaces that of fairness and compassion, financing wars becomes totally rewarding.... If there is no enemy financiers can fund a rebel movement and build it up to the point where its threat becomes real. If a country doesn't want to borrow money for war, there are ways around this for financiers: opposition parties can be funded, revolutions financed and, if necessary, leaders assassinated."

Cuts to social services, plus the burgeoning inequity between the highest-paid and the rest of us, demonstrate personally and locally that current measurements of the Gross Domestic Product do not measure the well-being of people, but rather the well-being of money. One statistic which floored me is that less than one percent of "investments" refers to anything concretely productive. All the rest is gambling - "trafficking in money" - the creation of debt, driven by the perceived necessity of growth.

Yet the first item on Nickerson's list of *Things to Do* as we face into the future, is to enjoy ourselves: "Life-based activities are things we can do because we are alive. They include, for example, appreciation, empathy, friendship, love, art, music, dance, sport, parenting, looking, listening, smelling, touching, tasting, thinking, meditating, scholarship and service." Instead of wearing out and needing to be replaced, life-based activities grow stronger with use.

In an account remarkably free from partisan rhetoric he traces the development of industrial society and the rise of corporations. I found the writing engaging, and the conclusions inescapable. Nickerson acknowledges the way denial takes over and makes it difficult for us to look at a future as fraught as the one we face now. However, he maintains a tone of optimism and direction. We humans are "hugely capable. We can easily master living on this bountiful planet and thereby enable successive generations to live here for millions of years to come." We are resilient and creative.

Money, he notes, was not an evil or an inherently oppressive discovery, but sensible and useful. We remain in need of a means of exchange. Debt-driven money, however, has placed us all in an impossible position. No policy can be life giving if it degrades our environment and/or excludes the disadvantaged. Nickerson quotes Gandhi: "Take care first of the least among you."

The last sections are rich in suggestions for shifts in Canada's tax laws, monitoring of health, accounting for unpaid and voluntary work, and much more. Nickerson encourages us to use what he calls our "strong institutions" of government and legal systems, to tip us away from *mutual destruction* to *mutual provision*. The author himself has worked extensively on the effort to change the measurement of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to the Genuine Progress Index (GPI) which would have us monitor, for example, the amount of pollutants released into the environment and expenditures which are truly constructive, rather than the clean-up costs from oil spills.

"We do not lack the ability to transform our world. The problems we face are understood and most of their solutions are known. Transformation will proceed with remarkable speed once the balance of legitimacy tips toward long-term well-being."

Margaret Slavin,  
*Peterborough Allowed Meeting,*

# Quaker Book Service



The following titles have been added to our stock. For a complete listing of QBS books, see our 2011-2012 Quaker Book Service Catalogue available on the CYM website, [www.quaker.ca/qbs](http://www.quaker.ca/qbs).

*James Nayler Speaking* by Brian Drayton. Pendle Hill Pamphlet 413, 2011. The author says: "To read James Nayler is to connect with Quakerism's initial eruption of insight and obedience." Some central themes of Nayler's ministry in the 17<sup>th</sup> century are explored. (36 pp; \$8.45)

*Black Fire: African American Quakers on Spirituality and Human Rights*, edited by Harold Weaver, Paul Kriese and Stephen W. Angell. Quaker Press of Friends General Conference, 2011. A remarkable anthology of selections about and by eighteen black American authors, most of whom were active Quakers, living and writing from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. They speak of a broad diversity of experiences with Quakers and of race relations in the USA from the days of slavery until the 21<sup>st</sup> century. (252 pp; \$31.10)

*The Power We Call God: threshings matter for Quaker visioning*, by Frank Parkinson. The Kindlers, London, UK, 2011. The author examines what it means to us to be Quakers, with our belief in that of God in all, in our awareness of the Divine as Being, personal and cosmic consciousness. In a process he calls *entheism* we are all challenged to renew ourselves. The Kindlers, as publishers, are well-named. (45 pp; \$7.50)

*Costing Not Less than Everything* by Pam Lunn, Swarthmore Lecture 2011. Quaker Books, London, UK, 2011. The sub-heading *Sustainability and spirituality in challenging times*, stresses very well our need as Quakers - living in our own as well as the world community - to protect the environment of our One Earth. (148 pp; \$20)

## Ordering Instructions

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\$35.00 - \$59.95	\$11.50	
Over \$60	\$13.00	

# Quaker News and Thought

Page from the Archives May/June 1992

THE PEOPLE WILL LIVE ON.  
THE LEARNING AND BLUNDERING PEOPLE WILL LIVE ON.  
THEY WILL BE TRICKED AND SOLD AND AGAIN SOLD  
AND GO BACK TO THE NOURISHING EARTH FOR BOOTHOLDS,  
THE PEOPLE SO PECULIAR IN REBEL AND COMEBACK,  
YOU CAN'T LAUGH OFF THEIR CAPACITY  
TO TAKE IT. •CARL SANDBERG• Carl Sandberg

Submitted by Kyle Jolliffe



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## Having Too Much

shows in more places, not  
only the face but the belly and  
the polished leather. Where-  
ever you go, round every port  
of call, folks who practice  
this custom walk with cameras  
knocking their knees and  
genitals. Like busybodies  
they have so many friends to  
look in on they never quite  
catch up. They must use  
boats, planes, rockets, upon  
which they distribute  
cigarettes like tickets that  
will glow and take you  
anywhere,

even to the  
moon when it opens up  
for the season. What they  
have learned is certain  
lessons  
which they are fond of  
citing, e.g. money talks  
and they appear to be in despair  
from never absorbing quite  
enough electricity.

*David Ray (c) 2012*

*[Reprinted by permission from the author]*

## Clerk's Corner: Carol Dixon

Ottawa, October 25, 2011, Peter Harkness and I attended an interfaith seminar hosted by the Canadian Council of Churches. It was part of a shared project to send a plea to Stephen Harper and our Canadian government to take leadership in addressing the pressing issue of climate change. It was also an opportunity to share understandings of our common faith traditions that undergird our love, respect and engagement with all of Creation. Twenty-one faith representatives from Jewish, Muslim, Baha'i, First Nation, Christian and Orthodox traditions signed a letter to the Prime Minister

In our joint message to the Prime Minister we affirmed that the growing climate crisis must be addressed by solutions that draw on the moral and spiritual resources of the world's religious traditions. Human greed, loss of spiritual direction, along with unsustainable practices of production and consumption, are compromising our planet's health and the health of its people. Like the early Quakers, we see a disconnection between professed beliefs and daily actions. We noted that a problem with government policy is the prevalence of short-term economic and political goals, with no articulation of a long-term vision of planetary justice and sustainability.

The greed of a few is bringing about changes in weather that adversely affects all on the planet. This is evidenced in loss of arable land; loss of biodiversity; increasingly erratic weather patterns; rising oceans that flood low-lying islands and displace those who are already marginalized. "We have a moral imperative to act", stated our plea to the Prime Minister.

We cannot wait for others to act but must lead by example. Religious organizations, public institutions, and businesses have important roles to play in promoting ethical consumption and more sustainable practices in their everyday operations.

From African church leaders came this plea:

**"It is the eleventh hour. Make haste. The cry of Earth and the cry of the poor are one."**

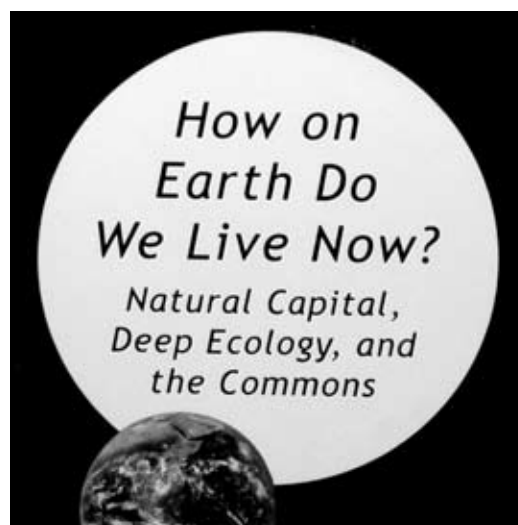
It was a privilege to represent Canadian Friends at this Multifaith gathering. It affirmed for me that there is more that unites us across sectarian lines than divides us. Our shared commitment to climate justice is vital work.

*Carol Dixon*

*Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

## Book Review: Don Alexander

*How on Earth Do We Live Now? Natural Capital, Deep Ecology and the Commons*, Quaker Institute for the Future. Pamphlet 2, 2011 by David Ciscel, Barbara Day, Keith Helmuth, Sandra Lewis and Judy Lumb. (91 pp; \$9.00) Quaker Book Service and online at [quakerinstitute.org](http://quakerinstitute.org).



Consider the questions we ask and how we ask them. The question in the title of this booklet, *How on Earth Do We Live Now?* may be asked as one of despair or, as the authors have chosen, emphasizing a question about "how to" approach a hopeful future of "...Earth restored".

I think about another question, often asked by children, *Are we there yet?* I would respond that while we are not there yet, this booklet moves us much closer to a capacity to create - for our children - a pathway to "...Earth restored".

The booklet - in the way it was prepared - respects the interconnections of the *Deep Ecology* of the title. The authors have worked together in a collaborative and interconnected way over time and distance. Over a period of two years the authors met frequently, connected by electronic means and sometimes face to face, to discern a response to the despair of ecological breakdown coupled with economic collapse and imbalance. Their response is a significant achievement in tying together an understanding of the interconnected relationships that will help guide a way forward - beyond despair.

In a last section of the book the authors, “speak briefly to the potential of the Quaker contribution toward Earth restored, but in a way that will resonate with all like-minded folks.” Quakers can help build an ecologically sound economy. Friends are reminded that the “practice of collaborative discernment and decision making that Quakers cultivate should be brought into the public policy arena at every opportunity”, and that we can “live our lives in a way that sets an example”.

Chapter eight, *Human Nature and Earth Restored*, is a good summary of recent writings about the “primacy of cooperation and empathy”. For me, this chapter is the fulcrum that leads us to positive responses to the question *How On Earth Do We Live Now?* We in the West have elevated and rewarded “human behaviors associated with self-interest, autonomy, individualism and materialism”. Now, recent scientific findings and observations forcefully challenge that one-sided view of human nature. In this chapter we are given a good summary of recent writings, stressing that human nature is founded on cooperation, compassion and empathy. We have a large social brain that is hard-wired for relationship. Deep ecology stresses that “everything is connected and it is relationship among the parts rather than the parts themselves that create and sustain the whole....Practising compassion is perhaps the fundamental expression of right relationship, and a guiding principle for humans in our search for a new way to live on Earth.”

The *natural capital* referred to in the book title is an abyss of contradictory understandings. Our economic system disregards a consideration of air, land, water, animals and minerals. Often they are considered insignificant in the economic scheme of things. We seek full-cost accounting. When all the natural parts of this wonderful world are given monetary consideration it can lead to trading of rights that can harm the environment. The value of natural capital is too easily thought of in monetary terms. However, the limits of the natural system do provide a boundary that goes beyond the financial.

How can the natural-capital and deep-ecology approaches to the future, respectfully meet to explore a way forward? The authors recognized the tension between the two schools of thought and set out in a Quakerly fashion to discern a way to embrace both natural capital and deep ecology. *The Commons* of the title provides the common field of understanding.

Here is the crux of the matter: “The natural capital argument that all Earth’s resources and services

previously undervalued by the economy, should be valued and paid for by the market is a recognition of the underlying commons on which economic life is built. In a similar way, the deep ecology argument that healthy ecosystems underwrite healthy human economies is also a recognition of the underlying commons.”

A managed and equitable commons is explored with examples from two areas of abiding importance, the land (property) and water. Certainly we have a poor track record of sharing resources and quality of life. A litany of ills is recounted here and the commons is perhaps, at the present time, seen as only a slim light to redress the ills of economic and ecological misadventures. How do we increase the potency and power of the commons? Managing and governing the commons requires high levels of cooperation and tolerance. It is here that we consider achievements of the Religious Society of Friends to break through persistent inequalities or abuse. Quaker testimonies of peace, simplicity, equality and integrity can begin to express a way of governing the commons with respect for all. Quaker ways of discernment and considered decision-making would also be an important part of governing the commons.

The booklet ends with an outline of some framing principles that can help focus our understanding and also inform public dialogue and community action. They help us move toward an integration of “natural capital, deep ecology, and the commons”. The framing principles provide a good checklist and primer about some places we can look to move beyond despair.

*How on Earth Do We Live Now?* has a significant ecological characteristic in that it defies narrow categorization. The publishers indicate that it is a pamphlet. I have referred to it as a booklet. In its thoughtful searching and discovery of a way forward it is an essay. As I look back on sixty years of my reading all the landmark books about environment, ecology, economics and governance, I will now call this a “very big book”. It considers and helps tie together disparate threads from such books as *Sand County Almanac* (1950), *Small is Beautiful* (1973), *The Nature of Economics* (2000) and *The Empathic Civilization* (2009). In these ninety-one pages we have a veritable bookshelf of thoughtful writing.

*Don Alexander, Pelham Executive Meeting  
Member of Canadian Friends Service Committee*

# Quakers and Permaculture:

Robert Kirchner

When I read about climate change, oil spills, toxic tailings ponds and accelerating species extinction, I find it tempting to view my fellow humans as something the rest of creation would be better off without. It's not much of a stretch to say that we industrialized humans are collectively behaving like a cancer upon the body of the earth. And yet, as a Quaker, I believe that there is that of God in every human being, and in every part of creation. There must therefore be some way for us humans to live on this earth peaceably without destroying and degrading it. In the words of the late folksinger Utah Phillips, we should be able "to make a living, not make a killing".

percent of us might make a living (*Capitalism vs. the Climate*, The Nation, Nov. 9, 2011). So, I return to the premise that there must be some way for humans to live without harming the rest of creation. How then? I believe I have found some answers to this question in my exploration of Permaculture. Specifically, I had the opportunity to work with a permaculture designer in developing a community garden for my neighbourhood; and this led me to take a two-week intensive Permaculture Design Course last July. Here is some of what I learned.

The fundamental ethical principles of Permaculture are: care for the earth, care for people, and sharing the surplus. The movement was founded by Australians Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in the 1970's. Permaculturists seek to design and implement systems that allow humans to meet their basic needs - food, shelter, and clothing - in an ecologically sustainable manner. Because food is one of the most basic human needs, permaculture ideas have been principally

## "...to make a living, not a killing"

As innocuous as the foregoing premise may sound, note that mainstream discussion of environmental issues denies the very possibility. The goal of protecting the environment is typically framed as conflicting with the goal of promoting economic prosperity for humans. Who among us is willing to protect polar bears if it means our families must go hungry and cold? Environmental goals are thus perpetually subordinated to economic growth. The mainstream debate is over how much environmental protection, if any, we can afford without hurting the economy. But this line of thinking is dangerously shortsighted. Obviously the economy won't survive if humans don't survive, and humans can't survive for long if we continue to degrade the ecosystems that we depend upon.

Since I started working on this article the emerging crisis of the global financial system, and the light shed on this system by the *Occupy Movement*, have made it increasingly clear that our economic system cannot and should not be saved. Naomi Klein (author of *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*) argues that the solutions to our environmental and economic problems are one and the same. We just have to move beyond the framework of this current economic system, designed as it is to allow the wealthiest one percent to make a killing, and focus instead on how one hundred

applied to the problem of food production, and it is perhaps best known as a method of organic gardening. Typically, permaculture gardeners emphasize edible perennial plants, including fruit trees and bushes, to create a self-sustaining "food forest". It was a Quaker, Ruth Stout, who pioneered the no-till, mulch-intensive gardening techniques which became central to permaculture.

More broadly, Mollison characterizes permaculture as "a philosophy of working with, rather than against nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless labour; and of looking at plants and animals in all their functions, rather than treating any area as a single project system." Holmgren further identifies the following design principles:

1. Observe and interact with nature before engaging in any design.
2. Catch and store energy. Collect resources at peak abundance.
3. Obtain a yield.
4. Apply self-regulation and accept feedback.
5. Use/value renewable resources and services.
6. Produce no waste.
7. Observe patterns in nature. They form the backbone of our designs, with details filled in.



8. Integrate and juxtapose elements of a system so that they work together to support each other.
9. Use small, slow solutions, - easier to maintain and produce more sustainable outcomes.
10. Use and value diversity. A diverse system is more responsive to changes in its environment.
11. Use edges and value the marginal. The interface between elements is often where the most productive aspects of the system are found.
12. Creatively use and respond to change.

Far from degrading ecosystems, these principles can be applied to increase biodiversity and ecological resiliency, while still obtaining yields to provide for the needs of all. As an example of these principles in action, consider an aquaponics system (raising of fish coupled with the growing of vegetables) developed by Will Allen of *Growing Power*, Milwaukee. Water from a large fish tank is pumped into overhead vegetable beds. The dirty water fertilizes and irrigates the plants, while the plants filter and oxygenate the water, which then flows back into the fish tanks. As this example shows, permaculture is not anti-technology, it is about development and utilization of appropriate technologies that don't require huge inputs of energy and non-renewable resources, that don't generate large amounts of waste. In the *Permaculture Design Course*, we considered how these principles can be applied on a variety of scales, from tiny window-gardens to commercial farming operations. I'm hoping to take this learning and put it to use helping other communities around Edmonton develop permaculture-style community gardens.

It's not immediately obvious how to get from small-scale gardening projects to the kind of massive social transformation we so urgently require. However, according to principle nine above, a small-scale solution, if shown to be successful, can be quickly and widely replicated. Naomi Klein explicitly acknowledges the role of Permaculturists and the allied local food movement in this hoped-for transformation. Ten years ago, she observes, anti-globalization activists faced the objection that there is no alternative to the corporate-controlled industrial production and distribution system for meeting people's needs and providing gainful employment. In the past decade though, the permaculture and local food movements have been developing the nucleus of a just and sustainable local food system. And permaculturists are already working on extending these ideas to home construction, transportation and other basic needs.

What does this have to do with Quakers? There was once a Friend who got in on the beginnings of the industrial consumer goods distribution system in North America. However, he saw the spiritual dangers of that path, and he stepped back from it, choosing instead to make a modest living from tending his fruit orchard, with some tailoring on the side. This is exactly the sort of career choice many permaculturists are making today. I can therefore say, with tongue only slightly in cheek, that the esteemed Quaker prophet John Woolman was recognizably a *Permie* – over two centuries before Mollison and Holmgren! More generally, I hope it is obvious from my description that permaculture principles are deeply consonant with our Testimonies.

The anti-consumerist, anti-waste theme of permaculture accords with *Simplicity*. Permaculture's insistence on living within our environmental limits speaks to *Integrity*. The concern for economic justice accords with *Equality*. The principles of integration, of valuing diversity, and of putting elements of a system in right relation to one another, suggests the building of healthy human communities as well as gardens, in accord with our *Testimony of Community*. As for the *Peace Testimony*, I submit that the corporate-controlled industrial production and distribution system of modern capitalism, with its demand for ever-increasing inputs, is in a state of constant war against the people of the developing world for control of those resources and against the other species of this planet as it devastates the ecosystems they are part of.

We can choose, actively or passively, to remain reliant on this system and thus complicit in its violence, or we can begin to move towards sustainable non-violent alternatives. I suggest that the permaculture movement can furnish us with a wealth of practical solutions to do this. Moreover, this is work that doesn't have to wait for the passage of laws, ratification of treaties, or other permission from political leaders. We can exercise our power, here and now, to live individually and collectively in accordance with the promptings of love and truth in our hearts. We can learn to make a living, not a killing.

A good introductory text for those who wish to learn more, is *Gaia's Garden: a Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture*, by Toby Hemingway.

*Robert Kirchner*  
*Edmonton Monthly Meeting*

## Around the Family Around the Family Around the Family

**Vancouver Monthly Meeting:** A Centennial Celebration was held at the Vancouver Meeting House on Sunday November 6, 2011, in honour of the founding of Vancouver Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, in November



of 1911. Approximately one hundred and fifty written invitations were mailed to everyone on the Meeting list and approximately seventy people attended.

Our Meeting for Worship was blessed with a warm and deep sense of spirit. The metaphor of a tree wove through much of the ministry. This included the image of Vancouver Meeting being like a one-hundred year-old tree that has gone through many cycles of dormancy and new life; the leaves springing forth and falling away representing the many lives which have come and gone throughout the life of the Meeting. We were enriched by the presence of many of our elders, some of whom can't always make it to Meeting regularly, as well as many of our children and teens.

At the rise of Meeting we gave thanks for our many blessings and acknowledged the Musqueam First Nation upon whose unceded territory our Meeting House stands; the Squamish First Nation and the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, on whose traditional territories the City of Vancouver lies; including the Coast Salish peoples on whose traditional territories our worship groups meet. We thanked our elders who help guide us and the children who are our future. Following a shared meal, a group photo and a beautiful birthday cake, we spontaneously visited *Occupy Vancouver* to sing and donate all of our leftover food.

A timeline banner documenting history of Vancouver Meeting from 1883 - 2006, was created to commemorate the Centennial. Some Friends brought writings or objects reflecting their thoughts on what Vancouver Meeting may be like one hundred years from now, or what their connection with Quakers has meant to them in their lives. One Friend created a beautiful Centennial quilt to commemorate the occasion. Our intention is to photocopy the writing and photograph the objects for the Archives, and to put the originals in a box, to be buried under a centennial tree, probably next spring.

**Halifax Monthly Meeting:** Christmas Eve Baby! **Lora Brightstar Aven Gillis** was born at 9:30 pm, December 24, 2011, daughter of **Katie** and **Andrew Aven-Gillis** and sister to **Molly**. Katie is a member of Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting sojourning with Halifax MM. Andrew is the incoming Clerk of HMM.

**Young Friends Gathering** took place November 10-12 at the Vancouver Meeting House. Thirteen youth came together to play, make music, worship, and bond for two evenings and one full day. Many had not met before.

As November 11 was Remembrance Day a Meeting for Worship was held at 11am and we were joined by family and friends in a rich and gathered Meeting. Later the Young Friends ventured to Strathcona area of Vancouver to a youth art centre called the Purple Thistle to participate in a Zine making workshop.

With Young Friends coming from Victoria, Fort Langley, Burnaby and Vancouver, the extended time together provided everyone opportunity to get to know each other in a relaxed way. They look forward to meeting at future gatherings, such as the Vancouver Monthly Meeting Easter Retreat at Camp Alexandra in Crescent Beach, BC, and Western Half Yearly Meeting in Sorrento, BC.

**Montreal Monthly Meeting:** had a number of potluck lunches and rich moments together. At our October 14 to 16 meeting at Waupoos Farm, Dorothy Parshall presented on the subject of sustainability. In November David Millar led us to consider the question of eco-justice. In order to encourage the quiet members and attenders to speak, in March we started five minutes of worship sharing before the close of Meeting. In September, we changed this to afterthoughts following the close of Meeting. This formula seems to be working quite well.

**Hamilton Monthly Meeting:** Beloved and long-time Friend **Andrew Brink**, husband of **Helen Brink**, died November 25. A Memorial Meeting was held December 11. Our tradition of *Cookies and Carols* - taking plates of home-made cookies, and singing Christmas carols to Friends who are less able to participate in Meeting was upheld by the Cambridge Worship Group and Friends. Seasoned Friends recently hosted several presentations, discussions and Q&A on the *Quaker Way* after First Day worship.

## Around the Family Around the Family Around the Family

**Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting:** In the fall we welcomed young adult **John Roche** into membership. New Year's Eve a number of **youth and young adult Friends** gathered in the Fern Street MH for food and fun together. A memorial was held here on Saturday January 14 for **Phil Esmonde** of Victoria Meeting. Phil died in Sri Lanka on Dec. 27, 2011.

Recently **Katherine Logan**, an architect who attends this Meeting, gave a day-long seminar on stewardship of our Meeting House, in light of our Quaker testimonies of Simplicity, Integrity, and the architectural aspects of the building. On February 4 the Eco Group of Fern Street Meeting hosted a presentation on Permaculture. The speaker focused on growing healthy soil, and the interdependence and multi-usefulness of every creature in the garden.

**Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting:** **Jo Vellacott**, long a stalwart of Thousand Islands MM, has moved her home and membership to Toronto. We have moved our place and time of worship. We meet Sunday mornings at 10:30 in the "quiet room" at the Kingston Unitarian Fellowship's premises, 216 Concession Street.

**Argenta Monthly Meeting:** Since the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Argenta Monthly Meeting has been supporting work to provide safe drinking water there. Our friend David Putt identified an opportunity for poor schools in the Cité Soleil area of Port-au-Prince. If the schools collect rainwater from their roofs and use a simple sand filter, they could save much of the expense of buying drinking water, and they could use the money they saved to pay teachers' salaries and student scholarships.

So far, we've raised about \$50,000 for the purpose. Two occasional AMM attenders spent months in Port-au-Prince to start the project: hiring and training a local crew, identifying schools and starting the work. About a dozen schools, so far, now have working rainwater collection systems.

We asked a US agency, *Pure Water for the World*, to administer the project for us, but found the arrangement too cumbersome. PWW will continue working on rainwater harvest for schools without us; we are now in the process of identifying a new opportunity in Haiti.



**New Brunswick Monthly Meeting** welcomes Eastern Shore Quaker Meeting as an Allowed Meeting under its care, November 20, 2011, in Sackville, NB. Photo by Nate Miller with Vince's camera. **Back left to right:** Michael Miller, Keith Helmuth, Randy Oftedahl, Vince Zelazny, Barry Thomas, John Calder, Doris Calder, Martha McClure, Marilyn Roper, Maud Anschutz, Lesley Read, Pat Craig, Linda Foy. **Front:** Edith Miller, Harry Roper, Anne Thomas, Margot Overington, Ellen Helmuth, Daphne Davey. Missing: Jane Robertson.

## Notice Board

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To the United Kingdom and the Netherlands

Mid July to Mid August 2012

Seeking 14 young Friends ages 16-18

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## Coordinator Wanted for the Food Co-op CYM 2012

Thursday August 2 to Saturday August 11, 2012 at Augustana University, Camrose, Alberta.

Would you like a way to take part in Yearly Meeting with work that places you at the heart (well, stomach) of the community, while earning a little money to help subsidize your attendance?

The CYM Food Co-op is also **looking for a second coordinator** to share the workload with an already-experienced coordinator. Food Co-op coordinators collaborate with the Local Arrangements Committee to purchase food supplies, making use of available menus, recipes and shopping lists. They manage food storage and use, direct volunteers to facilitate food preparation and clean-up, and ensure safe food-handling practices. The coordinators have available a Coordinator's Manual containing menus, recipes and procedures for guidance; they are supported by the Food Co-op Organizer of Programme Committee, the Local Arrangement Committee, and a host of volunteers for site set up and maintenance, financial control, food shopping, preparation and clean up.

If you love good food and community, are physically active enough to spend hours on your feet, lift the occasional heavy pot, have good communication and organization skills, stay calm and be of good cheer when the spices are frying in oil, the beans are about to overflow, and six people want to ask you questions all at once, this is a most rewarding way to experience Yearly Meeting!

An honorarium of \$400 is available to each coordinator.

If interested, please contact the Food Co-op Organizer, Nathalie Brunet, at [mdnatbrunet@gmail.com](mailto:mdnatbrunet@gmail.com)



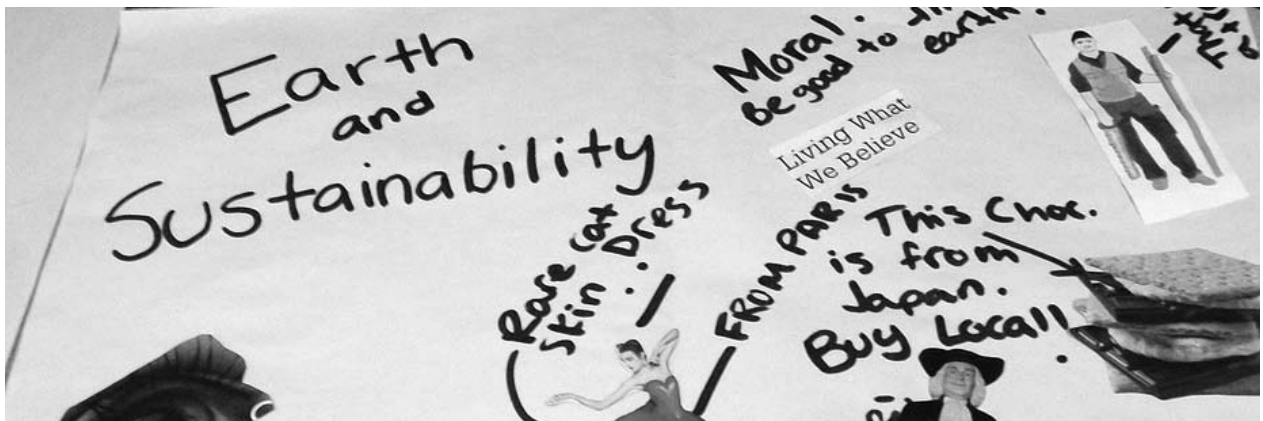
As Quakers, I believe our role is to propose solutions that are possible, socially/ecologically responsible and inspirational. Too often we focus on the negative. Instead, we need to offer a vision of a new society that is rich in connections and diversity. We need cities with diverse and interesting neighbourhoods so that we can explore them rather than travel to Egypt or Italy; enough natural parks in cities so that we don't need to drive for two hours to get away from the noise and the bustle; great public transportation; locally made foods and re-cycled, up-cycled, local clothing to offset what should be expensive imports - and what eventually will be expensive as fuel costs rise; great local art, theatre and music.

If you ask most people what they really want, fast cars, RVs, big houses and trips to foreign places are not on the list. These are luxury items. We want warm dry houses with enough room for our small families and perhaps a little luxury space - a spare guest room or play room - cheap and fast local transportation,

The Quaker testimony of Simplicity is doubly valuable. It gives us the peace to fully experience the essence of life and at the same time reduces our footprint on this fragile blue planet. Calm down, use less energy, travel less, have fewer children, read more, grow and eat more vegetables, and continue to innovate. What an easy prescription!

We press our governments to become more responsible and not be servants to corporations. We ask that our trees be harvested in small sections, our resources mined with minimal disturbance so as to protect ground water, and that our fishery quotas be made smaller.

We need to slow down the hungry caterpillar of industry by using Cap and Trade agreements, a carbon tax, a large-house tax, and a Tobin "Robin Hood" tax on financial transactions. To be truly sustainable we must increase gas tax, car ownership fees, parking fees, require green space, include the environmental price of materials, and product



good educations for our children, good and equitable health care, healthy/clean food, water and air, pensions/support for the elderly, friends, culture and community. All of these can be achieved within our own small communities and in a way that would make our lives richer, not poorer. We have heard the doomsday proclamations and are not listening. **Let us offer a vision of the future that is rich in human connections, diversity, caring and health, which includes all other species.**

*Dana Bush  
Calgary Monthly Meeting*

recycling costs in the sales price. To encourage better health: tax junk food, subsidize local vegetables and fruit, tax elevators. Let's spend this tax money on better education.

Keep that old kitchen, use screws in construction for easy renovation, use a broom to sweep, use a rake to gather up leaves to compost back into soil, turn down the heat and wear more sweaters. Let's keep each other warm in winter, cool in summer and empowered to make the changes necessary to care for our world.

*Claire Adamson  
Montreal Monthly Meeting*

Editor: Sherryll-Jeanne Harris

Editorial Support:

Steve Fick, Gerald Harris, Diana Mitchell,  
Michael Phillips, Ana Simeon, 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

## **Themes & Deadlines for upcoming issues:**

May 2012

Submit by March 10

The Influence of Quaker Writers -  
Historically and currently, in our  
lives and the world.

Summer 2012

Anything you wish to share:  
Send submissions NOW!

Young Adult Friends

Thoughts, photos, art, poetry  
Deadline: March 30, 2012.



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