

The Canadian Friend

Volume 109, Number 1

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Memories and Stories from Camp Nee Kau Nis

Mission Statement

Vision

The Canadian Friend

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Guest Editorial:

It has been over twenty years since I became involved in the business of NeeKauNis. It is no exaggeration to say that I grew up in Friends at NeeKauNis, as much as in my beloved Meetings of Hamilton and Ottawa.

Camp NeeKauNis is the gateway to Friends for many people of all ages. How can we guide this ministry of outreach? Do we hope that the seeds we sow will result in a larger membership, or is it our role to see Friends' ways guide and strengthen people on their own personal paths of service? The Camp experience can become deeply internalized. Is attachment a road to security and integrity of self, or is it a trap for unhealthy possessiveness? Is it really possible to eat too many S'mores and is that the final test in deciding the age cut-off for Young Friends?

NeeKauNis had its eightieth birthday in 2012. This celebratory issue contains contributions from three living Administrative Directors, Jim Adamson, Dick Preston, and Bev Shepard. We hear Fred Haslam's voice in his description of Albert Rogers finding the property in 1932. This particular selection has always conjured a full-sized canvas in my mind's eye, with sails, sand, and rowboats painted by a noble-souled painter, hung over a mantel somewhere in Toronto Friends' House. Having my children lose glasses, twice (thrice!) in the self-same muck that he describes, brings things right back to earth.

A report on the development of our new strategic plan is presented in this issue. The full plan, which is in our minutes, is the result of work of many hearts and minds, and has allowed a brisk clarity to inform our business. It has been remarkable to see the almost instantaneous change in the Committee as we gave voice to ideas and concerns that had previously struggled for footholds. There was an air of synchronicity in this work. We had tilled the ground by imagining Canadian Yearly Meeting in session at NeeKauNis; there was a generous bequest that sparked some new and needed financing; there was an impetus in the Yearly Meeting to strengthen Quaker Education. All this brought lively change. "Standing on the shoulders of giants" is a phrase that speaks to me of the legacy of Friends' work. Are there Light-hearted giants among us?

We thank our leaders, campers, and friends of Friends for their irreplaceable and loyal service to the quirky, quixotic idea that is NeeKauNis.

We invite you to visit our website: www.neekaunis.org to read about a new funding drive – the *Generations Fund* – which will help us work toward a robust future.

Kris Wilson-Yang

Clerk of Camp NeeKauNis Committee

Hamilton Monthly Meeting

Sojourning with Ottawa Monthly Meeting



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Front Cover: Friends celebrate NeeKauNis' eightieth birthday, courtesy Bev Shepard

Back Cover: Artist Grayden Laing

Illustration pg. 8: Holly Harris

The Greatest Birthday Party Ever!!!



Jenn Preston and Sarah Howe

Dick Preston is pretty close to the same age as NeeKauNis (NKN). Before he reached his eightieth birthday in 2011 we decided a major celebration was in order and booked an entire weekend at NKN. We were an off-season rental – arriving Friday and leaving Sunday.

Family and friends traveled from three countries to be together for this special time. Camp accommodated us all as we met for our meals and dish teams in Nelson-Hall. We decorated, wore party hats, sang and made music, played volleyball and croquet, took a guided tour, star gazed, and enjoyed a glorious bonfire, complete with S'mores and story-telling.

On our final evening we had ten birthday cakes – all chocolate of course. Grammie Bee's special recipe.

Dick's best friend from graduate school (more than fifty years previously!) made the trek from North Carolina. Baby grand nieces and nephews from England and the United States came. It was a beloved gathering of young and old. We all enjoyed the introductions repeated at meals, when we explained our connections to the birthday boy. Many had never experienced NeeKauNis before and marveled at the wonders of the Spirit of the place.

Camp was an awesome place for so many people to come together. A single birthday dinner would not have been enough for this grand celebration. We

needed an entire weekend in such a joyous atmosphere where we could visit without being crowded.

As one young celebrator announced loudly: “**This is the best birthday party ever.**” Dick agreed.

Camp is an amazing place for family gatherings. The rates are very reasonable, no matter the size of the group. For the few who need more comfortable amenities, reasonable hotels are just down the road.

Rentals offer the option of a camp NeeKauNis cook, and in the summer season the option of having lifeguards. At this gathering we were blessed to have a pair of cooks from Toronto Monthly Meeting ‘hired’ for the weekend. They bought the groceries and the cost was very reasonable for all the delicious meals.

Bring your loved ones to renew, engage and connect.

Jenn Preston (Dick’s ‘KID’)
Sarah Howe (Dick’s ‘KID KID’)
Hamilton Monthly Meeting.

[Dick and Jenn (left) serve on the NKN Committee.
Sarah avoids committee meetings when possible.]



NeeKauNis Hymn



[Sung to the tune of *The Old Rugged Cross*]

On a hill far away, overlooking the bay
A part of the Georgian expanse
There’s a view that is grand
Both of lake and of land
A scene which all souls must entrance.

So we’ll go to this beautiful place
And together we’ll dig up the sod
And we’ll lay the foundation space
In the fear and the love of our God.

For it seemed a wise thing, our material to bring
And to build a fixed camp on this spot
Through the love of kind friends
Who subscribed to these ends
We’ve a structure adorning the spot/plot

Thus we build on the basis of love
For it stands when all others shall fall
And our unity came from above
When His image was found in us all.

*(Composed in 1933 by William H. Willson
on the hill overlooking Georgian Bay.)*



Raising Children at Camp NeeKauNis

In the early 1990s I was looking for a community where I could raise my two young children. I grew up in a small rural Ontario town. I knew if I fell off my bike at the four corners someone would come to help me. That person would likely know my name and have a fifty-fifty chance of being related to me in some way, in a town where my family had been for one hundred and thirty years. I desired that my children also grow up with the secure feeling of belonging to a particular and loving place. However, I was raising them in the fast-paced and ever-changing Greater Toronto area.

In part, this is how I came to Friends and for the first time to Camp NeeKauNis. I attended Half Yearly Meeting at camp and was struck by the simple, rustic, practical beauty of the place. It was like an old Meeting House spread over the shores of Georgian Bay. It was the Meeting House timbers before they were sawed.

We went to Family Camp until my children could go to camp on their own and as soon as they were old enough they also applied to work as staff and share the joy of the place with the next generation. This culminated in both of my children spending almost entire summers at camp before travel, school, and jobs began to limit their time at NeeKauNis. They learned to work at camp and to be responsible for others. They made friendships that have lasted for decades.

As the years have gone by I have had the opportunity to serve on the Camp Committee and to co-direct camps. This allowed me to see the love and hard work that goes into the programs that gave my children a spirit-led community. I thank Canadian Yearly Meeting and all the F/friends big and small who made that possible.

Paul Sheardown

Yonge Street Monthly Meeting

“...we created the community I had hoped to find for my children and myself.”

That summer my partner and I took our one and three-year-olds to a ten-day Family Camp directed by Bev and Robbie Shepard. The welcome was warm and the children loved the freedom to move freely through the large, safe, natural environment.

Other young families were there and we laughed at our struggles and shared childcare as we sneaked away for the occasional afternoon nap. At night, while the children slept soundly after a play-filled day in sun and water, we lined up our baby monitors on the dining hall mantel and enjoyed adult fellowship.

We had Meeting outside on the hill overlooking the bay and washed dishes together after meals. Through our ten days together, through joys and tears, discoveries and occasional disappointments, we created the community I had hoped to find for my children and myself.

For many years we returned to camp to find the same families and always a few new ones. A highlight was getting to meet the hard working teen staff who were lifeguards, chore people, and kitchen help. They also put on the traditional skits at talent night, which tied us to all those camps that had come years before us. Our children were in awe of these marvellous, competent teens who were so joyful in their work. I was to find out in the years to come, those staff members were even more joyful when they had camp to themselves, long after I had gone to bed!



Sam Egan-Sheardown, 1994



Paul Sheardown



Not all creatures spend Meeting for Worship in silence...

Meeting: Camp NeeKauNis

What has so angered the crow
who shrieks his monotonous rage
From atop a caterpillar-riddled tree?
Is it the children
wearing their spirits like banners
bright-coloured and fluttering in the clear
air

as they set off along the tilted path?
Can it be the motorboat
cutting a white slash across the pewter
surface of the lake,
trailing behind it its distant roar?
It cannot be we older, calmer ones
settling into stillness on the hill,
drawing to ourselves the treasure of
worship.

No, we are not the ones who so distress him,
not children nor adults,
for he is moving away from us all,
his anger continuing but fading
like a departing trouble,
leaving us to feel the peace
seep back among us
with the sigh of grasses
and the songs of gentler birds.

*Beverly Shepard
Hamilton Monthly Meeting*

Miller Family Camp 1976

The best thing, for me, about Camp NeeKauNis was community. Michael and I and our boys, Andrew (thirteen), Nathaniel (ten), and Joel (six and a half), had just joined Montreal Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends the year before. We were looking for a summer trip and a Quaker intergenerational experience.



Our camp was the cross-border program, of equal numbers of Canadian and American Friends. It was 1976, the year a magnificent wooden jungle gym was built under the supervision of an American family.

NeeKauNis was balm for me. Relieved of constant responsibility of childcare and cooking, I could unwind and relax in worship every morning under trees overlooking the lake, eat three square meals without having to cook, hold adult conversation, and join in international folk dancing. I was overjoyed to participate in a community of adults and young people sharing in sublime and ridiculous activity.

Our boys enjoyed camp too: the water sports, meeting other kids, and participating in cooperative chores. They so enjoyed the lineup of campers engaged in stages of dish-cleaning that they were inspired to help when we returned home. Alas, it was short-lived! A funny image I have is of another daily-shared chore: a boy marched from outhouse to outhouse flourishing a plunger ringed with toilet paper rolls.

There were tours to the Huron Indian Village and to Wye Marsh, where everyone, regardless of age, took a paddle in a guided canoe trip. Walks through the woods were peaceful and the water sports were refreshing.

We admired the camp sailboat so much that we bought the same model – a little fiberglass sloop, a Kolibr – so we could resume our sailing at home.

That was a long time ago. A picture of the five of us in NeeKauNis T-shirts reminds me pleasantly.

*Edith Miller
New Brunswick Monthly Meeting*

Joys of Family Camp

Barbara Horvath

Family Camp at NeeKauNis has become one of the weeks I really look forward to each summer. For the past six summers I have attended with my grandchildren. During my first experience they were ages eight and five. We were there without their parents so they were in my charge. I loved the way in which these two were treated as individuals, expected to do their share on meal teams and be quiet during daily Meeting for Worship. Yet camp also gave these city kids marvelous freedom to run around, make new friends, learn about the natural environment and swim every afternoon.

More recently, my daughter-in-law has come with her two (now three) children, giving me five grandchildren in one place for a whole week! This has been a different opportunity, providing ample time with my daughter-in-law to share lots of stories and laughter about our family, while giving her an extra hand in managing her active threesome. I try to make a point of giving one-on-one time to each of the children during most days, and reading to all the kids at bedtime is a special pleasure.

In 2012, my oldest grandchild was no longer a camper. At thirteen she was working as kitchen help and staying in the staff cabin. I didn't get to spend much time with her, but it was another kind of joy to see how responsible and accomplished she was in this role.

Grandparents are not the only adults at Family Camp, but it provides a unique opportunity for grandparents to spend quality time with grandchildren we may otherwise not see very often. The supportive environment of camp fosters intimacy. There are no meals to shop for or cook, no entertainment to plan or playmates to recruit. Family Camp is an immersion in Quaker family life, modelled by camp directors Bev and Robbie Shepard. There are shared approaches to ensuring safety, healthy activities, good nutrition, and constructive discipline. Camp also allows me to introduce my grandchildren to Quaker faith and practice. None of them are in a position to attend a Monthly Meeting or First Day School, so this is a precious opportunity to bathe them in the Light that has been so important in my own life.

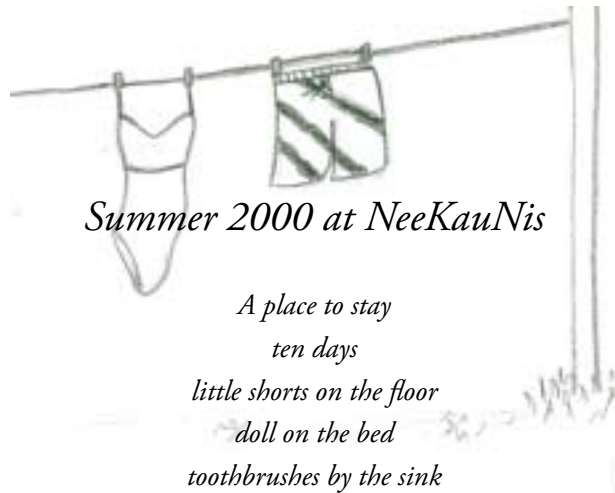
I have to admit that by the end of Family Camp I am tired, and quite happy to return everyone to

their own homes and routines, but I make a point of watching for the dates for next summer's Family Camp.

Barbara Horvath

Yonge Street Monthly Meeting

[With grandchildren below]



Summer 2000 at NeeKauNis

*A place to stay
ten days
little shorts on the floor
doll on the bed
toothbrushes by the sink
swimsuit on the line
Mother's soothing voice
laughter of children
Grandma's loving arms
soft breathing in sleep
ten days
a home.*

*Beverly Shepard
Hamilton Monthly Meeting*

(We're not away from home when we're at Camp.)

Camp Stewardship: It's a Family Affair

My grandchildren and I enjoy Family Camp each summer. What a wonderful way to hang out together! Now our granddaughter also attends Junior Camp.

During the other fifty-one weeks of the year I'm an educator and practitioner in the world of conflict engagement. I work with people to address troubling differences and improve decision-making processes.

Because I'm a camper and a facilitator I was asked to write an article about conflict resolution for this special camp issue. At first I was surprised because Camp NeeKauNis is, at least in my mind, an idyllic place that I visit each summer to co-create community and enjoy the best of everyone, without staying long enough to become irritated with other's foibles and eccentricities. Conflict and camp? Sure, we inevitably encounter a few rough edges but they're tame compared to the stuff I deal with during the rest of the year. After all, the welcoming sign tells us to leave our cares and woes behind. Most of us are happy to comply.

Consensus is a cornerstone of Quaker decision-making. This arises from our belief that there is a divine spark – that of God – in each person. We sit together to discern the will of God by listening intently for the “still small voice” inside, then we share the most important bits of that voice with the group. In this way, we hope to experience a common understanding of the ways we can best move forward together. Occasionally this approach actually works.

Sometimes - okay, frequently - the Creator needs a little help. This assistance shows up in the form of clerks who help committees address issues of common concern, make collective decisions, and solve shared problems. Leadership takes many forms, usually starting with, “I can do that”. The key to our collective well-being is servant leadership (Robert K. Greenleaf). We serve the needs of our community and in so doing are enriched beyond measure. In fact, if we act in our own self-interest without taking others into consideration, trust is broken, and relationships suffer.

In its best moments, camp is a marvelous example of [servant leadership]. At Family Camp we happily care for one another's children, share in aspects of meal prep and clean-up, volunteer an hour or two each day to maintain the facilities, self-organize recreational activities for mutual benefit, and generally demonstrate how well we can attend to the needs of others while meeting our own desires for personal relaxation and

comforting fellowship. Who makes this possible? While we all contribute what we can, the directors who organize and run camp programs, create and hold the space for us to interact with care and love.

In other words, it's no accident when we experience the divine in others. It takes tender attention, learned skills, active intuition, and strategic choices to bring together the ingredients that inspire trust in one another as we move toward something that feels like spiritual unity. As individuals we know the ineffable joy of those synchronistic moments when all's well with the world. If we are to experience similar moments together with others, we must work to make them happen. Sometimes this means learning new skills and attitudes; sometimes it means slowing down so that we can gather “with hearts and minds prepared”; sometimes it means examining our opinions and biases so we can grow into greater compassion and wisdom.

I give thanks for the many hearts and minds that make Camp NeeKauNis possible. Together, we continuously create and re-create this little gem on the shores of Georgian Bay. Camp waits patiently for us to return each summer to welcome newcomers and seasoned campers alike. Make no mistake, Friends work diligently during the winter to ensure that camp will blossom again when the warmth returns. Let us hold them in the Light just as they hold the best interests of camp in their hands.

Sylvia McMechan

Kitchener Area Monthly Meeting

[With grandchildren below]



My NeeKauNis Summer

Ellie Greenler

“Today is my last full day at camp. I am not ready to leave this place, the place that has nurtured me so much these recent weeks. The friendships I have formed are more than I could have ever wished for.”

When I was asked to write about my camp experience I wondered how I would put my memories of the time I spent at NeeKauNis into words. I decided to start by rereading my little black note book that was handed to me on the first day of Intermediate camp, my second week of lifeguarding at NeeKauNis. The quote above was the last entry about my NeeKauNis summer.

I had no idea what I was getting myself into when I first arrived at NeeKauNis, and drove down the dirt road bearing a sign: *No cares and woes beyond this point*. I didn't know many people, and didn't expect the wonderful intensity of this intentional community that is created at NeeKauNis. My experience can be summed up by a story from the same day I wrote the journal entry above – my last full day at Camp NeeKauNis:

The whole camp was buzzing, cleaning up from the week of camp. There was much to do, many good byes to be said, and of course, lunch to be eaten. Everybody was diligently trying to get the last jobs done. I was finishing up some lifeguard tasks when two of the teen-staff came running up to me. I was expecting them to ask me to help them with clean up. Instead they gave me huge hugs and heart-felt good byes. They looked at me and made me promise to make it back to NeeKauNis next summer. I must return, they said. I promised; it was an easy promise to make. Moments like these made me feel totally at home in this small camp in Ontario, Canada.

I had initially been intimidated, but the kind words of these girls made me realize that NeeKauNis is a truly wonderful place. After the first real conversations I had with them, we were friends. I realized that they were just as excited that I was there as I was to be there. Gone were the insecurities of arriving at a new place, to be with people I didn't know. In a short time NeeKauNis became my second home.

These are not uncommon interactions at NeeKauNis. The community is so intentional that you will immediately feel welcome. Every person who

has been attending for a long time just wants to pass on love to other people. The people who are new are welcomed with open arms and hearts. NeeKauNis is all about strong friendships, great conversations, and lots of fun.

NeeKauNis came into my life at just the right time. It was deeply satisfying to find a place where my Quaker values were a part of every day life and everyone around me shared my love of laughter and life. Part of my heart is living at NeeKauNis and I know that I will return to this community many times in the future, but for now I will carry the love, joy and intentionality through the year, until I drive again down that dirt road and pass the sign: *No cares and woes beyond this point*. [See page 23].

*Ellie Greenler, Madison Monthly Meeting
Northern Yearly Meeting (United States)*

Reflection

Mayra Flores Tavares

I was introduced to Camp NeeKauNis through friends with whom I had the pleasure of living in Guelph, Ontario. From them I heard stories about NeeKauNis. Many of them met there and continue in friendship to this day. One day I went to visit the Camp with them. It was a *mutirão* (work bee day) to tidy up the camp at the start of the season.

I was there for only four days, but I could see how the place, that I had heard about from my friends, is so special. My experience was short but incredible, because I got to know so many wonderful people who were welcoming and patient with me and my bad English. Surrounded by the beautiful landscape, I had a great time at NeeKauNis. I played a lot. I played baseball for the first time, and I laughed a lot. If I lived in Canada I would definitely go back to the Camp.

In this current digitized society where people are so separate and communicate through virtual messages, I believe it is essential for children to experience life at camp, enjoying its many outdoor activities, the days together, and making friends for a lifetime. I thank Camp NeeKauNis for very good memories!

*Mayra Flores Tavares
San Paolo, Brazil*



location

Camp NeeKaunis is on a hill above the shores of Georgian Bay. The cabins, outbuildings, woods, and enhanced waterfront provide the perfect location for kids and families to experience northern living within a community environment.

real world skills

Our camp is rooted in the Quaker principles of equality, cooperation, and respect. The interpersonal skills campers learn here will become an invaluable asset in their lives as well as something they can pass on to others.

campers : staff

Our camper to instructor ratio is one of the best and, depending on the camp, will range from 4 : 1 to 2 : 1. This allows each camper to participate in all activities with proper supervision.

camp experience

Everyone has a passion and ours is making sure each camper has an unforgettable experience. Campers will have the opportunity to spend time at the water front, in the sports field, playing drama games, and leaving camp spiritually refreshed.

Programs for families, children, young adults, and mixed groups are offered in a series of camps which provide opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and spiritual growth.

April 19 to April 21	Camp Opening and Work Weekend
May 9 to May 11	Committee Meeting/Work/Training
June 28 to July 6	Work Camp and Skills Training
July 7 to July 17	Teen Camp (ages 14-16)
July 7 to July 14	Digital Film Camp
July 19 to July 27	Family Camp (all ages)
July 28 to August 4	Junior Camp (ages 9-11)
August 5 to August 11	Intermediate Camp (ages 12-13)
August 12 to August 18	Community Camp (ages 12-18)
August 14 to August 17	Pre-CYM Young Friends Retreat
August 30 to September 2	Refugee Camp
September 4 to September 11	C.O.D. Camp (ages 55+)
October 4 to October 6	Young Friends' Thanksgiving Retreat
October 18 to October 20	Camp Closing and Committee Meeting

For more information on camps and travel bursaries, or to download registration forms, please visit our website at www.neekaunis.org



Left top: Halsam Cottage, 1953



Right top: Fred and Maud Haslam, Kathleen Hertzberg



Above: Nelson-Hall building;
Fred and Maud Haslam far right;
Calvin Nelson and Eve Schmitz-Hertzberg
Below: Nelson-Hall fireplace.
(All photos this page from circa 1953, courtesy
Eve Schmitz-Hertzberg.)

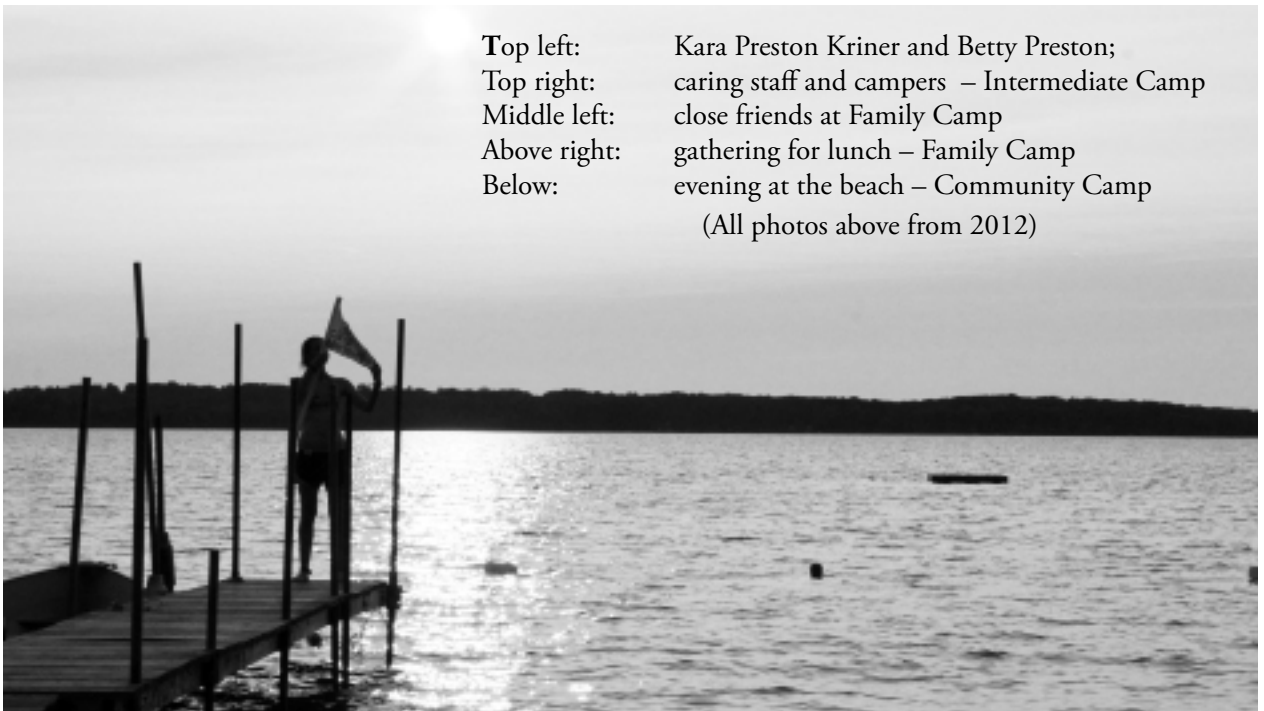


Below: Calvin and Stirling Nelson, unknown older
gentleman, and Evie and Kathleen Hertzberg on
First Hill, 1953





Top left: Kara Preston Kriner and Betty Preston;
 Top right: caring staff and campers – Intermediate Camp
 Middle left: close friends at Family Camp
 Above right: gathering for lunch – Family Camp
 Below: evening at the beach – Community Camp
 (All photos above from 2012)



Notice Board

At the Growing Edges of our Faith

2013 FGC Gathering

June 30 to July 6, 2013

University of Northern Colorado
Greeley, CO

**FGC Gathering
in Colorado!**

Week-long workshops

Spirit-led youth programs

Worship with Friends from across the continent

Financial aid (e.g. travel grants for western Canadians)

Find out more and request an Advance Program
at www.FGCgathering.org (or call 215-561-1700 x 2)



Education Outreach

The Education Outreach Committee (E&O) offers grants and loans, or supports referrals to other funds, for members and attenders of Canadian Yearly Meeting who wish to pursue educational opportunities. Examples include attendance at the Friends General Conference Gathering, Pendle Hill, and various Quaker-related conferences. In some cases the Pendle Hill scholarship has provided the space and supportive nurture for writing or artistic projects.

Details on CYM web page or phone or write the E&O Grants & Loans Officer, Brent Bowyer, RR2, Wingham, Ontario. N0G 2W0 (519-357-1883)

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history, religion:

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Letting your life speak...



*“I want my estate to live out my values;
that is why I have named CFSC in my Will.”*

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

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

416-920-5213 or cfsc@quakerservice.ca



**Canadian Friends Service Committee
(Quakers)**

A Committee of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada

Thoughts on Quaker Education

In November 2011, the ad-hoc sub-committee for Strategic Planning invited all committee members and associate members, present and past directors, and interested alumni, to a Meeting for a Concern for Planning. One of the questions asked in the invitation was “Do you want to see a Pendle Hill North?”

In the early 1980s, my grandparents, Kathleen and Fritz Hertzberg, along with others such as Max and Lorraine Skinner, held seminars at Camp NeeKauNis with such titles as *The Presence of Christ in My Life* and *Quakerism: A Faith to Live By Today*. A few years later, others made NeeKauNis a place of intentional spiritual learning.

In the late 1980s, upon returning from a semester at Pendle Hill (the Quaker retreat centre in Pennsylvania), Dick and Sarah Preston were inspired to see Camp NeeKauNis as the Pendle Hill of Canada. During one of their first years as directors of NeeKauNis they led a program that used the camp as a spiritual learning centre. A few seasoned Friends attended. Among them were Gerta von Bitter, and Rosemarie and Bill McMechan. During the week they read, contemplated, and shared their thoughts on *There Is A Spirit: The Nayler Sonnets*, by Kenneth Boulding.

There are undoubtedly other examples of how Camp NeeKauNis has been a place of spiritual education. I urge Friends from across Canada to remember that Camp NeeKauNis is there to serve us all, and the Camp Committee is always looking for Friends to lead short seminars or workshops between regular camp sessions.



Rebecca Ivanoff


Yonge Street Monthly Meeting

Benefits of Having Yearly Meeting at Camp NeeKauNis

- Most Canadian Friends within 200 km.
- Pearson is the closest airport and shuttles are available; travel time 1.5 hours.
- Our bed and board rates are competitive and reflect our collective ownership of Camp.
- We have a capacity for eighty people, but can expand through rentals.
- We have good level camping space for thirty to forty tents.
- There is alternate accommodation for those who wish to stay off-site within a fifteen minute drive
- Our kitchen with real cooks; real food.
- We accommodate all diets.
- Nelson-Hall, our kitchen/dining and lounge area, is available to twelve midnight (we don't lock the door!).
- Nelson-Hall accommodates eighty-seven
- We eat together.
- There are options for service to reduce costs, though there are no food co-op facilities.
- The guarded beach front with water craft is ours!
- Accessible by forest path or by road.
- We have indoor (and outdoor) plumbing; a new shower/toilet facility is being built.
- We have a beautiful Meeting House with a seating capacity for 131.
- There are several other small meeting spaces and the great outdoors in fine weather.
- There is no rental fee associated with existing camp meeting space or facility.
- There is parking for forty – sixty cars.
- We own this space; net income goes directly back to us.

Intrigued? There are extensive planning details and reports available on hosting Yearly Meeting at NeeKauNis (when held in Ontario). These have been presented to Yearly Meeting. Please contact the Camp Committee Clerk @ wilson_yangk@yahoo.ca if you wish to see them.

Quaker Book Service



The following titles have been added to our stock. For a complete listing of QBS books, see our 2012-2013 Quaker Book Service Catalogue available on the CYM website, www.quaker.ca/qbs.

Picturing Alyssa by Alison Lohans, Dundurn, Toronto, 2011

Alyssa, a teen-aged Quaker girl, tormented by a school bully and a teacher unsympathetic to her pacifist beliefs, studies a 75-year old family photo of her great-grandmother's Quaker farming family, makes magic visits to them, and writes her experiences for a school project. (212 pp. \$12.95)

Quaker Process for Friends on the Benches by Mathilda Navias, Friends Publishing Corporation, Philadelphia 2012

A comprehensive guide, and the most thorough survey to date of Quaker process and practice. Well researched and presented, with a glossary of Quaker terms and an extensive index. Every Meeting, Worship Group and library should have a copy. (323 pp. \$32.50)

Belonging and the Practise of Our Faith by Dana Mullen, Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture 2012. Canadian Quaker Learning Series No. 2, Canadian Yearly Meeting 2012.

The spiritual path of Quakers is a closely woven web of belief, belonging and behavior. Dana Mullen's work on our book of Canadian Faith and Practice and the words of past Friends have helped her to identify the spiritual strands in that web, gathered over almost fifty years of belonging to a Quaker Meeting. (24 pp. \$6.00)

Ordering Instructions:

Mail orders, enclosing payment by cheque or money order, should be sent to Quaker Book Service, Box 4652, Station E, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5H8. ***Phone orders cannot be accepted.***

For orders from North America Please add the following mailing costs:		For orders outside North America
Value of an order	Postage Add-on	We require an extra 20% to be added to the total cost of the order to cover the extra mailing charges
Up to \$9.95	\$2.50	
\$10 - \$19.95	\$7.50	
\$20 - \$34.95	\$10.00	
\$35.00 - \$59.95	\$11.50	
Over \$60	\$13.00	

[Notice from the Editor: Please send submissions for the Multifaith and Interfaith issue asap. Know any youth? Are you a youth? The Youth Issue is looking for your stories, photos, poems, thoughts and experiences. Please share with your Canadian Friends. Send Now!]

Historical Notes about Quaker Camp NeeKauNis

Camp NeeKauNis came about following a decision by Toronto Monthly Meeting in 1930. They wished to seek a suitable place for offering inner city children, who attended Toronto Monthly Meeting's Quaker programs, the experience of being at a summer camp. Fred Haslam and Albert Rogers were the two weighty Friends who were involved in the 1931 purchase of a ten-acre lot near Waubashene, on the shore of Sturgeon Bay.

In those days, Canadian Friends belonged to three separate Yearly Meetings. When Canadian Friends Service Committee was formed in 1931 to combine the service supported by the separate Yearly Meetings, one of its first responsibilities was for the camp. Almost at once Canadian Friends could see many uses for this newly acquired property.

In 1932 an extraordinarily sudden decision was made to construct a building about thirty feet by fifty-five feet, plus an adjoining sixteen-by-sixteen-foot kitchen, on the camp site. This was ready just in time for the Young Friends of Canada and Genesee Yearly Meetings' Conference, from July 29 to August 1 of that same year. (Reference minute 45 of Genesee and Canada Yearly Meetings held in joint and concurrent Session in 1932). This building, named Nelson-Hall [after Stirling Nelson and Eric Hall] in 1957, became, and remains the focal point of the camp. Three cabins for sleeping – later named White Feather, Amitie and Welcome – were built in 1934 and are still in use.

From 1946 to 1971 NeeKauNis was tenderly and effectively cared for by Stirling and Mildred Nelson. Under Stirling's leadership the facilities were expanded to allow for the provision of Quaker-oriented camping experiences for Friends, young and old. He sought talented program leaders and created that indefinable 'Spirit of NeeKauNis'. His remarkable talent and ability made a lasting impression on many Friends, Attenders and their acquaintances, over his twenty-five years of dedicated service. One particular notable achievement that Stirling spearheaded was the erection of the Meeting Centre in 1967-9. By putting on a drive from 1965 through 1970, he raised enough earmarked contributions to cover the costs (approximately \$11,000). Materials came from a historic building that was being dismantled in Midland. Except for laying the concrete floor and building the fireplace, most labour was provided voluntarily by f/Friends.

The success of NeeKauNis is the result of the hard work done by able volunteers. They are recruited to present appropriate programs and undertake supporting jobs. In 1971 when Stirling retired, I was asked, along with my late wife Bobi, to take over the responsibility of NeeKauNis. We had the support of many wonderful Friends.

A few of my lasting memories from 1971-86:

- The consistent work done as head cook by Bonnie Hall all summer long. (Stirling often reminded me, "The kitchen is very important").
- Eric Hall's impressive service. No job was too little or too much. From repairing the lawn mower to building cabins, he kept an eye on everything, helped volunteers learn to do work they could handle, and planned necessary projects. One of his achievements was directing the work of building the Meeting Centre in 1967-9. Fifteen years later with help from competent campers he removed decayed roofing boards on the Meeting Centre, and installed pre-finished metal roofing (\$3,656).
- The unstinting work done by a myriad of talented volunteers to present programs suited to various age groups.
- Quakerly morning messages after breakfast each day.
- Daily Meeting for Worship, usually in front of the Meeting Centre.
- The emotional goodbyes at the end of each camp period
- The sense that many campers take away with them lasting changes in outlook, fostered by interactions at NeeKauNis.

After members of the Camp NeeKauNis Committee (CNC) recruited Dick and Sarah Preston as business director and Clerk of the Committee in 1986, I continued to be involved in camp as a member of the *Physical Development and Finance Subcommittees*.

There has been, and continues to be, a stream of volunteers who deal with the many problems and duties that arise. Following are some of the demanding aspects of NeeKauNis that the Camp NeeKauNis Committee must face:

- **Drinking water:** In 1938, over 1,000 feet of galvanized pipe and a high pressure pump at the beach delivered highly chlorinated water from the bay. In 1982, a shallow well was dug half way up from the beach, and later an ultraviolet treatment unit was installed to provide purified water without chlorination. Now a deep (277 feet) drilled well (1990) with submersible pump, supplies ultraviolet-treated water to Nelson-Hall.
- **Sewage:** Prior to 1973 only well-placed outhouses served the camp. When indoor plumbing was put in some cabins, septic tanks were installed near Haslam, and later near Rogers. A five-hundred-foot tile bed was laid under the playing field.
- **Capital Investments:** The Samuel Rogers Memorial Trust continues to help NeeKauNis, by granting funds to support needed improvements to the facilities. The Trust's support began with the camp's inception in the 1930s. In addition, certain specific projects have been financed through donations and fundraisers organized by Ontario Young Friends and others.
- **Programming:** Each year the CNC decides on a roster of programs, recruits staff to put them into effect, and advertises widely.
- **Bookkeeping:** Stirling's scribbles served the purpose until 1971. After that, I worked with Dorothy Muma, Canadian Yearly Meeting's Treasurer, and others, to document transactions, using a bookkeeping method suggested by John Petrie, an accomplished accountant and member of Toronto Meeting. Since 1996, a computer program carefully tended by a qualified volunteer treasurer, Cathy Jolliffe, was put in place to oversee income and expenditures. Cathy reports to the Camp NeeKauNis Committee and sends a trial balance to the CYM Bookkeeper for integration into the CYM bookkeeping system. Camp directors must follow extensive rules detailed by Cathy.
- **Administration:** When Stirling Nelson directed the camp he was also chairman of the Camp Committee. He organized the camp programs and kept the financial records. During my period of service with NeeKauNis, duties were more broadly shared. In 2002 CYM made the

CNC responsible for all transactions.

These duties are implemented by the camp's Administrative Director and Treasurer as described in detailed job descriptions. They are carried out currently by Beverly Shepard (since 1997) and Cathy Jolliffe (since 1996) respectively.

This abbreviated account records some of the many responsibilities and time lines the CNC fulfills. It continues to amaze me that a group of volunteers cope with all of this year after year. Space permitted me to name only a few whom I was privileged to work with, and to hint at the demanding work required to maintain and improve the facilities.

Long live the CNC and NeeKauNis staff!

Jim Adamson,

Toronto Monthly Meeting

Dick's Memories

Camp NeeKauNis (NKN) is a place, and people, fashioning a brief community. It is good to have an opportunity to cobble together personal vignettes of a place that has given so very many people such good experiences over the decades. Camp and I share our age in common. Here are a few of my memories:

One of our newest cabins – McNicol – is wheelchair accessible for a good reason. Margaret McNicol was a camp director before my time at camp. After her retirement she talked with her grown children about her will. They told her that they were financially secure enough and she should do something with her legacy that pleased her personal sense of value. She donated funds for a new cabin at Camp, on the condition (anathema to Friends!!!) that it be wheelchair accessible. The NKN Committee worried over this more than good sense would have suggested, but it was done. We later learned that Margaret's sister would have come to camp with her but for the fact that she depended on her wheelchair.

Another Margaret McNicol story tells how Bobbie Adamson became a camp director. Bobbie brought her children to drop them off for a week, and Margaret, director of that particular camp, said that she was unexpectedly short-staffed and Bobbie would have to help out if she wanted her children to stay. Bobbie agreed and Margaret told her there was an organizational



meeting right away on the porch of Haslam Cabin. Margaret started off by telling them that she wanted to know from each in turn what their plan for the children's activities was for the week. She started by asking Bobbie. On the spot, Bobbie looked up at the

place where the walls met the ceiling, and there she saw the Ten Commandments. "We are going to talk about the Ten Commandments, one each day." Bobbie was hooked for life. She was clerk of the NKN Committee for many years, and Jim was the Administrative Director.

Margaret also had a masterly strategy for teens who stayed out past bedtime. She was once just such a teen. As she was sneaking back to her cabin, the director sat unobserved on a picnic table. "Go on to bed. We will deal with this in the morning", was all that was said. It was hard to get to sleep after this gentle 'bust'! This strategy has been passed on to generations of directors.

Many years later, Rick – a Preston kid – was being dropped off for a week at Camp, when the director told Sarah – his mother – that the cook had cancelled at the last minute. Sarah would have to stay and cook if she wanted her kid at Camp. She agreed on the condition that Jenn (not old enough) could stay with her. I drove back to Hamilton to get their clothes and basics. Sarah became hooked for life and was for many years clerk of the NKN Committee (relieving Bobbie), and I became administrator (relieving Jim). Jenn became a camp director after her mom died, and is now recording clerk. Betty and I co-directed the Carry on Discovering Camp (COD) for several years, and we go there now just as campers.

All camp folks could share their stories and anecdotes, and we could build up our "peoples' history". How about it?

*Dick Preston
Hamilton Monthly Meeting*

Around the Family Around

Montreal Monthly Meeting thanks Dana Mullen for her driving force behind the new *Canadian Faith and Practice*. This book helps us come to Meeting with our hearts and minds more prepared.

On November 25 we held a potluck followed by discernment of quotes from the topics: *Ministry* and *Living the Spiritual Community*.

Claire Adamson demonstrated against the Gun Show held in Longueuil, Quebec, and during an 1812 War commemoration held in Montreal's Old Port. She held a sign: *Quakers for Peace. Diplomacy is better than killing your neighbours*. Claire was not turned away and was happy to find everyone agreed.

Victoria Friends Meeting welcomed into membership Lynne Reeve who transferred from Kingston Area Meeting in the UK; Elizabeth Azmier-Stewart who has been associated with this Meeting for many years; and Othmar Arnold, who resides in Whitehorse, YT and frequents Victoria.

We are considering plans to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the Meeting House, which opened in May 1913 and has been in continuous use as a place of Quaker worship.

There is joint planning with the North Jubilee Neighbourhood Association on the use of our back lot as a community park, tentatively named "Friends Park".

Following the informal theme of CYM 2012 "Belonging", there is an in depth exploration within the Meeting community of how to foster this sense of belonging among attenders and members. Meetings for Business of **Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting** continue to be held in one of three locations - Victoria, Duncan, or Nanaimo - every other month, with local worship groups encouraged to use the intervening month for their own business. The Meeting is feeling a need to re-visit the structure which we have been using since 2004, as people and conditions change.

Annapolis Valley: Friend Paula Magwood is sojourning in Florida for the winter, and we miss her and look forward to her return in April.

An Atlantic-wide committee clerked by Halifax Friend, Maida Follini, is actively planning Atlantic Friends Gathering 2013, which will be at Camp Geddie near Merigomish on the Northumberland Strait, May 17 to 20. Watch for registration on the

Around the Family Around the Family Around the Family

Atlantic Friends website in March. This is as close to Prince Edward Island as you can get without actually being there, so a good preview for CYM 2015.

For our first Meeting of 2013 we enjoyed worship-sharing on the topic *Being Present in our Lives*, followed by a potluck at the Home of Peggy Hope-Simpson.

Toronto Monthly Meeting held a Memorial for stalwart Friend, Dorothy Janes, on July 28. Dorothy died on April 16. Shortly before, when asked about impending death, defiant-to-the-end, Dorothy wisecracked, "Death? Bring it on!"

Our Friend Spencer Brennan succumbed to A.L.S. disease on August 23. His death felt somehow softened by our memories of the joyous and intimate "Living Memorial" that he and his loving spouse Larry Tayler, so elegantly organized at Friends House on June 2.

On June 28 our eighty-nine-year-old Friend, Oswald U. Murray, now living in Jamaica, launched his memoir *The Third Person - A Glorious Life in the Spirit*, detailing his extraordinary experience in bereavement following the death of his beloved wife Joan.

In September, Bette Logan and Jo Vellacott, with the support of several other Toronto Friends, began facilitating an eight week course on *Quakerism* at Ryerson University's LIFE Institute. The course, immediately well-received, consisted of weekly sessions of almost two hours, attracting eighteen curious and enthusiastic senior students.

Halifax Monthly Meeting: On November 13, 2012, Betty Peterson received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. The award was presented by Nova Scotia's Lieutenant Governor, J.J. Grant, at Government House. The impressive ceremony included addresses by the Lt. Governor, and by Megan Leslie, M.P. for Halifax.

It was stated that Betty received her medal "for her decades of activist work for many issues and causes including peace, anti-nuclear, anti-poverty and women's rights, all with an abiding concern for the dignity and security of others".

Betty's civil rights work started in the United States where she participated in sit-ins at segregated lunch counters in the South. Later, in Canada, Betty advocated for the rights of the First Nations peoples to their land and communities. She camped out on the

NATO air strips in Labrador during NATO's flight training, where the low-flying planes were disrupting the life of the Innu people, and scaring away the game. In Alberta, where oil exploration was destroying the Lubicon Cree's traditional way of life, Betty helped blockade the roads, sleeping in tents at night until she and the other protesters were arrested and taken to jail.



Betty (above) was an organizer for the Voice of Women for Peace, which in 1982 brought women from all over the world to New York City, to join a huge march of a million people and deliver petitions for peace and disarmament to the United Nations. She was an active member of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, working for nuclear disarmament. In 1983 she participated with women from all over the world in a large peace march at the NATO headquarters in Brussels.

When the Group of Seven powerful nations held their economic summit in Halifax in 1995 Betty and her fellow activists created the *People's Summit* to showcase the need to overcome poverty, address social injustice, and protect the environment. More recently Betty, with other Quakers and community activists, rallied in support of a low-income, mixed race community in Halifax, whose social agencies, day care, and community kitchen were being taken away. The public outcry helped in having this decision overturned.

A long-time member of Halifax Friends Meeting and Canadian Yearly Meeting, Betty, at age ninety-five, has been a shining example for Friends in Nova Scotia, and for activists in the wider community.

Historical Notes:

Looking for a Place to Have a Quaker Summer Camp

At Camp NeeKauNis, the name *Haslam* is not only associated with the beautiful little cabin with the Quaker library, but also with the founding of camp itself. Fred Haslam was known for his integrity, honesty, and unselfish service. Born in England, Fred Haslam found Quaker faith through a fellow conscientious objector he met in prison during the First World War. He came to Canada in 1921 and became very involved in Toronto Monthly Meeting, the Boys' Club, Camp NeeKauNis, and the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC). It was through his work at CFSC and NeeKauNis that he contributed to the unification of the three Yearly Meetings in Canada in 1955. In his book *A Record of Experience with Canadian Friends (Quakers) and the Canadian Ecumenical Movement, 1921-1967*, he describes the beginnings of Camp NeeKauNis.

"[Albert Rogers] was interested too, in these neighbourhood boys and thought it would be a good thing to arrange for them to have a summer holiday away from the city. He asked Raymond Booth and me to try and find a suitable camp site, offering to pay for the land. We looked at a number of places not far from Toronto, since transportation would be one of the major problems, and finally found a ten acre property near Waubauskene on Sturgeon Bay, an inlet from Georgian Bay about ninety miles from the city. Albert Rogers came down from his summer cottage to see it. He anchored his boat in the bay and I rowed him slowly to the beach, so that he could test the bed of the lake for quicksand. We found none.

He then noted that the railway passed through the property near the shore. He did not like that, but was re-assured when he realized that the single track was straight at the camp site, and for a considerable distance on either side, and that there would be warning whistles as trains came round the bends of the bay shore from both directions. It was a branch line and trains were not frequent. The passenger service has since been discontinued.

It is appropriate to describe something of the physical layout of the site; the story of its development and its later use, belongs in the wider Yearly Meeting work which will be described in due course. The property has a level area, cleared of timber, near the highway. This area is large enough for field games. Beyond this level section, there is a slight incline to the high point of land, which commands an extensive and beautiful view over miles of the coast line of Georgian Bay. This...should be the building area. Descending from this point towards the bay shore, one passes through a beautiful wood with moss-covered boulders which have lain there for countless ages. This is a place where trilliums abound in the springtime, and where autumn's rich colours precede the inevitable winter snow. The beach is partly sandy and the rest is covered with rocks and stones of many geological formations. After a few days thought, Albert Rogers felt that it would be a suitable location, and I was asked to proceed with the purchase. It was 1930, and this was one of the last services [of] Albert Rogers to the Society of Friends in Canada" (Haslam 1968:17)."



Report on Refugee Weekend 2012: *by Ken and Rae Mavor*

Fellowship, Healing and Hopefulness

On Labour Day weekend, Camp NeeKauNis hosted its annual Refugee Weekend. This brief retreat provides an opportunity for both recent and former refugees to come together in a secure and supportive Quaker environment. The driving force and chief organizer of everything from transportation to programming was Eusebio Garcia, from the Quaker Refugee Committee of Toronto Monthly Meeting.

There were eighty-six campers in total with ages ranging from one to seventy-one. Some had been in Canada less than two months while others had lived here for several years. Countries of origin were: Afghanistan, Colombia, El Salvador, Eritrea, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Paraguay, Peru, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, and Turkey.

Most of the newcomers, young single and cut off by distance from their families felt isolated by culture, language, religion and economics. Many are residents of Sojourn House, a transition home for new refugees. For most, the weekend retreat at NeeKauNis was the first holiday they have ever experienced. Just months ago, the chance to enjoy NeeKauNis would have been an unimaginable luxury. Few had seen any part of the Canadian landscape outside of downtown Toronto.

The majority of the older refugees, many of them now well established, were families from Central and South America. More experienced with the transition to Canada, they offered both example and advice to the younger campers. The group came together in a spirit of cooperation that was nothing short of inspiring. Somehow, the shared experience of being a refugee overcame every other difference.

When discussing what they liked most about Canada, a young man from Somalia told us that this was the first time in his life that he had gone to bed unafraid. A young Afghan girl said that when people ask her where she's from she now tells them (after less than a year here) that she's Canadian because this is the first place she was ever made to feel welcome. At one point, the same girl was chatting with us in Nelson-Hall rather than going to the evening's entertainment. She explained that she had no experience with music

and it still made her feel a little awkward. Two young women of about her age – one Kenyan, the other Somali – came looking for her to ensure that she was safe. To us, the incident suggested a great deal about their backgrounds – violence, institutional sexism, poverty – and a great deal about their character. The most profound impression came after her new friends went back to the music, when she remarked shyly that this was the first time in her life that anyone had been concerned for her safety.

Many campers went out of their way to express their gratitude for the use of the facility. Eusebio's efforts on behalf of the Refugee Committee are evidence of a passion and commitment that provide a model for all Friends. Refugee Weekend is a reminder that part of NeeKauNis' original mandate was to be a safe holiday-haven for impoverished children. Becoming part of this remarkable community was a privilege and a profound, unforgettable experience. We look forward to being invited back.

Ken and Rae Mavor

Kitchener Area Monthly Meeting



[Sign at entrance to Camp NeeKauNis]

Report: *by Kris Wilson-Yang and George Ivanoff*

Planning For The Future – Camp’s Strategic Planning Process:

This past year, 2012, we commemorated the eightieth anniversary of Camp NeeKauNis as a Quaker camp. In the minds of F/friends, Camp NeeKauNis is a place where long term friendships are made and renewed with each camp season. Camp has a history of service and of being a place of renewal and healing both spiritually and physically. It has brought the world to our fingertips: land, water, air, and Friends in community.

For the last decade there has been an increasing sense that we must change. We have seen diminished enrolment, creeping decrepitude in our structures, and struggles with the idea of service. We have felt a loss of sanctuary and sacredness. Older Friends felt the burden of leaving insurmountable problems for the future, and Young Friends felt a sense of powerlessness and frustration. Connections were being lost and camp was not in the consciousness of many Friends within Canadian Yearly Meeting.

We began a journey in 2001 with a Vision workshop. This was the first step in a renewal. Visioning workshops held in 2005 and 2007 by the Camp Committee continued this process, and provided a foundation for the new directions we report here. The ad hoc subcommittee on holding Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) at NeeKauNis started as a personal concern of two Friends and was formalized at the May 2010 Camp Committee Meeting. Throughout 2010 we re-opened substantive communications with our natural constituency: the members and attenders of Canadian Yearly Meeting. The use of camp for Friends’ gatherings is an important way to increase visibility and ensure continuation. In November 2011 it was suggested, by the Program Committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting, that 2015 was the earliest possible date for holding Canadian Yearly Meeting in session at camp. Unfortunately we were informed in November 2012 that another site had been chosen in PEI for 2015. Thus we must revise our expectations of hosting CYM session at NeeKauNis to 2017 at the earliest.

At the 2011 spring Camp Committee Meeting, an ad hoc strategic planning subcommittee was approved. During Community Camp 2011, we invited Steve Hemming, the former director of Camp Wanakita – a Hamilton YMCA camp – for a preliminary consultation. A report of this day went to Committee in October 2011. It was decided to organize two one-

day strategic planning workshops with the status of a called Meeting for a Concern.

The first session was held on 26 November 2011 at the Hamilton Meeting House. Many documents were distributed in advance, and current and former committee members, as well as anyone else willing and able, were encouraged to come. These documents included our former vision documents, and Steve Hemming’s report to us from his visit to camp in July. It also included written comments of many Friends, documents from the ad hoc subcommittee on holding CYM at NeeKauNis, and a thoughtful proposal developed by a concerned Young Adult Friend, Ethan Chiddicks. This workshop was promoted throughout Canadian Yearly Meeting by correspondence to the Monthly Meetings. Twenty-three people attended. There were seven regrets.

At the January 2012 Camp NeeKauNis Committee meeting there was a general agreement that the second follow-up workshop would benefit from a professional facilitator, such as Steve Hemming. It was suggested that we also consider using a Quaker facilitator. We were able to contact Pam Leland, of the Leland Leadership Group (a Limited Liability Company) as recommended by two concerned Young Adult Friends. Leland has specific experience with Friends’ governance and business practice. She graciously provided a series of comments which have been preserved in our records. An immediate need, Leland identified, was to agree on a vision statement, so as to begin any redevelopment on a common footing. There was discussion about leadership, recruitment, and Spirit-lead decision making. She was unavailable for the February workshop but expressed a willingness to assist us in the future.

In advance of the February workshop, Rebecca Ivanoff prepared a source document, *A Review of Quaker Camp Best Practices*. It compared in detail the structure and function of other Quaker camps in the US and similar camps in Ontario. Steve Hemming joined us as a facilitator on 25 February 2012. There were fifteen people in attendance and ten regrets. We reviewed and focussed our areas of concern, and worked in each one to develop strategic goals that follow the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable; Relevant, and Time-framed) guidelines.

Both sessions were well attended and produced directions that allowed us to proceed promptly with many new initiatives and to regenerate our subcommittees. We were able to finalize our Mission and Vision statements. We have re-stated our *Guiding Principles* and reviewed the *Camp Mandate* provided in *Organization and Procedure*. We identified five areas urgently needing renewal: **Governance, Physical Development, Programming, Publicity and Finance**, along with preliminary time lines for the attainment of our goals.

There was immediate change. Following the submission of a funding proposal to the Trustees of Canadian Yearly Meeting, we received re-affirmation of Camp NeeKauNis' place within Canadian Yearly Meeting, as well as funding for critical infrastructure repair from CYM and the Samuel Rogers Memorial Trust. We were motivated to rebuild all our systems and we have increased Friends' interest in camp.

Our ministry through Camp NeeKauNis is a heavy responsibility. We accept our duty to maintain the property as wise stewards, and to run the camp as befits Friends' testimonies to integrity in business. We also recognize camp's central position in the spiritual lives of many who have shared this space with us. Although camp cannot be all things to all people, it is our intention that we run Camp NeeKauNis with its Vision, Mission, and Mandate in mind when making decisions and taking action.

This plan will be reviewed annually, and in its entirety every three years. We will chart our progress by assembling relevant minutes that record implementation of this plan. We will examine both our successes and our failures, to inform our future. All supporting documentation is available from the Clerk, and will be placed in the Society's Archives.

This process has given us a sense of direction and the confidence that we can renew camp's place in our Religious Society, so that it can better accommodate our physical needs, while its setting and programs provide the spiritual renewal we all seek.

*Kris Wilson-Yang, Hamilton Monthly Meeting
Sojourning with Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

*George Ivanoff
Yonge Street Meeting*

Perspective of a CYM Trustee

Camp NeeKauNis is owned by Canadian Yearly Meeting and is therefore a concern of the CYM Trustees. However, active stewardship of this property is a responsibility delegated by CYM to the Camp NeeKauNis Committee. In recent years there have been significant investments of time, talent and funds in maintaining and developing the camp property. The Camp NeeKauNis Committee and its many volunteers have a long term plan and are making impressive improvements to the Camp property and buildings.



If you last visited Camp more than ten years ago, come again and see how buildings have been refreshed and have been made more comfortable and attractive. It's worth the drive to Waubushene!

*Barbara Horvath
Clerk, CYM Trustees*

Mission Statement

We are an intergenerational Quaker camp. We bring people together to build an intentional community through work and play, in a safe, inclusive, natural environment. We nurture the spiritual lives in our community through the Quaker Testimonies of integrity, peace, simplicity, equality, justice, and unity with creation.

Vision Statement

NeeKauNis will be a welcoming, inclusive camp with creative programming that is engaging and reflects Quaker values. We will foster a vibrant community where we come together in an atmosphere of spiritual refreshment. We will be a sustainable camp, accessible to all who wish to come, in a natural setting with facilities that are clean, safe and environmentally sound. We offer programs for all ages with a focus on youth and families.

Last Words: *Interview with Ravi Joshi*

In thinking about the role Camp NeeKauNis has played in the lives of Friends, especially during their youth, I was led to speak to one Friend for whom Camp was the catalyst for him becoming Quaker. Ravi Joshi is a twenty-seven-year-old member of Toronto Monthly Meeting. He lives in Toronto where he works as an assistant to a City Councillor. He has worked for many years as a political activist and has attended Camp NeeKauNis since 1995. Over the years he was instrumental in the development of many new projects at Camp. In early December 2012, I had the pleasure of interviewing Ravi about his experiences at NeeKauNis.

Rebecca Ivanoff, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting

How did you begin coming to Camp NeeKauNis?

Ravi: I grew up going to my parent's cottage where all my siblings had friends their own age on the lake. I didn't like going because I was actually removed from my friends in the city. Maureen Balcombe* was a very good friend of my mother's from teaching. Maureen suggested that I should come to Camp NeeKauNis. Having never been a part of the Society of Friends, my mom asked about the whole Quaker thing, wondering if I would enjoy it or if it would be too pushy. Maureen explained about Meeting for Worship and that the Quaker faith was not in your face. In the end I went, to Junior Camp in 1995. That was my first interaction with the Society of Friends.

How did you become a part of the Religious Society of Friends?

Ravi: In 1997, my fellow camper and friend, Daphne Hemily, said they needed people to be part of the Christmas play at Toronto Monthly Meeting. You could say, I got a casting call from a fellow camper. I went a few consecutive times. I felt comfortable with Quaker Meeting because of my time at camp. So after the Christmas play was completed I just kept going. I was not really involved in youth programming but chose to stay in Meeting for Worship. People like

*Maureen and Gerry Balcombe were long-time campers and adult staff at kids' camps. They led workshops, organized fantastic soccer games, and Gerry drew and painted many aspects of camp. You can see his paintings hanging on several walls at Camp.

Declan Hill, Morgan Phillips, and Sue Husolo would invite me to lunch and to hang out after Meeting on Sundays. I was very appreciative of this crew of thirty to forty-year-olds who were happy to spend time with me, challenge me intellectually, and just have fun together. I continued going to Meeting almost every week until I moved away to University seven years later. After I moved I wrote a letter to Toronto Meeting and went through the clearness process to become an official member of the Society of Friends.

In what ways did you become involved with the Camp community over the years?

Ravi: After Junior Camp, I kept coming back the next year and the next and the next, as I really enjoyed it. In 2000 I was asked to be program staff for Intermediate Camp. That is when I started getting really involved, and made the switch from being camper to staff.

Declan, from Toronto Meeting, got me involved in the Quaker Bolivia trip. When the summer Bolivia trip was cancelled, I got into the leadership program at Camp Couchiching where my sister had been going. This whole program was really interesting; it really influenced me, and I did very well at the leadership work. When I was asked to return to Couchiching, I said 'no thanks', as I wanted to go back to NeeKauNis.

I wrote a letter to the Camp NeeKauNis Committee saying that there was a gap at Camp where amazing leadership programming could be happening. Ian Graham (Hamilton Meeting) and Jane West (Pelham Meeting) picked up that letter and we became a committee. As a committee we formed the youth leadership program at NeeKauNis that we called *Friends Youth Discovery Experience* (FYDE). It ran from 2003 to 2005. We worked on that for three years, two of these years we met every other day via phone. Ultimately the program could not be sustained with such a small group of organizers, and we decided we would not continue after 2005.

I was willing to put in all this personal time because it was my project and something I believed in strongly. It took so much work and sacrifice from all three of us over the years. Even as a sixteen-year-old I could tell that teen staff were not being challenged enough to be involved with camp. There was an absence of a role for engaged youth to play. Being a teen staff member was singularly the most important part of life for many within my generation of NeeKauNis youth, but we could have gained much more and had even more of a role in our later teens and twenties.

Even though there is an entire body of people, knowledge and interest in the camp community, we tend not to show an interest as a group in seeing new ideas through. At a committee or director level there was a culture that believed that change could not happen. For the most part, there was an attitude that all great ideas were welcome but if you suggested it then you had to carry it out on your own (which isn't very welcoming after all). This attitude does not build a strong organization or community.

What drew you to become involved with Camp?

Ravi: Camp was a place where I wasn't an outsider. I was fully accepted for who I was. Camp makes an awkward experience of being a teen into something great. It was the most defining part of my childhood. You can't go through that experience and not want to give back, especially when you hear that camp needs help.

gifts. We need to entrust other people to do really good work, and support them. I know of some people who have stepped back from camp and have started to begrudge what others are doing at camp, but this is not Quakerly. If I can't contribute to camp it is not because I am upset, but that I know I can't give my full effort at this time, and that I can support and trust those who are doing it.

Are there any other things you would like to tell me about your experience at NeeKauNis?

Ravi: I remember when the Clerk and some committee members sat down and worked on redoing the camp's marketing and branding. We were trying to communicate why we came to Camp NeeKauNis and why we didn't go to other camps. We don't have climbing walls or archery like other camps have, so why are people so in love with Camp NeeKauNis? Ethan Chiddicks said the slogan should be *Find yourself at*

“Camp was the most defining part of my childhood”

Are there any lessons or values that you learned at NeeKauNis that you carry with you?

Ravi: Camp is one of the places in the Quaker world that really has a focus on finding the Light within people. You come as an awkward, geeky kid, and someone at camp decides you are a poet, a funny person, a great soccer player, or someone simply treats you the way you ought to be treated. I felt that I was allowed to be myself and I came out of my shell. I came to understand that you need to find the Light in other people. Now when I work with other people I do this all the time and I encourage others to do this. It is really significant how much [looking for the Light in others] has played a role in my life. I think this spiritual belief is really why I am a Quaker and I learned this almost exclusively at camp.

Why have you currently chosen not to be as involved in camp as you have been in the past?

Ravi: I serve with a lot of passion and I often take on too much. I have learned when to be able to say 'no' to things, and make certain undertakings a priority to the exclusion of other things. I have been pulled away by my job, but I also believe that the current camp committee members are doing a great job. I believe that it is not only important to see the Light in other people but to recognize also that Light as a gift and to foster and support it by allowing people to use their



Camp NeeKauNis. We adopted it almost immediately. Camp is a place where I've found myself, both physically and spiritually, again and again. It is both a call to action and a statement of who one is.

I still have many remaining questions, such as why is there not a full-time administrative staff? Why isn't social justice work more a part of our core programming? Why can't we have more pastoral care at camp to nurture and council Friends spiritually? Why can't we have a substantially larger budget so we can actually sustain and grow camp? These ideas are not perversions of the original camp spirit, but extensions of it. The founding of NeeKauNis was innately ambitious, and when we acknowledge that ambition we can move forward more quickly while still holding onto our values.

*Ravi Joshi
Toronto Monthly Meeting*

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