

The Canadian Friend

Vol. 102, No. 1 \$5.60

MARCH 2006

Hallowing our Daily Lives



- Grammy, my greatest mentor •
- Some words of help from Sunderland P. Gardner •
- Elbow grease with love: Ugandan work camp •
- Our debt to imagination •

The Canadian Friend

March 2006
Volume 102, Number 1

From the editor's desk ...

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

• Articles, Poetry, Photos and Drawings

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

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Argenta, BC V0G 1B0

(Cheques are payable to *The Canadian Friend*.)

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• Publications Mail Registration No. 09887



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

The cover is printed on 60%, and the pages on 30%, post-consumer recycled paper.

As I contemplated this theme of *Hallowing our daily lives*, I felt delighted to receive Amy-Jean Polster's beautiful portrait of her *Grammy*. Geographically dispersed and otherwise diverse contributions in this issue offer a variety of views on how we and others hallow our daily lives. Kyle Jolliffe once again adds richness to the readings, this time with a very moving excerpt from Sunderland P. Gardner's writing.

In many ways, this is a period of transition for all of us in Canada: winter is showing signs of slowly transitioning into spring, and our recent election results have us all transitioning into a new era of government. Thinking deeply about our callings and hallowing our daily lives, I have also entered a period of transition on the personal level.

It is with tender feelings that I have decided to resign as editor of *The Canadian Friend*. It's partly my coming of age as an official *senior citizen* this summer, and partly in answer to a promise I made myself long ago. When I was young, I promised myself that when I was old (at that time, my definition of *old* was aged 40, so you know I was really young), I would devote myself to art work for the rest of my life. Even as a child, art work felt like sacred activity, although I would not have been able to articulate that. My whole life long, art is what I have done when I need to get centred, though I have only recently been able to articulate that, too. Only since a solo art exhibit at the end of my second year at Pendle Hill did I begin to consider that art might be serious, important, possibly even my true calling. Increasingly now, it asks for more time in my life. Increasingly, I consider it is indeed my calling.

Contemplating the many ways in which people hallow their daily lives, I often think of those who do so by working on behalf of people who have gone missing — the hundreds of Aboriginals, especially women, here in Canada; people in many countries all around the globe; and of course, the four Christian Peacemaker Team workers who are still missing in Iraq as I write these words. I pray for a time of peace, when as the popular peace song (based on Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3) says: *Everyone 'neath their vine and fig tree shall live in peace and unafraid ... and into ploughshares beat their swords; nations shall learn war no more.*

June-Etta Chenard

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The place God calls you is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.
— Frederick Beuchner

The Canadian Friend can be viewed online at: <http://www.quaker.ca/cfriend/cfriend.html>.

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COVER PHOTO of Thomas Louws
was taken in 2005 by Martha
Laing, a member of Yarmouth
Monthly Meeting

INSERT: Canadian Yearly Meeting
registration information

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the position of

EDITOR OF *THE CANADIAN FRIEND*

Application deadline:
1 June 2006

Starting date:
15 October 2006

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Grammy, *my greatest mentor*

By Amy-Jean Polster

There are many people one might admire throughout their life. I try to have a variety of mentors in my life but the person I admire the most is Grammy, my grandmother. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "Be the change you want to see in the world." The person I know who has lived her life according to these words is my grandmother. She is my greatest mentor because she lives an exemplary life and is the person I strive to become.

My grandmother grew up in Pennsylvania and was born into a Baptist family, and later became an Anglican. During the Second World War my grandmother grew to realise that she believed all war was wrong. At the University of Philadelphia she was one of the few women to graduate with a Bachelor of Mathematics and Sciences. By her twenty-first birthday, she married. And soon together, my grandparents became Quakers, a religion they felt better expressed their ideals. My grandmother is a great supporter of equality and was the President of the Women's League for Peace and Freedom movement in the U.S. She was involved

in Martin Luther Kings' walk for freedom in Alabama that had thousands

of participants. It was dangerous at that time to be a white woman supporting black equality in the U.S. and she was the victim of death threats and abuse but she never let this deter her.

My grandmother's work did not end with equality. With the start of the Vietnam war she continued her call for peace. This work was especially difficult for my grandmother's children who were picked on relentlessly for being unpatriotic and communist lovers because of my grandmother's controversial views. The strain was so great on pacifist children during that era that many did not know what to do. As a result my father's best friend killed himself at age 13. With their sons approaching draft age, and the difficulties in the States, my grandparents decided to move to Canada.

They moved to Argenta, a small community in the interior of BC, to live simply. Here they built their house and became teachers at the local Quaker school. Later, my grandfather passed away after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. My grandmother has continued her

work for peace and equality, setting an example for me and her other grandchildren. She is a leader and example, and through many times of conflict her patient, diplomatic and loving attitude has served as guidance for everyone.

My grandmother is my greatest mentor and influence and I strive to live my life as she has. Her love and support are an integral part of who I have become. In the words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, "The basic sources of happiness are a good heart, compassion, and love. If we have these mental attitudes, even if we are surrounded by hostility, we feel little disturbance. On the other hand, if we lack compassion and our mental state is filled with anger or hatred we will not have peace." Like all of us my grandmother is not perfect; however, I truly believe she is one of few who have managed to achieve this of which the Dalai Lama speaks. She is a model of a good heart, compassion and love, and for this she is my greatest mentor. 🐾

NOTE: THIS WAS WRITTEN FOR THE PREMIER'S AWARD SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION, WHICH I WAS AWARDED IN SEPTEMBER 2004 BY GORDON CAMPBELL. I GUESS THEY WERE AS IMPRESSED WITH MY MENTOR AS I AM.

Amy-Jean Polster is a Young Friend of Duncan Worship Group, Victoria Monthly Meeting.

Wangari Maathai and Terry Tempest Williams: The connection between peace and environment through women's eyes

By Elaine Caldwell Emmi

"Throughout Africa, women are the primary caretakers, holding significant responsibility for tilling the land and feeding their families. As a result, they are often the first to become aware of environmental damage as resources become scarce and incapable of sustaining their families.

"I came to understand that when the environment is destroyed, plundered or mismanaged, we undermine our quality of life and that of future generations.

"Although initially the Green Belt Movement's tree planting activities did not address issues of democracy and peace, it soon became clear that responsible governance of the environment was impossible without democratic space.

"Today we are faced with a challenge that calls for a shift in our thinking, so that humanity stops threatening its life-support system. We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds and in the process heal our own – indeed, to embrace the whole creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder. This will happen if we see the need to revive our sense of belonging to a larger family of life, with which we have shared our evolutionary process."

(excerpts from Wangari Maathai's Nobel acceptance speech, City Hall, Oslo, Norway, 10 December 2004)

For too long, many advocacy groups have worked on unique issues without looking at the whole. They espouse a goal and work toward that, exclusive of others who might be advocating similar ideas. Through her years of work with the Green Belt Movement, Wangari Maathai had realised that she had to look at life in a holistic way – democracy with peace and sustainable living. She learned that wars are usually over national resources; and that these resources need to be managed more reasonably and equitably to

prevent war. With greater participation and democracy, harmony and balance can be achieved. Also, through participation people become empowered and gain self-confidence and identity.

Women have often had trouble with identity, self-confidence and empowerment. Wangari points out that this is especially a problem in more traditional developing and under-developed nations. In attempting to overcome a history of having little power, women

have not only improved their country through tree planting but improved themselves. Through this process, women are able to participate more fully in the care and well-being of their country. They have done something for themselves and also for their future

generations. This is a very sustainable act.

Terry Tempest Williams is also a planter; she is a planter of ideas. Many years ago I went to a lecture she gave for Thanksgiving. It was an earthshaking moment for me and my world was never the same after that. She came dressed in black, in mourning, for what the native peoples of America lost when the first settlers arrived. She mourned for their lost way of life and territory and their loss of hope. In all the years of celebrating Thanksgiving, I really hadn't given a serious thought to the losses of the native peoples. A 'tree' (an idea) had been planted! I looked at history in a different light – whose history, whose success?

In her book entitled *The Open Space of Democracy* (Orion Society, 2004), Terry Tempest Williams plants more ideas (trees) such as "love can lead to social change (p. 49)." or "the power of nature is the power of a life in association. Nothing stands alone (p. 58)." "We are

In all the years of celebrating Thanksgiving, I really hadn't given a serious thought to the losses of the native peoples. A 'tree' (an idea) had been planted!

learning that a community engaged is a community empowered. If we listen to the land, we will know what to do (p. 75).” “Our future is guaranteed only by the degree of our personal involvement and commitment to an inclusive justice (p. 85).”

Terry Tempest Williams asks us, “Are we ready for the next evolutionary leap – to recognize the restoration of democracy as the restoration of liberty and justice for all species, not just our own (p. 88)?” I love this question as it gives me hope. The idea that democracy and sustainable living involves all of the entities living on this planet is a thought I have been nurturing for a long time. And with it, the sense that peace is not possible without justice ... and that means environmental as well as social justice.

I recently read an article entitled “We’re all Environmentalists Now” by Mark Schmitt. ([HTTP://WWW.PROSPECT.ORG/WEB/PAGE.WV?SECTION=ROOT&NAME=VIEWPRINT&ARTICLEID=10311](http://www.prospect.org/web/page.wv?section=root&name=viewprint&articleid=10311)).

He helps carry on the ideas of Terry and Wangari, that in order to go forward in advocacy we need to think holistically and work together. Peace cannot be a separate advocacy from the environment. It all works together and it only works when we are together.

Wangari Maathai and Terry Tempest Williams are two women who have stepped into a new world and are asking all of us to join them. They have listened to the land and they know what to do; do we? 🐾

Elaine Caldwell Emmi is a member of Salt Lake Monthly Meeting, of Intermountain Yearly Meeting.

Some words of help from Sunderland P. Gardner

By Kyle Jolliffe

Canadian Friends are familiar with the name Sunderland P. Gardner. The annual special lecture at Canadian Yearly Meeting is named after him in recognition of the tireless service of this beloved Friends’ minister who lived from 1801 to 1893. It is virtually forgotten that in 1895 Genesee Yearly Meeting, one of the three yearly meetings which reunited in 1955 to form Canadian Yearly Meeting, published the *Memoirs of the life and religious labors of Sunderland P. Gardner* (Philadelphia: Friends Book Association, 1895). At 687 pages, it is certainly a lengthy book, composed of his autobiography, journal, letters, sermons and addresses.

Of all the material in this book, what stands out for me as worth sharing today is a letter he wrote in 1882 to a man grieving the loss of his family. While some of the theological

language in this letter is dated and foreign to our age, it merits reading for the light it shines on a caring and deeply sympathetic Friend, and the deep grounding of his humble faith as he drew on his own experiences in life to comfort someone awash in grief. The following is the text of this letter, with the exception of several paragraphs in which he responded to the man’s question as to whether departed spirits can ever appear and be sensibly noticed by the living.

My Dear Friend, J. S. C.:

Thy letter was duly received, but a great pressure of various cares and weariness from labor, kept me, in part, in a condition not favorable to a baptism of spirit suitable to sit with thee where thou sits: which is necessary, at least in a measure, in order that we may be brought into sympathy of heart. Although each heart knows best its own sorrows,

yet the gospel is designed to bring man so into sympathy with man, as to be willing to bear at least a share of each other’s burdens: one cannot do the work for another, yet Divine wisdom has so arranged our relations to each other, that we may mourn with those who mourn, and rejoice with those who rejoice. I can say to thee, my dear friend, that similar dispensations to those through which thou hast passed and art passing, have in a large measure been within the lines of my own experience. In earlier life I lost what was then an only child, and so deeply did it affect me that I desired to be taken also, but I now believe that to have been a wrong desire. It would have been better had I endeavoured to be resigned to circumstances which I could not change or control, and be thankful that the sorrow had not come sooner.

My path through life thus far

has been one of conflict and trial, and sometimes baptisms unto death even in my early years; but from my present standpoint I can see that they, in a general way, have been conducive to my higher interests. I have learned that upon all mundane things is inscribed, “passing away,” and hence our principal trust and interest should not be placed upon them; but that we should look higher, to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and then all secondary things come along in their proper allotments. And His Kingdom, so far as relates to us in this state of being, we can find nowhere else but in our own hearts; every man has a kingdom in himself, and it depends upon his own choice whether it shall be governed by the principles of, and so become the kingdom of God, and righteousness, or whether it shall be a kingdom of evil.

In order to gain a victory over the world, we frequently have to enter into a warfare, truth against error. Our noble powers are brought into hard servitude, and we are led into evil habits when we neglect

to school and give right direction to our passions and propensities. “His servants ye are to whom ye render yourselves servants to obey.” Just here comes the cross of Christ, which is not designed to be cruel or to harm men, but simply to restrain them from those things which would

**Dwell not my friend, too much
upon the gloomy side of life,
but look to that light
which dispels the clouds,
causing the storm to recede,
and the sunshine of love and truth
to penetrate the heart
and resurrect it to a higher state.**

harm, in the practice of them. Thy path and mine have not been peculiar, for such has been the allotment of many. The best men of whom we have any account passed through similar experiences and many, no doubt, much deeper. Jesus said, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.” I apprehend that no allusion to the death of the body is here intended, but a death to sin and attachment to everything except his Father’s will and a desire to finish His work. He was baptized

into the states and various conditions of men, hence qualified to speak to those conditions. There are seasons when we seem to abound with food, and others when we are filled by a suffering need; the latter condition is as good for us as the former, and why? Because when the vessel has been filled with love, and a qualification for any particular service, and that performed the vessel must needs be empty, and the bread used yesterday will not answer for today. Then a sense of poverty ensues, and is so deeply felt that it seems for the time being we have never tasted of good.

Here we have need of patience and trust, and as we abide in this state our Father gives us a new qualification with bread for to-day and consequent strength for a new work.

... Dwell not my friend, too much upon the gloomy side of life, but look to that light which dispels the clouds, causing the storm to recede, and the sunshine of love and truth to penetrate the heart and resurrect it to a higher state. ☞

Kyle Jolliffe is a member of Yonge Street Monthly Meeting.

Toronto Friends Meeting House in the news

Faith in peace Friends Meeting House (60 Lowther)

“A beacon of peace and social justice since 1931, the majestic Friends Meeting House is the Vatican of Canadian Quakerism. For years, it has

provided refuge for hundreds fleeing violence the world over. In the sunlit meeting room of the turn-of-the century manse, where the chairs are unfailingly arranged in a semi-circle overlooking an organic garden, activists inspired by the words of former

Quaker and Pennsylvanian governor William Penn (“True godliness does not turn men out of the world, but ... excites their endeavours to mend it”) have spent decades in pacifist plotting through the Canadian Friends Service Committee. From community centres

in war-torn Congo to the meeting rooms of the United Nations, Friends projects are helping peace efforts in the Middle East (the Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement) as well as pulling people out of war and poverty with CIDA-funded farm co-op and education programs in Nicaragua and Guatemala. Closer to home, [the Society of] Friends has supported action around reform of the justice system and stood in solidarity with native peoples. It has spoken out loudly against the persecu-

tion of minority communities under the Anti-terrorism Act, [and] is currently campaigning with its U.S. counterparts against torture and helping American Iraq war resisters seeking asylum in Canada. In their tradition of standing with marginalized people, Quakers are one of the few faith groups to support the Civil Marriage Act. A shining example of courage and determination.”

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE 22 DECEMBER

2005 ISSUE ([HTTP://WWW.NOWTORONTO.COM/ISSUES/2005-12-22/NEWS_STORY2.PHP](http://www.nowtoronto.com/issues/2005-12-22/news_story2.php)) OF *NOW MAGAZINE* FEATURED THIS ARTICLE “PACIFISM’S POWER SPOTS: HERE ARE THE TOUCHSTONES OF A CITY BLESSED WITH A RICH HISTORY OF ANTI-WAR ACTION” BY JOHN BACHER. THANK YOU TO *NOW MAGAZINE* FOR PERMISSION TO REPRINT THE SECTION OF THE ARTICLE ABOUT FRIENDS HOUSE, AND TO JO VELLACOTT FOR SUGGESTING WE DO SO (DESPITE THE FEW INACCURACIES, ESPECIALLY THE VATICAN BIT).



Elbow grease with love

By Sheila Havard

This spring I signed up, with some trepidation, for a work-camp run jointly by the African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) in the U.S., Evangelical Friends Peace Community Development (Quakers), and Child Care in Uganda. The work-camp I was privileged to attend was in July 2005 in the stunningly beautiful village of Bududa in eastern Uganda. The work-camp was a great success on two counts: because the nine North American, two non-Ugandan African work-campers, and approximately a dozen Bududan volunteers, completed the assigned construction of the vocational school, and because of the spirit of unity and fellowship the joint effort inspired in all the work-campers. Our work-camp, the best of the four AGLI work-camps according to our U.S. coor-

dinator, seems to become a vocation for participants, who return home enthusing about the project; with the exception of one work-camper with a conflicting commitment, we all said we would consider returning in 2006.

Bugisu, the eastern province in which Bududa is located, has the highest population density in the nation, up to 250 people per square kilometre. As a result, almost all land is cultivated and the standard of living is much lower than in the central portions of the country. Pressure on the land is such that all the volcanic mountains around Bududa and circling the Mount Elgon National Park are intensively farmed. With families commonly comprising eight children, settlement has crept up to the peaks with in living memory, causing conflict

with park authorities as poachers with guns and unauthorized settlers have to be evicted. This same higher fertility rate, coupled with increasing subdivision of the land, has created an army of the unemployed. Bududa is a village of 80,000, but still a village, not a town, sociologically speaking. Walking down the potholed main road at whatever time of day, one encounters streams of people, walking, and passing the time of day. Gainful employment is negligible.

The Bududa project is a double-pronged attempt to address the issue of unemployment and the increasing population of children orphaned by AIDS, landslides, and the wars in the northern provinces of the country. The Children of Hope orphans, selected on the basis of dire need, receive counselling and remedial

education on Saturdays. In addition, sponsors have been found for about 175 of the 200 orphans, and the sponsored children receive materials to help them with their schooling. When they go on to secondary school, sponsors will be asked to pay the school fees and, if this is not possible, new sponsors will be found. The plan is to train the orphans free of charge, from the summer of 2006, when the vocational school opens, in secretarial, typing, carpentry and mechanical skills.

On arrival at the work site the first day, we found a brick structure consisting of four mud-floored classrooms, two tiny offices and a muddy corridor piled high with lumber. The upper floor was barely started and it had no roof. Primary school children were using the downstairs rooms, which were equipped solely with a few locally made wooden desks and pitted blackboards. By the time we left, after one month, the building was roofed over and the downstairs rooms were "finished" inside, which meant that whitewash had been painted over the cement. Everything was done by hand and the foreign work-campers set about the tasks with as much gusto as the Ugandan volunteers, but with considerably less skill and strength. Exchanging jokes and learning the local language, Lugisu, as we proceeded, we mixed cement, handed up bricks and cement to the skilled bricklayers perched on the walls, hauled muddy water out of a pipe-filled puddle in jerry cans up to the upper floor, and trundled a dilapidated wheelbarrow full of sand or cement up a steep and wobbly wooden ramp. There was constant progress, but no assigned tasks, production goals or pressure.

We all chipped in where the need was discovered, according to our individual interests and abilities.

During down time, while we waited for a load of the brittle, roughly shaped bricks to arrive or when the puddle needed refilling, there was time for camaraderie, cultural exchanges, and assistance with the medical needs of both the Ugandan volunteers and the orphans. In the rainy season, malaria is rampant and increasingly resistant to the drugs sold in the sparsely equipped medical centre. Our first-aid kit and our own personal supplies of painkillers were soon depleted and unfortunately many patients had to be escorted to the dispensary for the \$2 of medication they could not afford.

Other non-manual assistance included home visits paid to investigate the orphans' background and requirements. We also organized a storage room of medical supplies from the donations each work-camper had brought from home in the required 70-pound suitcase of "stuff," the stuff in question consisting of clothing, stationery and medication. In addition, many projects were visited, solicitations and proposals for financial assistance were received from all possible quarters, and reams of notes taken describing the various projects and proposals. Last but not least, to offset the complete lack of teaching materials and as a lasting testimony to the work-camp, a beautiful map of Uganda was painted on a classroom wall. This was an eye-opener to the Ugandan volunteers cooperating on this week-long project, and probably the first time they had seen a pictorial reproduction of their native land.

One of the strengths of this particular AGLI work-camp was that the work-campers lived with local families, rather than sleeping dormitory-style in public buildings. Our hosts were, without exception, charming. Our muddy shoes were snapped up on our arrival and meticulously cleaned with an inch of water and a panga (machete), and dirty clothes were gathered up and returned neatly ironed with an iron using hot coals, given the complete lack of electricity in the village. Material comforts acquired a whole new meaning after we had spent four weeks with our host families, washing in two or three litres of water that had been hauled up the mountain and heated on a wood fire, and eating two identical starch-laden meals a day. Yet the warmth of our hosts' welcome more than compensated for the simple lifestyle; everywhere we were greeted with, "How is life?" and "How was your night?" After a half-hour trip to the local store, neighbours would call out: "Welcome back!" Perhaps the most universal greeting was: "Are you well?," a question which assumed new significance given the incidence of disease.

Without exception, we were inspired by the joyfulness of the villagers' homes, the closeness of their families, many of which have taken in almost as many orphans as they have children, and their fervent religious faith. We were constantly pressed to return. 🐸

NOTE: ANYONE WISHING FOR FURTHER DETAILS ON THE WORK-CAMP, THE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM, OR CONTACT INFORMATION FOR AGLI, MAY GET IN TOUCH WITH ME AT: HAVARDTRANSLATION@ISP.CA.

Sheila Havard is a member of Coldstream Monthly Meeting.

Broom horses and Danish Jews

By Grace Wolf

My Victoria Quaker friend Janet Hawksley makes hobby horses out of old broom handles she finds or people give her. She sews the heads out of remnants of grey or brown material and attaches button eyes and a simple wavy mane. Then, finally, she attaches a bridle and a yellow, six-pointed star. When we were recently at her house for a quick visit, I sat on her floor patting her dog and listened to her tell us the story again about the Danish King Christian.

Janet is one of the first Quakers I ever met in Victoria Monthly Meeting. I lived in her house for a few months too, just before I went on a four-month volunteer adventure in Fiji. But that is a whole other story.

One thing I know for sure about Janet: she can tell a good story. In Janet's stories, peaceful actions are the heroes. And she'll look you in the eye good and hard to make sure that you get the key message. The account of King Christian is one of my favourites. It's also one of hers, and one she likes to tell. The hobby horses she gives to local kids, with the story, which she tells them as she hands the horses off.

King Christian X (the tenth) was the beloved ruler of Denmark for 35 years. He was in his seventies when Hitler sent word that not only were they coming for the Jews, but King Christian had better make sure that all the Jews were wearing the Star of David when his troops got there.

King Christian was not amused. He thought about a response and acted quickly.

When the Nazi troops arrived, everyone they saw had a Star of David pinned to their clothes: Jews, non-Jews, even King Christian. They couldn't very well take everyone in the whole country, so the Nazi troops did not take anyone to a concentration camp. Then the Nazis threatened to seize Copenhagen. And, somehow, the Jews were snuck out of the country.

The whole time when the Nazis were threatening to storm into the country and were making demands, King Christian rode his horse every day alone, without a bodyguard or any kind of support.

This is the part of the story where Janet looks me in the eye, and I say, "Wow!" and she says, "Yeahw" in her Midwest American accent that makes her, in my mind, almost sound like a cat. She nods her head and I know that she knows that I know how important this story is to the world.

"Sometimes a person needs a story more than food," a kind, reverent voice quotes Rabbi Nolan on a tape of healing stories I have. Janet dishes this one out where and when she can.

I looked up some of this story tonight on the internet. Partially because I got talking with my husband about it and we were curious about what we could find on the web, and partially because I wanted to find out more information for a Jewish classmate who was intrigued

by the portion of the story she had heard secondhand when I told it to a couple of others in a class two days ago.

Our class had been doing a dramatic exercise on *Rose Blanche* (by Roberto Innocenti), a story about a young German girl who, after stumbling upon Jews in a concentration camp, feeds them, and brings to the land a flower of hope and 'somehow' disappears from her home in the chaos of war. I thought of Janet's story when I read this book, and told it to a couple of classmates.

The one classmate stopped me first thing this morning, determined to find out more about King Christian. I told her Janet's story, and that if I learned more, I'd pass it on. I did learn more.

Despite having taken, during my undergraduate studies in Anthropology, a course on Oral Traditions, and learning that oral stories hold valid information and truths that are parallel to and engage with print texts, I found myself looking for printed "proof" of events. To the internet I went.

Wikipedia, the on-line encyclopedia I consulted, says that the story of King Christian and everyone in Denmark wearing Stars of David is apocryphal. When I read that, I found myself immediately defending the story. "Well, maybe there's some truth to it somewhere," I said to myself. "It's still a powerful story." I kept looking on the online encyclopedia, and found an even better story, which was documented enough to be considered true in the

print-based scheme of things.

When the Danish people found out that the Nazis were coming for their over 7,500 Jewish people, the non-Jewish Danes found a variety of creative and brave methods of sending nearly all of their Jewish neighbours to neutral Sweden, within a two-week period! And, the website corroborated, King Christian did indeed show his bravery, not only because he rode his horse daily, without protection, often even through

the streets, but simply because he remained in his country while the leaders of nearby Norway and the Netherlands fled to England.

Both Janet's oral story and the printed encyclopedic stories hold hope and promise that people can be kind and resourceful and work hard for peace.

So many stories of the Holocaust are depressing. May there be more stories like these that cause the purple flower of peace and hope to

bloom in people's hearts and imaginations.

Rose Blanche carried such a flower in the book bearing her name. King Christian and the Danish people passed this flower to each other, their Jewish neighbours and the outside world. Janet Hawksley and others who tell this story and other stories like it also pass this flower on. Now it's yours. 🌸

Grace Wolf is a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting.

gkisedtanamoogk, our neighbour and our friend

By Sophie Bérubé

gkisedtanamoogk came to talk with Young Friends during the Canadian Yearly Meeting gathering of 2004. In addition to sharing with us about the Neighbour's Project (see 'NOTES'), he also shared with us about the sunlight, the first dawn, the Wampanoag world view, and the importance of building relationships between First Nations people and Canadians.

He encouraged all of us to reach out to First Nations people, to go visit powwow's, to get to know First Nations individuals, to build bridges between our communities. He expressed his hope and wish that Canadians learn First Nations languages, dances and customs.

gkisedtanamoogk talked about the earth, the sky, and the creatures living on earth. He explained how, in his tradition, there are no separations between all living beings and

the rest of nature. We are all one. He mentioned how the Earth is feminine, and how he believes that the world should be governed by women.

gkisedtanamoogk spoke from the heart, sharing his wisdom with us in his quiet and relaxed way. The sky and the earth and the trees took on a new life, a new energy around us at King's Edgehill on that sunny morning. When gkisedtanamoogk gave us the honour of speaking to us in his native language, we could feel the resonance of his language reverberating in our natural surroundings. He genuinely shared with us a piece of his world, and we thank him deeply for that. 🌸

NOTES: THE NEIGHBOUR'S PROJECT OF THE TATAMAGOUCHE CENTRE AND THE WABANAKI NATIONS CULTURAL RESOURCE CENTRE AIMS TO DEVELOP

BRIDGES BETWEEN NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE PEOPLE IN THE ESGENOOPETITJ, NEW BRUNSWICK, AREA. THE PRIMARY FOCUS IS WORKING WITH GROUPS THAT ARE EARNESTLY WILLING TO DEVELOP COMMUNITY LINKS.

GKISED TANAMOOGK, WELL-KNOWN TO MANY CANADIAN FRIENDS, IS A MEMBER OF THE WAMPANOAG PEOPLE OF THE WABANAKI NATION. HIS LIFE'S WORK FOCUSES ON THE OFTEN DAUNTING TASK OF HELPING THE FIRST NATIONS AND NON-FIRST NATIONS POPULATIONS IN THE AREA FIND COMMON GROUND AND UNDERSTANDING.

EDITOR'S NOTE: THIS ARTICLE, WRITTEN ON A SMALL PIECE OF PAPER, WAS LOST IN THE BOTTOM OF MY CAMERA BAG FOR OVER A YEAR. GIVEN THE THEME OF THIS ISSUE, I GIVE THANKS FOR HAVING FOUND IT SO IT CAN NOW BE SHARED WITH FRIENDS.

Sophie Bérubé is a member of the Annapolis Valley (formerly Wolfville) Monthly Meeting.

Some thoughts on a year at Pendle Hill

By Sharon MacDonald

From September 2004 to June 2005, I had the great privilege of attending Pendle Hill as a Resident Student under the Dorothy and Douglas Steere Scholarship. Working on a doctoral study concerning Western women associated with Gandhi and the Indian independence movement, I had just returned from a research trip to India in early 2004. Close to the end of fellowship funding and just beginning to write my thesis, I was encouraged by a member of my meeting to apply for a scholarship to Pendle Hill (PH). As might be imagined, the idea of living within a Quaker community while working on a solitary writing project had great appeal. Pendle Hill's positive response to my application not only affirmed my work but also provided a grace period before I had to resume other responsibilities.

Because I consider my research subjects a part of the Pendle Hill experience, I will begin by introducing several of "my" women because of their connections with PH and the Philadelphia area. Years ago, on another research project, I began searching for the possible survival of the papers of a Nova Scotian suffragist and proponent of peace and arbitration in the early twentieth century, one Mary Russell Chesley,

"of Quaker descent." I knew that her daughter, Mary (Polly) Chesley, also a social activist, had joined the Religious Society of Friends in Britain. An inquiry at Friends' House library in London turned up a tantalizing piece of information – a memorial notice at the time of Polly's death in India in 1936, contributed by none other than M. K. Gandhi. His effusive praise for Chesley and her commitment to the Indian independence movement

At one point I thought that I might get started on my writing earlier in the day if I didn't attend [Meeting for Worship] daily but discovered that I could not do without this time of worship.

aroused my curiosity. Searching further, I soon discovered other fascinating women connected to the Indian cause. The fact that a number of the women were Quakers or closely tied to Quakers through the network of peace and pro-independence organizations only added to my interest.

As for the connections to the Philadelphia area, in 1923 Polly spent several months there volunteering with a Quaker relief organization. Pendle Hill did not yet exist; however, Polly regularly visited another Nova Scotian friend

studying at Bryn Mawr and they went to Quaker meetings together in the area. As well, I discovered through a period newspaper that Polly had spoken at a peace rally in Philadelphia on Armistice Day organized by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

In 1930, another Canadian, Mildred Osterhout (later Fahrni), attended Bryn Mawr on scholarship and spent time at the newly opened Pendle Hill. Muriel Lester, a British pacifist and guest speaker at PH in that first year, invited Osterhout to come to Britain to volunteer at Kingsley Hall, a settlement house Lester had founded in East London. Mildred responded to the call, and her time at Kingsley Hall coincided with Gandhi's stay there in 1931 during the Second Round Table Conference. Mildred visited Gandhi in India and seriously contemplated staying there to work. Ultimately, however, she returned to Canada where she became very active in the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR).

Three other women in my study had occasion to visit Pendle Hill. Mirabeau (Madeleine Slade), perhaps the Western woman most closely associated with Gandhi (and an early environmentalist), gave a talk at Pendle Hill while on a

speaking tour in the United States in 1934. Agatha Harrison, a British Quaker and key member of the India Conciliation Group, who served for many years as a facilitator in talks between Gandhi and the British authorities, visited Pendle Hill in 1953. At the time, she was serving on the UN Quaker team. Finally, Marjorie Sykes, another Quaker friend of Gandhi's and author of *An Indian Tapestry*, a chronicle of Quaker history in India, served as Friend in Residence at Pendle Hill in 1977.

This introduction to the women associated with Pendle Hill and area is just to provide some context for why my residency there had particular significance. For example, in order to add another thread of connection to Polly and my activist women from the past, I made my first trip into Philadelphia on Remembrance Day, a day of rain and wind, to attend an anti-war vigil. I wanted to honour Polly's participation in the peace rally that had taken place eighty-one years earlier. As I stood in the damp and cold with a pitifully small and bedraggled group of strangers, a wonderful conversation with a former Iraqi citizen transformed my initial feeling of gloom into one of blessed connectedness with both present and past humanity.

Before arriving at Pendle Hill, I knew from looking at the brochures and programming that I would be tempted to do everything *but* work on my dissertation. I confess that I yielded to temptation on a regular basis, especially in the craft studio; however, towards the end of the year I realised, with some consolation, that I had, in fact, written a reasonable portion of the thesis – far more than I could have accomplished had I stayed at home. In addition, I had experienced the many gifts that Pendle Hill had to offer. Attending Meeting for Worship every morning of the week became an important grounding for me. At one point, I thought that I might get started on my writing earlier in the day if I didn't attend daily but discovered that I could not do without this time of worship. Taking studio classes in

clay, paper making, and book arts opened up new areas of creative exploration. The daily and weekly chores in which all resident students participate; the special camaraderie of Wednesday work morning; digging and spring planting in the organic garden – all these activities helped to ground me in practical and physical ways. For someone who has been living and working alone for the past few years, community life offered opportunities for new friendships, the stimulation of conversation on questions of faith, and the chance to give and receive affirmation and support on so many levels. Although a centre for study and contemplation, Pendle Hill is a busy place — there are many activities going on at all times, either on campus or nearby. In the face of such choice, I had to learn to be selective and know when solitude was the best option.

If Pendle Hill sounds idyllic, well, in some ways it was, particularly for a student. However, as with any diverse group of individuals in close quarters, personality differences and occasional flare-ups of tension occurred. Often, in the “outside” world, personal conflict and resolution can be avoided because distance can be maintained – not so in a small community. Pendle Hill offered opportunities to practice addressing difficult situations in a Quakerly way. Formative learning periods seem to be all too rare after one has reached middle age. I found it exhilarating to be discovering and exercising new parts of myself. At Pendle Hill I experienced many moments of great joy, but I believe that the challenging times helped me to grow and deepen my spiritual life. I will be forever thankful to all who helped make my year at Pendle Hill possible. ☞

NOTE: I WISH TO GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM HALIFAX MONTHLY MEETING (THANKS TO HEATHER BROWN AND ANNE THOMAS FOR THEIR INITIAL PART), CYM'S HOME MISSION AND ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE (HMAC), AND PENDLE HILL.

Sharon MacDonald is an attender of Halifax Monthly Meeting

... The lives of Young Friends sometimes stand out as radiant ... I believe that, at its best, religious life is about seeking and finding. In this context, it is worth remembering that it was an itinerant evangelist by the name of George Fox who, in 1643, at the age of nineteen, left a small English village, his family, and his apprenticeship to a shoemaker. Over the rest of his life, until his death in 1691, he lived an extraordinary life and became known as the founder of Quakerism.

– Kyle Jolliffe, 1997

Poetry

Green Force

On the morning my daughter flies to Kathmandu
she emails:
We've packed our lives
into our bags – everything we need for 5 months
on our backs. We have room left over.
The day she was born I held her
tight and let her go.
Here, world, I said.
She's yours, I said,
not knowing who yours was —
just that she wasn't mine
for keeps, but on loan.
The Sumacs and Maple
have been setting themselves on fire
all week. Red-orange explosions.
It's in their blood, this give-away.
I stand under the Maple,
under the falling, open
keys of the Maple.

– Cornelia Hoogland, Yarmouth MM

Reflections on an old road

I love the sight of something overgrown
Where human foot has trodden heavily
And now is gone:
A vine-entangled gate,
A weed-choked path,
Nature reclaiming what once was paved or bounded.

I love to see the sapling break through stone,
Wild grape and wildflowers obliterate
A fence or wall,
Neatly-drawn lines erased,
Angles and squares
(Our foolish presumptions) now made blunt and
rounded.

Oh, I am blessed when God reclaims God's own –
With holy fingers disassembling all
We thought was ours,
By storm and sunlight,
Green growth, rush of air:
I am at home when nature puts me in my place.

– Beverly Shepard, Hamilton MM

Was Eliot right? Is April truly the cruelest month?
Or maybe just the month
of broken promises?

May is more reliable. April is just May with an attitude.

April this year was just being itself: lots of rain, some piles of snow in
secret places under the trees. The part humans created was typical too:
muddy roads and potholes in proportion to our use of the only road into
Argenta. But then there were those perfect days when the eternal seemed to
reach down and say "Come play with me."

– Jack Ross, Argenta MM

Our debt to imagination

By Michael R. Miller

There is a phrase in the Lord's prayer that is familiar to many of us: "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." This is great advice if you know what you owe and to whom you owe it. There is one debt that we as a society are hardly aware of — that is, what we owe to human imagination.

For without this marvelous gift we would not have survived as a species nor developed our human nature with all its potential for good or evil. Perhaps I am biased as an imaginative artist; after all I have this habit of composing music. I believe, though, that imagination plays a much larger role in our personal and communal lives than we realise.

It is by no means limited to young children, pathological liars, and artists. It seems to me that imagination is the leaven that gives life to science, technology, art, and *religion*, heretical though it might appear to some. The historical connection between art and religion runs wide and deep, even though the arts have been restricted by religion from time to time. This apparent control masks what to me is obvious: that religion is itself a *communal art work*, developed over time by a certain culture in a similar way to a distinct language. Generally though, the influence of

individuals is much easier to trace in the evolution of religion than in the case of language.

Unfortunately, either political, cultural, or ethnic rivalries tend to encourage religions to assert their own view of the Divine as the only way to salvation. This often leads to serious abuses too familiar to us in today's world. Until recently some historians favoured monotheistic religions like Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, praising them as religions of "the book," because they had a high regard for scripture of one kind or another.

Be that as it may, I think that the greatest mistake that these three religions make is *not* to realise that their holy book can become as much of an idol as any graven image. We become as guilty of idolatry as the ancient Jews in Exodus if we turn scripture into a kind of golden calf. Inspired by God or not, it is still imagined and interpreted by fallible human beings.

Of course the most we can do is to form an image of God. No problem with that, unless we forget that this image is as much our doing as God's. God is basically unknowable except through our mind and experience, imperfect and incomplete though we may be. Why can't we accept our imperfection and that of the Universe by

forgiving God for making it imperfect? Instead of relying so much on imaginary worlds like the Garden of Eden, Heaven, and Hell to make moral sense of our lives, why not look for the good in ourselves and in our world? Start from where we are. There's plenty for our imaginations to do right here and now! ☞

Michael R. Miller is a member of New Brunswick Monthly Meeting

Please God forgive me

My dear God, I owe you all,
You do help me when I fall!
I must never miss your call
From behind the space-time wall!

I do now appreciate
When my hand you kindly take,
Whether conscious or awake
You're a balm for every ache!

When I doubted your existence
Concentrating on renascence,
You poured Love and Oh such
patience
On my soul that seemed senescent!

Let this cry come from my own lip:
You, I know, I must now worship,
Let me board your lofty flagship,
Which space-time does softly
unclip.

You did send us Jesus Christ
To perform His sacrifice,
His act did indeed suffice
To break space-time in a trice!

Please forgive my many failings
All my sins and many strayings,
I have loved too many earth-things
I now need what love of God brings

— Zoltan Dienes, Annapolis Valley MM

My answer to the question: “What is or makes a Quaker?”

By Siepko Lok

Good question, as the saying goes, but not an easy one to answer. There are to begin with at least ten different types of definitions, and besides it may be difficult to find two Quakers who fit the same pattern. Even within my own Meeting I only have a vague appreciation of what kind of Quakers they are. Arbitrary decisions are unavoidable, but I am willing to try. Most of what I intend to say is based upon my experience as a Quaker for over 50 years, almost entirely with Quakers who are joined in the so-called *unprogrammed* Yearly Meetings (particularly in Britain and Canadian YMs). I will refrain from commenting on practices in other kinds of Yearly Meetings.

Quakers Defined

One way of describing Quakers is to describe the criteria they set for themselves. It is a descriptive definition, and a variation on defining a person's occupation by describing what the person is doing for making a living. There are three or four criteria with which most, if not all, Quakers would probably agree: (a) Quakers accept the notion that every person is endowed with something of the Divine; (b) Quakers try to live their lives in accordance with moral testimonies; (c) Quakers worship collectively in a silent meditative fashion; and for good measure

(d) Quakers seek the comfort of a social community. These criteria are not given in order of importance or logical sequence. For me, each is important in being a Quaker. If, as assumed, most Quakers go along with them, then quite likely there will be different interpretations. For sure, there will be differences in emphasis. I will give you mine.

Faith: It can happen, and has happened, that suddenly a person is overwhelmed with the sensation of being totally without anxieties and filled with an extraordinary sense of joy. The conscious is literally illuminated. It is total bliss. It cannot be explained. Sometimes during such a spell (which may last less than a minute) one becomes aware of what may seem to be a message. It happened to George Fox, who from then on believed in direct revelation. It can happen to anybody. This experience is the basis for Quakers to believe in the notion that there is something of God or the Divine in every person, good or bad. It may be only a spark that lies in a state of dormancy. This notion is one part of the faith of Quakers. It is an intrinsic part. The Divine inside can also manifest itself with a spontaneous outburst of compassion and energy. Cases are known of people running into a burning house to save a child without regard for their own safety. The nature of the Divine is not prescribed for Quakers, and they are free to decide for themselves the

Deity, if any, they prefer. It does not matter. It is a private matter. This freedom is an important part of being a Quaker. It is the beauty of being a Quaker.

Moral values: The other part of the Quaker faith is Altruistic Love, the kind Jesus taught without much success. For me it is the personification of the Divine. It is the antithesis of the selfish Ego, and it is the source of other values, such as tolerance, compassion, equality, honesty, justice (social as well as economic), and reverence for life (the basis for our Peace Testimony and our deep respect for all that is creation). Quakers believe that values must be lived to make them meaningful. They are moral activists. They are known for trying to live in accordance with these values, and often impress outsiders with their consistency and devotion in doing so. Without a strong moral commitment, there is little if anything to be gained during worship.

Worship: Quakers worship collectively in silent meditation. They seek unity with the Divine within, but already feel strengthened and filled with peace when inside a degree of harmony is reached. There is no external guidance. No religious authority serves as an intermediary. No mandatory theology. We are like the knights of King Arthur's court looking for the Holy Grail in a virgin forest, each on his own.

The Quaker form of worship is not easy, but one is free to use a 'vessel.' Again, as already mentioned above under Faith, the choice is a personal matter. Some may concentrate on the spirit of Jesus, others on the spirit of Buddha, or of Francis of Assisi, or on Mother Theresa, or someone else who lived to lessen the suffering of others. Some may dwell on the Bible, others on the Talmud, or on ethics in the Koran. It can be any religion or none. One can also follow the age-old practice of Yoga. There are many ways to the Divine. If one vessel does not seem to work, one is free to try another. It is important, however, to remain aware that the choice of vessel is relative, mostly to one's place of birth and upbringing. The absolute Truth remains beyond our grasp.

Community: Although there may be a tendency to take for granted the time we spend together after Meeting for Worship and on other occasions, the importance of these shared minutes comes immediately to the fore the moment other commitments interfere. We need those minutes to maintain a sense of unity after worship where our thoughts moved in different directions. We

minge freely, and converse without knowing what kind of vessel others have been using. There are no labels to tell us. It does not matter. We are united by our common faith in the Divine within. I may be guilty of idealizing, but if so than at least the ideal is something worth aiming at. We feel pleased and privileged with the realisation that it is quite possible to experience peace and harmony inside, not in spite of, but as a consequence of religious or spiritual diversity.

Synthesis

The above criteria and elaboration comprise my answer to the question: "What is or makes a Quaker?" They define for me a Quaker within the community of the *unprogrammed* Yearly Meetings, where each Quaker is an *individual* who pursues the spiritual quest in a way that suits him or her best. Each follows his or her own inner voice. All who are attracted by the Quaker approach to a spiritual life are welcome. Our Society is fully inclusive. There is nothing in this definition that intrinsically favours a particular religion. The religious freedom in this Quaker community, the spiritual diversity that results,

and the opportunities it offers to learn from each other, are its heart and soul. All of the above could be compressed in a few words: Quakers are a unified group of diversified spiritual seekers. As Jesus said: "Seek and you will find." Assuming that no unforeseen obstacles get in the way, and assuming the editor's agreement, I will pursue this article with further reflections. 🐉

Siepmo Lok is a member of Victoria Monthly Meeting, attending Vancouver Monthly Meeting.

Victory

And there are days
aye, there are days
When darkness reigns
from ground to head
and all men's evil deeds
hold sway, and Creation
wears a crown of thorns.

On days like these
defeat seems certain
women's small hearts
a tiny shield
'gainst massive sword' —
but love will conquer,
yes, love will conquer.

Life is a force
produced by love
that passes on, yet
never dies.

A blade of grass
a drop of water —
immortal atoms:

you and I!

— Eva Lyman, Vancouver MM

Foundations of Faith

(Draft chapter of Canadian Yearly Meeting's *Faith and Practice*)

60. We can define "ecumenical" as simply world-embracing. But deeper meanings have been distilling themselves into this world until now we can fairly say that an ecumenical encounter points towards an attempt to understand, an attempt at shaking off the stereotype with which we have approached another's religion and moving from the shadow to the substance; of opening ourselves to the truth in another's religious approach; and becoming vulnerable to the point where we may not return to our own faith in the same condition that we set out.

— Douglas V. Steere, 1965

Quaker food relief action in Zimbabwe

By John Schmid


At Easter 2002, Friends at Central and Southern Africa Yearly Meeting decided to help the people of Zimbabwe in a practical way by providing food relief in selected rural areas affected by drought. With money from Friends in South Africa, Botswana, Ireland, the UK, the U.S., and Australia, we managed to buy and distribute 180 tons of cornmeal (the staple food) in ten villages in Matabeleland South during the following two years.

Botswana Monthly Meeting agreed to keep the funds for us in a Botswana bank to protect them from the ravages of Zimbabwean inflation, currently more than 500% per year. My wife, Kelitha (who is Zimbabwean), and I, were asked to identify areas of great need and do the actual distribution. For this we use the four-ton truck of Hlekweni, a Quaker rural training centre, founded in 1967 near Bulawayo. In the past, the centre was assisted by the Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC). Unfortunately CFSC's rules made it difficult to help us with our very informal feeding scheme, though Quaker Service Australia and Irish Quaker Faith in Action had no such problems.

But why, after so many years, do we still need funds for food relief? You may have heard that large parts of Africa are at present affected by drought. When that happens, the subsistence farmers, who constitute a large part of Zimbabwe's population, are particularly hard hit as they

cannot grow their own corn to feed themselves and earn some money for things like school fees. With no money in their pockets they cannot afford to buy food in town — food whose costs have escalated both due to inflation and due to scarcity. Add to this the difficulties caused by the lack of fuel and an erratic political climate and life becomes very precarious.

In our project we distribute one 10 kg bag of cornmeal per household to 1400 households, aiming to do this at least once or twice a month. The planting season this year started with good rains at the beginning of December but since then there hasn't been a drop of rain and we are worried that people will suffer another failed or minimal crop. Our project will have to continue for the foreseeable future.

If you can help our project with any amount, we would be most grateful. In North America, please make cheques payable to Schenectady Friends Meeting; write 'Zimbabwe famine relief' in the Memo section; and send them to David Gerhan, Treasurer, Schenectady Friends Meeting (Quakers), 930 Albany Street, Schenectady NY 12307. Enquiries: gerhand@union.edu 

John Schmid is a member of Bulawayo Monthly Meeting, and also its treasurer.

EDITOR'S NOTE: AS WE PREPARE THIS ISSUE, I HAVE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FROM JOHN, WHICH I INCLUDE AS IT ADDS FURTHER UNDER-

STANDING TO THE ZIMBABWE SITUATION.

"SINCE SENDING YOU THE PIECE A MONTH AGO, SOME LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE CHANGED. FOR EXAMPLE, ALMOST AS SOON AS I HAD SENT IT, THE HEAVENS OPENED AND WE HAD SIGNIFICANT RAINFALL, WHICH GIVES US HOPE THAT FROM MAY OR JUNE ONWARDS FOR A FEW MONTHS PEOPLE WILL BE ABLE TO EAT THEIR OWN FOOD.

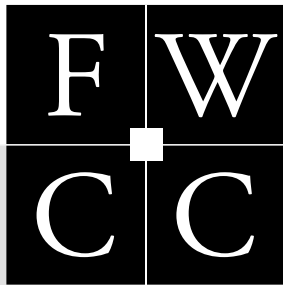
BUT AS SEEDS WERE SCARCE AND EXPENSIVE, MANY FAMILIES HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO PLANT AS MUCH AS THEY USED TO, AND THE CHANCES ARE THAT BY DECEMBER WE WILL HAVE TO RESUME DISTRIBUTION.

WE ARE ALSO HAVING A PROBLEM WITH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES WHO WANT TO STOP US FROM ACTUALLY GOING OUT AND DISTRIBUTING THE FOOD — SUCH IS THE PARANOIA IN OFFICIAL CIRCLES. WE ARE WORKING HARD TO OVERCOME THIS PROBLEM.

ON THE OTHER HAND WE RECENTLY RECEIVED REQUESTS FOR HELP FROM COURAGEOUS PRIESTS IN BULAWAYO WHO ARE SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF THE CLEAN-UP OPERATION IN MAY/JUNE LAST YEAR AND DESPERATELY NEED EXTRA FOOD SUPPLIES, FROM A LADY WHO SUPPORTS OVER 1000 ORPHANS, AND FROM A LARGE PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTACHED TO HLEKWENI WHERE MANY CHILDREN ARE SEVERELY UNDERNOURISHED AT HOME AND BECOME LISTLESS, AND WHERE A REGULAR SCHOOL LUNCH COULD MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

MY WIFE AND I ARE VETTING ALL THESE REQUESTS AND WILL HELP WITH FOOD RELIEF WHERE WE CAN BE ASSURED OF TRANSPARENCY AND HONESTY."

Connecting Friends • Crossing Cultures • Changing Lives
Vincula a los Amigos • Sobrepasa Barreras Culturales • Cambia Vidas



Friends World Committee
for Consultation

SECTION OF THE AMERICAS

Comité Mundial de Consulta
de los Amigos

SECCIÓN DE LAS AMÉRICAS

Annual Meeting 2006

Chiquimula, Guatemala
March 16–19

I've met new Friends, practiced my Spanish...savored reunions with known Friends, and heard some words that inspired and challenged me.

From a first-time attendee at the
2005 Annual Meeting in Tempe, Arizona



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**Friends World Committee
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Book Reviews...Book Reviews...Book Reviews

The Promise of Spring

Jack Ross

(Available from Jack Ross, General Delivery, Argenta BC V0G 1B0, for \$15, plus \$2 shipping)

Reviewed by Bert Horwood

Jack Ross's latest book is a delightful collection of personal stories and poetry. Some poems stand alone and others, in particular "Listen," have stanzas inserted between stories. This technique gives both the poem and the preceding story extra impact. Jack has avoided making the collection merely a set of personal reminiscences. Each story illustrates some aspect of a human's pilgrimage, however halting, toward non-violent activism.

The stories range from Jack's childhood, through his experiences in the Pacific theatre of World War II, social work in Chicago and with AFSC, to his most recent actions for peace. They are short, readable, and pointed. They are organized by theme rather than chronologically and this adds to their interest. Some of the stories are scary, depressing and painful. Others are warm and funny. The best of them illustrate the clown's art, namely to make us laugh and cry simultaneously at a deep truth about the human condition. Jack uses comedy as a loving device to wring our hearts at the usages of injustice and violence.

Another device Jack uses is the occasional punch line to a story placed in boldface type. This works rather like the moral of an Aesop fable. Two of my favourites are "Refusing cooperation with stupidi-

ty of authority is sometimes the only method available to the powerless," and "My criterion for a successful project is that after it is over you can invite the other guys to a potluck supper and they would come."

In keeping with ancient Quaker tradition, Jack has self-published this book and given Friends everywhere the testimony of a life and faith lived to the full. He has also given the benefit of his instructive experience as a relentlessly active worker for peace and justice. The design of the book is simple, and the editing somewhat rough, though it radiates the hope implicit in the title and the beautiful cover. I can't think of a finer gift that Jack has given to all those who are moved in the spirit to seek peace and justice. ☞

Bert Horwood is a member of Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting.

The Human Right to Peace

Douglas Roche

Ottawa: Novalis, 2003

Reviewed by Anthony H. Richmond

Douglas Roche has been Canada's Ambassador for Disarmament and Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Committee. In this book he reviews the efforts that have been made, since the end of World War II, to remove a culture of war and to obtain recognition of the human right to peace. Resolutions have been passed by the U.N. General Assembly outlining a programme of action for a "culture of peace." Other international

agencies, such as the U.N. Human Rights Commission and UNESCO, have all gone on record declaring the "human right to peace." The author examines the reasons why these hopes and aspirations have failed to eradicate the "culture of war." He notes that war is profitable for some, notably the multinational corporations that make up the "military industrial complex." He recognizes that, through the entertainment media, we have become conditioned to violence. At the same time he rejects the view that there are inherent biological or psychological causes of violence.

Douglas Roche examines the role of religion in promoting peace, and emphasises the shared concerns for peace and reconciliation that are common to all major religions. He places emphasis on the need for education, and for an active role by non-governmental organisations and the emerging global civil society, to bring pressure on governments and the private sector to eliminate poverty, promote sustainable development, and end the arms race.

The book includes many useful references to other sources of information concerning the right to peace, including a list of websites. Although the Quaker "Peace Testimony" is not mentioned, Friends will find the book a valuable resource, and an encouragement to those who "speak truth to power."

☞

Anthony H. Richmond is a member of Yonge Street Monthly Meeting.

Book Reviews...Book Reviews...Book Reviews

Abolishing War: One Man's Attempt
Nicholas Gillett
Sessions of York, 2005
Reviewed by Bert Horwood

After a slow start I found this a fascinating read. The book, an autobiography, is best read as though listening to an old man recount the stories from nearly a century of life dedicated to Quaker ideals. It should be read with patience for its non-sequiturs and leaps in time, just as one would listen patiently to elderly reminiscences. In them there is a gold mine of exemplary service, wry acknowledgment of failure, modest acceptance of success, good humour, and above all shining hope for betterment of the human condition.

Nicholas Gillett, a son of an old Quaker family, rubbed shoulders with great and humble persons alike. He learned from them all. Dedicated to education, particularly to training teachers for work in community schooling, his main work was with UNESCO. His stories of success and frustration are a telling summary of both the hope and the failures of the United Nations through the latter half of the last century. My own career as an experiential educator paralleled his, although much less adventurously. I found each page ringing with the truth of educational promise which failed in the delivery and was unable to overcome inexplicable resistance.

Later Nicholas Gillett worked with the Rowntree Trust and with other aspects of the United Nations Organization. His observations on

the use of funds and the internal dynamics of international peace work are relevant and candid. In the book he uses Shakespeare's words to describe another person, "... they make their exits and in his time one man plays many parts ..." This book is the story of such a man. ☞

Transcending Trauma
Ruth Morris, with Ruth Bradley-St. Cyr
Winding Trail Press, 2004
(Available at Quaker Book Service, \$29.95, plus shipping)
Reviewed by Sheila Brown

Ruth Morris shared with us some of the traumas she faced in her life, including the diagnosis of incurable cancer, and the discoveries she made while dealing with them.

The even-numbered chapters tell of her observations, which we may apply to our own lives; odd-numbered chapters detail her own experiences. She says middle-class North Americans, unlike most of the rest of the world, have a belief in life without trauma, and feel rage, blame or even defeat when trauma happens.

Chapter headings: Shock, Grief, Acceptance, Forgiveness, Healing and Reintegration indicate the path many follow, while other people become stuck at any one of these stages, and lose life's wonderful opportunities for growth and development.

The book is full of examples that demonstrate her points, and practical steps for sufferers and for their

friends and well-wishers. We should remember that people don't react to traumas in the same way or at the same speed. It is better to pass on bad news in a letter before phoning or visiting, so people can moderate their reactions.

Ruth's deep faith and wide reading fills the book with apt quotations. The poem *Be Gentle*, by the Rev. Richard S. Gilbert, moved me to read it after Meeting for Worship on Christmas morning.

This is not only a quick read, but a book to keep on hand and reread frequently. ☞

Sheila Brown is a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting.

Checkpoints and Chances: Eyewitness Accounts from an Observer in Israel/Palestine
Katherine von Schubert
Quaker Books, 2005
Reviewed by Sheila Brown

In October 2000, Katherine von Schubert went to the West Bank for Quaker Peace and Social Witness, based in Bethlehem. Later, she stayed in Jerusalem for another organisation. With a master's degree in Arabic Studies, and further studies in Arabic-English and English-Arabic translation, she was well equipped to communicate with Palestinian people. Her studies in Hebrew, and the time she lived in Jerusalem, gave her a better understanding "of the depth of history and misunderstanding of one side by the other that makes the situation so

Book Reviews...Book Reviews...Book Reviews

complex and tragic.”

Katherine’s e-mail messages form the main text of this book. The vivid depiction of life under military occupation, with its unpredictable curfews and checkpoints (some of which were mobile), the sudden loss of home and livelihood, and the effects of the illegal security “fence” built mainly on Palestinian land — without advance notice — is horrifying.

“There can be no reconciliation without truth and without justice.” “Both peoples need safety and a home, but the security of one can never be obtained at the expense of the security of another.” Two States are at present impossible, but perhaps if the “Security Fence” were moved to the Green Line, and if West Bank settlements were given to Palestinians, while their Israeli occupants returned to Israel proper, peace and security for both nations would be possible. 🐼

Sheila Brown is a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting.

Whispers of Faith: Young Friends Share their Experiences of Quakerism

Edited by W. Geoffrey Black, P. Zion Klos, Claire Reddy, Milam Smith, and Rachel Stacy
Quakers Uniting in Publications (QUIP), 2005

(Available at Quaker Book Service, \$19.20, plus shipping)

Reviewed by Andrew Gage

The voice of Quakers is often an older voice. Not only are young

people under-represented in the Religious Society of Friends, but they are also less likely to have written about their spiritual experiences.

Anyone listening for the voices of Young Friends should pick up a copy of *Whispers*. Edited by five Young Friends, this book brings together the writings of 45 Quakers (primarily American, but with some British and African Friends included) between the ages of 12 and 19.

There is no doubt that *Whispers* is a valuable contribution to Quaker literature and an incredible accomplishment on the part of its authors and five clearly enthusiastic editors, themselves between the ages of 15 and 19. There are few, if any, other books which even attempt to record the experiences of Friends in this age group. I found myself comparing *Whispers* to *Who do we think we are?* — the 1998 Swarthmore Lecture prepared by British Young Friends — but in that case the Young Friends who wrote that (also remarkable) book were almost all between 18 and 30 years of age.

The depth and power of the contributions themselves are extremely mixed. The collection seems to take its name from its first contribution — a wonderful poem entitled “Whispers.” Its power enfolded me in the silence as I read it, and I was frankly stunned to find that its author was only 13 years old. There are other similarly articulate and powerful contributions that would be at home in any collection of Quaker writings, from Friends struggling with thoughts of suicide,

or the death and illness of loved ones, to Friends looking for the words to explain their beliefs to their classmates.

However, there are also many contributions that seem based more upon what the authors have been told about Quakerism than original “experiences.” It is perhaps unreasonable to expect a uniformly high level of insight among the authors, but contributions which sound like an excerpt from a “What I Learnt In First Day School Today” essay do little for the book as a whole, and pale next to the truly spirit-led and personal contributions.

I got the impression that the editors themselves had something of the same problem: a little too much book learning about what Quaker experience is “supposed” to look like. The book might have benefited from a little more openness to the Spirit to trust that a range of personal spirit-led sharing, even if not always obviously Quaker, might better convey the experiences of Young Friends. In one case the editors even went so far as to annotate a contribution, noting that it represented only a partial account of Quaker belief.

I also wished that the editors provided some background about how the book came to be. Who decided to write such a book? How were the contributions collected? How many were received? How were the editors selected? The development of the book itself was probably an engaging exercise in Quaker practice; however, although there is an interesting

Book Reviews...Book Reviews...Book Reviews

description of the meeting at which the editors came together to "sift through the submissions" and make their selections, we are left in the dark as to the rest of the process.

Despite my quibbles with some of the contributions and the editing, there is good and powerful stuff in this book. In addition to providing a voice to encourage Young Friends to

articulate their belief in and experiences with Quakerism, the book consciously attempts to capture the full diversity of the Quaker community, from Evangelical to Liberal, from African to North American. Those contributions containing a powerful insight or heart-felt cry from an articulate teen demonstrate that the editors have done us all a

service. Although in some ways a less consistent book, *Whispers* deserves a place on the shelf beside *Who do we think we are?* and other better-known collections of Quaker writings. ☞

Andrew Gage is a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting.

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The following titles have been added to our stock. For a complete listing of QBS books, see our 2005-2006 Quaker Book Service Catalogue (CF: October 2005). Our Book List is also on the CYM website: < www.quaker.ca/qbs>.

Becoming Peacemakers by Meredith Egan and Marc Forget (Deep Humanity Institute, 2004). Based

on the authors' years of experience, this book is for educators, parents and students interested in changing the way conflict and violence are addressed in the school environment. It aims to foster a restorative approach to behaviour, transgressions and discipline. (117 pp; \$30.00)

Crash by Jerry Spinelli (Random

House Children's Books, 1996). This comical novel for young readers tells the story of the evolution of the relationship between Crash Coogan, a seventh-grade football sensation/ bully who has been mowing down everything in his path since the time he could walk, and Penn Webb, his conscientious, vegetable-eating Quaker neighbour. (162 pp; \$7.95)

Creeds and Quakers by Robert Griswold (Pendle Hill Pamphlet #377, 2005). Quaker spiritual authority lies not in belief systems – in creeds – but in direct communion between individual Friends and the Divine Spirit. While early Friends’ refusal to formulate a creed threatened existing religious practice and brought them great persecution, this historic witness against creeds is not fully appreciated by Friends today and may be in danger of being lost. (35 pp; \$6.40)

Engaging Scripture: Reading the Bible with Early Friends by Michael L. Birkel (Friends United Press, 2005). To “engage scripture” is to encounter the presence of God. This book invites us to engage Scripture experientially as early Friends did, seeing in the words of the Bible the language of the inner life. (123 pp; \$19.20)

Fellowships, Conferences and Associations: The Limits of the Liberal Quaker Reinvention of Meeting Polity by Elizabeth Cazden (Beacon Hill Friends House, Quaker Issues, 2004, reprinted from *The Bible, The Church and the Future of Friends*). The author discusses the efficacy of different Quaker models of polity, that is, how meetings govern themselves and what decisions may properly be taken by a local meeting rather than by action of the Yearly Meeting. (36 pp; \$6.40)

Friends’ Peace Witness in a Time of Crisis edited by Nancy Irving, Vicki Hain Poorman, Margaret Fraser (2005 FWCC, Philadelphia, 2005). This is a moving record of views of Quakers presented at a Quaker Peace Conference in January 2003 after the traumas of 9/11 and the Iraq War. The five panels included presentations by Canadian Quakers Rick

McCutcheon, beyond joy, and Jane Orion Smith. (184 pp; \$28.80)

Inheritors of the Joyful Gospel by Helen Rowlands (Canadian Quaker Pamphlet Series # 62, Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture, 2005). In this lecture, Helen Rowlands explores the origins and purposes of Quaker books of Faith and Practice. She describes some of the issues faced by Britain Yearly Meeting as it went about revising its Book of Discipline. (35 pp; \$4.50)

Living in Virtue, Declaring Against War: The Spiritual Roots of the Peace Testimony by Steve Smith (Pendle Hill Pamphlet # 378, 2005). Born in an era of profound spiritual awakening, the Quaker Peace Testimony remains a radical challenge today – to live Jesus’ message of love, forgiveness and reconciliation. This is the author’s story of his personal discovery and conviction in the Light. (40 pp; \$6.40)

Living Truth: A Spiritual Portrait of Pierre Ceresole by Keith R. Maddock (Pendle Hill Pamphlet # 379, 2005). The author describes the spiritual growth of a passionate, poetic, solitary seeker of Truth, Swiss activist Pierre Ceresole (1879-1945), who urges us “to set aside our theories and our fears, to take up the tools that are needed to create a more humane, just and peaceful world.” (35 pp; \$6.40)

No Extraordinary Power: Prayer, Stillness and Activism by Helen Stevens (Quaker Books, Swarthmore Lecture, 2005). Drawing from her experience as a peace activist and a member of the Iona Community, Helen Stevens sets out to find how prayer can work to achieve the unexpected within ourselves and in the


world. (111 pp; \$22.50)

The Quiet Rebels by Margaret Hope Bacon (Pendle Hill, 1999). This well-researched book documents the significant role that Quakers have played in U.S. history. It is well indexed, has a good bibliography and features many photographs showing Quakers at work around the world. (249 pp; \$19.20)

Twelve Quakers and God by Quaker Quest (Quaker Quest Pamphlet 1, 2004). In 2003, members of the Quaker Quest team of Britain Yearly Meeting agreed to share their experience of the Divine. This pamphlet expresses what twelve Quakers at the start of the twenty-first century understand to be at the heart of their faith. (32 pp; \$6.25)

Twelve Quakers and Pacifism by Quaker Quest (Quaker Quest Pamphlet 3, 2005). The twelve Quakers who have written these pieces are of differing ages and backgrounds, and their views on pacifism differ too. (32 pp; \$6.25)

Twelve Quakers and Worship by Quaker Quest (Quaker Quest Pamphlet 2, 2004). The worship of Quakers is simple, waiting together in silence and stillness. This pamphlet records the personal worship experience of twelve Friends. (32 pp; \$6.25)

Whispers of Faith: Young Friends share their experiences of Quakerism edited by W. Geoffrey Black, P. Zion Klos, Claire Reddy, Milam Smith, Rachel Stacy (QUIP, 2005). This book is a collection of inspiring, deeply felt writing by Young Friends. It contains their views on worship, testimonies, communities, spiritual journeys and “walking on water.” (160 pp; \$19.20) 

Progress report: Faith and Practice (F&P) Development Committee

By Molly Walsh

Our committee wishes to outline for Canadian Friends the draft chapters we have produced, as well as other accomplishments and work in progress.

The following chapters have been distributed during sessions of Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) over the past years:

- *Faith in Action: Testimony* (2003)
- *The Foundations of Faith* (2004)
- *The Meeting Community* (2005)

At Canadian Yearly Meeting 2005, the committee also organised and chaired:

- the Sunderland P. Gardner lecture "Inheritors of the Joyful Gospel: Faith and practice as an expression of Quaker Identity" presented by Helen Rowlands;
- a Special Interest Group to discuss the lecture with Helen Rowlands;
- a pre-gathering hands-on workshop on the upcoming F&P draft chapter, *Faithful Lives*;
- Quaker Study Sessions on the history of our Discipline with Anne Thomas.

We are currently working on the next draft chapter, *The Lifelong Journey*, which will be distributed at CYM 2006. This incorporates material gathered for "Stages of Life," which was compiled during 2005. As our work progresses, further submissions as well as feedback are welcomed by the committee. 🐸

Molly Walsh, clerk of the Faith and Practice Development Committee, is a member of Montreal Monthly Meeting.

Canadian Yearly Meeting national listeners for adult and Young Friends

Canadian Yearly Meeting National Listeners are available to listen to any Canadian Friend disclose harm done on matters of sexual harassment or abuse, or any other topic a Friend may need to discuss.

If you need a listener, the first step is to approach a trusted Friend within your Monthly Meeting (MM), or to go to your MM Ministry and Counsel. If this path is not comfortable, you may contact a National Listener. Knowing the healing that comes from simply being heard, we offer you a safe and confidential space in which to speak.

National Listeners for Adult Friends

• **Ed Belzer:**

Tel: (902) 384-2730 E-mail: belzer@ns.sympatico.ca

• **Rose Marie Cipryk:**

Tel: (905) 684-9924 E-mail: rmcipryk@cogeco.ca

• **Jay Cowsill:**

Tel: (306) 652-2407 E-mail: jmc590@mail.usask.ca

• **Dorothy Janes:**

Tel: (416) 929-8812 E-mail: dorothyj@idirect.com

National Listeners for Young Friends

• **Nat Egan-Pimblett:**

Tel: (604) 826-8859 E-mail: data_dyne@hotmail.com

• **Julie Paradis:**

Tel: (403) 284-5946 E-mail: turtlekate@telus.net

• **Peter Stevenson:**

Tel: (765) 983-2054 E-mail: stevepe@earlham.edu

Whenever possible, please contact listeners first to arrange a mutually convenient time to speak later.

Home Mission and Advancement Committee

invites applications for the position of Editor, *THE CANADIAN FRIEND*

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For further enquiries or to receive an information package, please contact Rose Marie Cipryk, 70 Louisa Street, St. Catharines, ON L2R 2J8 Tel.: (905)684-9924 E-mail: rmcipryk@cogeco.ca

Family reunion, secret society, or servant of Yearly Meeting?

A Report on the Fall 2005 Representative Meeting

By Beverly Shepard

Joyous greetings, hugs, smiles, quick catch-ups on news — a celebratory atmosphere prevailed as people gathered from across Canada in Ottawa in November. Friends who have become dear to each other through their shared work and infrequent encounters met again like members of an extended family. Seeing each other after a separation of months; preparing for a couple of days of being together, working hard, invoking the spirit in each of us, and discerning Divine will; knowing we are about to be pampered by members of Ottawa Meeting — those who attend Representative Meeting (RM) find it meaningful and important, yet I am constantly surprised to learn how many Friends across Canada are scarcely aware of its existence.

Representative Meeting isn't just for those on it. Each member is appointed by his or her Monthly Meeting to serve in this capacity, or is a committee clerk or Yearly Meeting clerk. Between August of one year and the next, there is much to be done to maintain our Society, and it's RM which oversees that work and makes the necessary decisions. It's just a bonus that it's such a rewarding service!

For your present reading delight, here are some of the matters that came before Friends at the gathering in November.

Martha Laing, Clerk of Religious Education Committee, reported on the Travelling Library, presently under the care of Yarmouth Monthly Meeting. There's material for both adults and children, curricula and individual books, including a lot of new ones purchased from FGC with funds from an anonymous Canadian benefactor. Particularly recommended is an adult curriculum entitled *Friends' Ways*.

We continue to be concerned about Friends United Meeting's policy on hiring and sexual activity. CYM, one of five YMs affiliated with both FUM and Friends General Conference and troubled by this issue, sent a letter from RM last spring to the Board of FUM. Finding a way forward together is a spiritual challenge which will exercise our deepest capacities for understanding and compassion.

We received an inspiring report from the co-clerk of Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting. Reykia Fick reported on the fundraising results for sending Young Friends to the World Gathering of Young Friends last August — the officially designated Canadian Young Friends, others who had been accepted to attend, PLUS Young Friends from Guatemala! After costs, there will be a surplus — this is fundraising with real energy and commitment! Reykia expressed the thanks of Young Friends to CYM and indi-

vidual Friends for their generous support. Attending this event has transformed and inspired our Young Friends — if you haven't yet experienced a presentation from one of them you should invite one to your Monthly Meeting soon.


We heard that the size of Camp NeeKauNis has been approximately doubled by the purchase of the neighbouring property, which includes a small house. Imagine the possibilities! Friends are asked to be mindful of Camp's financial needs, given the expansion of the camp, but the Camp NeeKauNis committee would also welcome ideas and visions for our new, larger facility.

We meet for long hours at Representative Meeting, and we do so willingly because there is much important work to be done: expressing our testimonies inside and outside our own YM, supporting our youth, offering special opportunities such as Camp, and ensuring that we have the funds and the energies to do all we do. Asking your Meeting's Representative what's been going on at the meetings is one of the best ways there is to feel connected to Friends across the country and to learn about the faith community of which you're a part. ☸

Bev Shepard is a member of Hamilton Monthly Meeting, and clerk of Canadian Yearly Meeting.

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For more information, e-mail Shane at: info@yingwenteach.com or check our web site at <http://www.yingwenteach.com>.

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Ben Lomond (CA) Quaker Center. Two full-time positions providing spiritual leadership to West Coast Friends. Develop workshops; manage staff, finances and facilities; fundraise; work closely with spirited Board. Compensation includes: salary, housing, utilities, benefits, glorious coastal redwoods. Seeking applications from couples or individuals. GLBT & persons of color welcomed. Check website to confirm opening, review job description, and download application. HYPERLINK "<http://www.quakercenter.org>" www.quakercenter.org

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Woodbrooke is now searching for the next Ferguson Quaker Fellow. You will have substantial experience in an area of work of interest to Friends. You will use the time of the fellowship to reflect, research, draw out fresh insights and share them with a wider audience. You need not come from an academic background – we are interested in practical outworkings of Quaker faith. Your particular interests will determine the shape and outcome of the Fellowship – subject to negotiation, you may give seminars, run workshops, or maybe write for publication.

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 Application forms must be returned by 19 May 2006.



Letters to the Editor

I feel morally obliged to draw attention to unfortunate errors in Friend Keith Maddock's article that appeared in the recent issue of *The Canadian Friend* (Sept.–Oct. 2005). The errors lie with the meaning he attaches to the words Universalist and Universalism. These words have different meanings in different places, and without the writer revealing his source(s), the reader is left somewhat in the dark. But it is a fair guess that he (the writer) is talking about Quaker Universalism (see below under item 2). The errors are:

1. In the first sentence of the first paragraph, the writer says that many people who seek “an alternative world view in *universalism* are *cut off* from their religious heritage.” The term *cut off* is poorly chosen. It is unkind, presuming and rash. It is used without giving evidence; it is misleading because it biases the uninitiated; and it is not in accordance with the truth. I happen to know a fair number of Universalists (in Canada, U.S., and Europe), and not a single one of them would consider him or herself *cut off* from *any* religion. If asked, they probably would say that their spiritual awareness *evolved* beyond their *religious heritage*. Instead of being *cut off*, they *extended* their spiritual horizons. The poor choice of wording may have been a slip of the pen, which nevertheless reveals an unfortunate prejudice on the part of the writer.

2. In the second sentence of that paragraph, the writer gives *his* understanding of what *Universalism* is about. He got it all wrong. A good definition is given on the back cover of every issue of the *Universalist Friends*, the Journal of the Quaker Universalist Group in the UK. It says, “*The Quaker Universalist Group is based on our understanding that spiritual awareness is accessible to everyone of any religion or none, and that no one person and no one faith can claim to have the final revelation or monopoly of truth. We acknowledge that such awareness may be expressed in many different ways.*” A similar definition is given in no. 39 of the *Universalist Friends*, the Journal of the Quaker Universalist Fellowship in the U.S.

3. It should be clear that by itself Universalism is *not* a religion; it stands perfectly neutral on religions. It also does *not*, as the writer “*assumes*,” “refer to belief in

one undivided ... truth,” and does *not* in any way get involved in *theological* disputes, such as “Trinitarian” versus Unitarian. Call it a philosophy, or a doctrine, or a worldview, if you must. It is understandable that the neutral stance with respect to religions is difficult to appreciate for some Christians, and Universalists have to remain alert for misinterpretations of what they cherish, whether made intentionally or in good faith.

NB: For an article such as the one mentioned above the Editor at least should insist on adequate references so the reader can follow up.

In friendship and in peace! Siepko Lok

Siepko Lok is a member of Victoria Monthly Meeting, attending Vancouver Monthly Meeting.

Author's response

I'd like to express my appreciation to our Friend Siepko Lok for responding to my article ... To be brief, I should explain that my writing is always a work in progress, and my perspectives do evolve over time. When writing the introductory paragraph referring to people being “cut off” from traditional religion it did not occur to me that my wording was especially provocative. However, now that it has been brought to my attention, I am inclined to replace the term with “alienated from,” to suggest that the traditional forms of organized religion no longer speak to the experience of many seekers.

Friends have something valuable to offer in recognizing that it is not the outward forms but the inward experience of the Spirit, or the living Truth, that is at the heart of all vital religious teachings. The definition of “universalism” offered in Siepko's letter seems to be in harmony with this point. My own concern is primarily with encouraging interfaith dialogue through mutual recognition of the Truth we hold in common, and which our diverse symbols, allegories and even rituals are intended to evoke. I believe that everything needs to be subjected to question and revision as we, in the words of the Swiss Friend, Pierre Ceresole, “take

care to grease our weather vanes, so that they do not get stuck in the rust of tradition in a position unrelated to Truth.” Yet, as a person who has been deeply influenced and inspired through organized religion, I feel that we cannot dismiss the outward forms either — even when they no longer seem relevant in a pluralistic or secular

world. To speak of the Spirit as living Truth is only meaningful in the context of incarnation, or “inspiration,” or the interaction of body and spirit.

But that’s enough for the present. Thank you again for this opening to dialogue. ☞

Keith Maddock is a member of Toronto Monthly Meeting.

How to avoid paying military taxes when you do your income tax this year

Since 1982, Conscience Canada has maintained a Peace Tax Trust Fund, in which peace trustees have deposited the military portion of their taxes as a protest against paying for war. Until a Conscientious Objector Bill has passed into legislation, Conscience Canada provides a positive option for conscientious objectors to military taxation to deposit the military portion of their federal income taxes into a Peace Tax Trust Fund, as a formal objection to paying to kill.

To do so, we suggest the following procedure:

1. Complete your Income Tax Form as usual, down to *Balance Due*.
2. Go back to *Net Federal Tax* line. Calculate 8.06% of the amount you entered on this line.
3. Make out a cheque for this amount to *Conscience Canada Peace Tax Fund, In Trust*, and send it to Conscience Canada, 901-70 Mill Street, Toronto, ON M5A 4R1. Please specify if you want the interests on your deposit kept segregated or if they can be used for the work of Conscience Canada. If you have all your taxes deducted at

source, as 85% of taxpayers do, you can deposit a symbolic amount in the Fund. Be sure to make a copy of your cheque before you mail it in.

4. Write a letter to the Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty, explaining why you wish to have your taxes supporting peace rather than killing, teaching others to kill, making and selling lethal weapons, and preparing for war. Indicate that you have directed the military portion of your income taxes to the *Peace Tax Fund, in Trust* (or have sent a symbolic amount to the Fund). Make seven copies of this letter.

5. Send the following to your local Tax Centre:

- your completed Income Tax form, your cheque to the Receiver General for the Balance Due (less the amount of the cheque, which was derived from step #3),
- a copy of the cheque in #3,
- a copy of your letter to the Minister of Finance, Jim Flaherty.

6. Send the original letter, postage free, to the Minister of Finance, House of Commons, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6.

Send copies to your MP (whom you can find at: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/people/house/PostalCode.asp?Source=SM>); and to Conscience Canada for possible use in their newsletter.

7. Send the other copies of your letter, also postage free, to the following federal politicians, all c/o the House of Commons, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6:

- Carol Skelton, Minister of National Revenue,
- Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, and Leader of the New Conservative Party of Canada,
- Gilles Duceppe, Leader of the Bloc Québécois,
- Jack Layton, Leader of the New Democratic party (NDP),
- Alexa McDonough, NDP member of Parliament for Halifax.

8. You may also wish to write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper and/or to Canadian magazines of your choice. ☞

THIS ARTICLE IS BASED UPON INFORMATION FROM: <[HTTP://WWW.CONSCIENCECANADA.CA/TRUSTFUND/INDEX.HTML](http://WWW.CONSCIENCECANADA.CA/TRUSTFUND/INDEX.HTML)>.

Around the Family

Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting

As of January 1, 2006, Wolfville Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends will be known as Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.

Coldstream Monthly Meeting

Coldstream Monthly Meeting has welcomed into membership Tom Butler, George Downham, and Don Frost. Beth Osuch has joined us as a sojourning Friend from Seneca Valley Preparative Meeting in Maryland. Ken Muma has reaffirmed his membership in our Meeting.

We mourned the passing of Marydel Balderston, a long-time member of Coldstream Meeting.

Halifax Monthly Meeting

The Meeting supports the broadening of the Isolated Friends Committee to include (within our region) Isolated Friends, Distant Friends, and Friends who wish to be kept in touch.

A group of Friends has been meeting for worship and study in Middle Musquodoboit (more below).

Information on the historic Dartmouth Quaker House Museum, can be found at: <http://www.dartmouthheritagemuseum.ns.ca/quaker.html>.

Hamilton Monthly Meeting

On 12 December 2005, our Friend Bea Fletcher died. A memorial meeting will take place in the spring, since many of her family are at a distance.

On 22 April, a Spring Retreat is planned at the Meeting House, with a variety of activities to help us think about our life as a Meeting. Are we declining? If so, what should we do about it? If not, what has happened to the energy that used to enable all the activities and tasks we set ourselves? Do we need greater outreach? Fewer commitments and offices? Does our busyness affect our spiritual life positively or negatively? These are some of the questions we may be exploring at the retreat.

Ottawa Monthly Meeting

On 17 December 2005, Peter and Rose Mae Harkness hosted a book launch for Murray Thomson's memoir

entitled: *Mother, God Bless Her!* His book is based on the letters and stories of his mother during her life in China and Canada.

Saanich Peninsula Monthly Meeting

On 20 November, Saanich Peninsula MM discussed the significance of the Peace Testimony. We agreed that we are opposed to war. However, there was no clarity about our reaction to other forms of violence. We recognize that each individual is confronted with different challenges and has unique opportunities to promote peace. This realization underscores that the Peace Testimony is mostly exhibited through personal conduct in everyday life — our interrelationships, and our social, economic and political choices.

Toronto Monthly Meeting

Richard Broughton, a long-serving member of Toronto Monthly Meeting, died on 17 January 2006 at the age of 88. A Meeting for Worship for Burial was held at Friends House on 28 January 2006.

Western Half-Yearly Meeting

The spring gathering of WHYM will be held as usual on Victoria Day weekend at the Sorrento Retreat Centre. Beginning with a balancing workshop on Friday, 19 May, and ending with a final meeting for worship on Monday morning, 22 May. For information, contact registrar David Stevenson: dgsteven@telus.net, (250) 564.5695 or clerk Mick Monroe: mickm@shaw.ca, (250) 370.9491.

Friendly Musquodoboit Invitation

A group of committed Quakers who meet for worship in Middle Musquodoboit, Nova Scotia, are inviting other Quakers to come to live in the village and contribute to the development of a Friends community. Here, houses are moderately priced. The community has a hospital, bank, post office, co-op store, pharmacy, gas station and garage, a cultural centre, schools, a casual lifestyle, and friendly neighbours. We are about one half-hour from the Halifax International Airport and one hour from Halifax/Dartmouth. Contact David Newlands at: newlands@primus.ca; 460 Archibald Brook Road, RR 5, Middle Musquodoboit, Nova Scotia, B0N 1X0.

Around the Family

Friends General Conference 1-7 July 2006 near Tacoma, Washington, U.S.

Plenary speakers will include Sallie McFague, from Vancouver School of Theology, speaking about God's love and command to care for all living creatures; Laura Holiday, on the Quaker Institute of the Future; and Sue Williams, a social activist from Ireland YM who has worked as a consultant in political mediation and intervention in many places of war and social unrest.

Various members of CYM will be presenting workshops on: Mandala and Prayer Art; War as Disease; Chant; Water Action: Making it Happen; Sharing Our Stories on Justice; and Wool Gathering. As well, Janet Ross from Toronto will give the Bible Half Hour.

Please note that only CYM members who have attended a previous Gathering will receive an Advance Program in the mail; please contact us if you want one mailed to you. A few programs will be mailed to monthly meetings and worship groups. Look for more information at: www.fgcquaker.org. On-line registration begins March 1. Space is limited, so register early.

Religious Education Committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting

The Religious Education Committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting keeps two collections of curricula and study material — one for ADULTS AND ADULT STUDY GROUPS, and the other for CHILDREN AND FIRST DAY SCHOOLS. CYM Members and Attenders can borrow these books, postage free, for up to three months. On the internet, visit: http://www.quaker.ca/Religious_Education/index.html for access to these excellent resources.

Send an e-mail to: AdultLibrary@quaker.ca or ChildrenLibrary@quaker.ca. Telephone: 519-775-2670 or write: CYM Travelling Library c/o Yarmouth Monthly Meeting, Box 105, Sparta, ON N0L 2H0.

Free Quaker resources on the web

Canadian Yearly Meeting online resources

<http://www.quaker.ca>

Our own Canadian Yearly Meeting resources web site, with sections on: Contacts and Information, Upcoming Events, Publications (including *The Canadian Friend*), CYM Committees, Resources, What's new?, and Other CYM Links.

Friends General Conference resources

<http://www.fgcquaker.org/library/fosteringmeetings/>

A rich and varied abundance of resources to help foster vital Friends Meetings.

Pendle Hill (PH) documents

http://www.pendlehill.org/e_publishing.htm

Free download of three lectures: "Quakers speak on the Bible, ministry, and their spiritual guides."

http://www.pendlehill.org/pendle_hill_pamphlets.htm

As well as information on ordering current Pendle Hill (PH) publications, here we find many free downloads of out-of-print PH pamphlets.

Quakers in the news

<http://quakersinthenews.blogspot.com/>

F/friends are invited to read, comment, and post links to this news reportage site concerning the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

Wikipedia project on Quakers

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Religious_Society_of_Friends_%28Quakers%29

Edit the work to maintain and improve Quaker-related entries on Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia.



An appeal on behalf of *The Canadian Friend* (CF)

As we begin our second century of publishing *The Canadian Friend*, many Friends have expressed gratitude for the blessings of connection and spiritual nourishment it brings. Please consider filling out the enclosed fund-raising card to help support this work, through a donation for your own subscription, a gift subscription to another person, or a general contribution. All donations are tax-deductible. For information, please contact the CF Business Manager, Seán Hennessey, at cf-businessmanager@quaker.ca or (250) 366-4372.

For this issue

Editor June-Etta Chenard
Editorial Support Donald Alexander, Daphne Davey, Erika Koenig-Sheridan, Barbara Smith
Graphics Martha Laing, Sheila Havard, Rachel Singleton-Polster

Please help! Your articles, poetry, drawings and photos are needed!

Submissions are needed, and do not have to be related to the issue's stated theme. Material from Young Friends is always especially welcome. Please send all submissions to the editor, whose contact information is on the inside front cover.

Themes, deadlines and queries for upcoming issues

- Due date: **8 May** 2006 (July issue) NOTE EARLY DATE, TO ENABLE THE *CF* TO REACH FRIENDS PRIOR TO THEIR DEPARTURE FOR CYM
Theme: **How we deal with illness, aging and death**
Quaker Faith and Practice 21.73: "As we open ourselves to become the channel of God's healing grace we shall find that healing is given to those who pray as well as to those for whom we are praying."
– Jack Dobbs, 1984
- Due date: 15 August 2006 (for October issue)
Theme: **Canadian Yearly Meeting in session**

The Canadian Friend can be viewed online at: <http://www.quaker.ca/cfriend/cfriend.html>.

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40012338
REGISTRATION NO. 09887
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO
THE CANADIAN FRIEND
ARGENTA BC V0G 1B0

The Canadian Friend acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program towards our mailing costs.

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