

# The Canadian Friend

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December 2006

## Portraits of Canadian Friends



**\*\* ALSO IN THIS ISSUE \*\***

Thoughts on Marriage

Foxfell Project Update

Friends and Electronic Media

News from Friends United Meeting

Ways to contribute to the Canadian Friend

# The Canadian Friend

December 2006  
Volume 102, Number 5

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## *From the editor's desk.....*

This issue focuses on thumbnail sketches of Friends in Canada, and our selection is inevitably dominated by some of our more weighty and prominent Friends. Of course, we could easily fill several issues with portraits of the pillars of our many communities. So as you read through, wonder to yourself why we're lucky enough to have these people. Or maybe, given how few Quakers there actually are, why aren't we lucky enough to have a few more people like them? Or finally, will we keep being lucky in the future?

One of the original purposes for the existence of Friends Meetings, is to help one another to become, bit by bit, more "perfect". Which is to say more mature, closer to how we're meant to be. In the past, one way this was done was to formally recognize those with special gifts for the community, and help them develop those gifts. Today we may not formally label our ministers and elders as such, but it's hard to deny that we do have them. The question is, how do we develop more people like them?

As a mental exercise, think of the Friends in your community, and consider:

Who are the ministers in my Meeting? Who has a gift for hearing what God is saying to us, and translating it into words we can all understand?

Who are the elders in my Meeting? Who has a gift for discerning how the spirit is trying to mold us individually?

Who has a gift for supporting others?

Who has a gift for carrying out tasks wisely?

Who has a gift for keeping us on the straight and narrow?

And most importantly: who in my Meeting is showing first signs of having a gift, and may need the help of the community to develop it?

Many thanks,

*Keith Macgowan*

# December 2006

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THE COVER ART IS BY CLARE SINGLETON, A MEMBER OF VANCOUVER MONTHLY MEETING WHO WORSHIPS WITH MID-ISLAND ALLOWED MEETING OF VICTORIA MM.

CORRECTION: IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE JEN DEAKIN'S NAME WAS INADVERTANTLY  
GIVEN AS JEN TATRO.

# Sarah Chandler

By Jesse Thompson

When I first e-mailed Sarah on the subject of writing an article about her for The Canadian Friend, it was early fall. The apples and plums in the Chandler's organic orchard were ripe and ready for picking. A large, furry black bear was lending unwanted help with the harvest. I was here in Winnipeg, where the trees were turning golden and the air danced with falling leaves, and despite the distance from British Columbia I felt daily connected to Sarah and Trevor's farm. I was munching my way through a bag of apricots, dried from fruit that had been picked there in July.

The Chandler's farm is at the bottom of a long, steep hill on the road leading north of Lillooet on the west side of the Fraser River. The surroundings are semi-desert, filled with Douglas Fir, sagebrush and bunch grass. A stream with a waterfall tumbles between the house and the orchard down into the river. Sitting on the porch for Meeting for Worship during a summer retreat of Vernon Monthly Meeting, I can hear the buzz of bees, the gurgle of the river, the chirp of birds, and the movement of wind in trees.

For Sarah, living on a farm and in these beautiful surroundings has deeply affected her spiritual practice. She says, "I am surrounded by Creation every day, in a way I lose touch with when I spend time in the city. The earth, the river, the creek, the trees, the mountains, the furred, the feathered, the finned ... all are present on a daily basis. They nurture us and speak to us of the Creator that made us all, even as we nurture some of them."

From seeds planted in early childhood, Sarah has been led much of her life to work on issues of aboriginal rights and restorative justice. She has been an active member of QAAC, (the Quaker Aboriginal Affairs Committee) and is an associate of Quakers Fostering Justice.

In 1999, Sarah was working in Uzbekistan. She was adapting and implementing human rights trainers training for a women's Non-Governmental Organization. That work led to the opportunity to

work with law and technical training centre students. While they practiced their English, Sarah led them through a training on the rights of the child. Many times her students asked her if she believed in God.



"When I said 'yes', they asked, 'Why?'. When I look around me here, or even in Tashkent, with its nearby mountains, tree-filled parks, and chattering, whistling flocks of mynah birds perched in the trees at twilight, I think, 'How can I not?'"

*"May you always seek. May you always be open. May the Light shine upon you. May you find the spiritual path that best supports the full expression of that of God within you. May you find the spiritual path that best supports you to connect with that of God in all of Creation."*

-a wish from Sarah Chandler, 2006

\* Sarah Chandler is a member, and Jesse Thompson an attender of Vernon Monthly Meeting.\*

# An Interview with Betty Peterson

By Donna Smyth

**W**hat brought you to Friends?

I was born into and brought up in the Methodist Church in the U.S. In the early 1900s, my grandfather was an itinerant preacher riding a horse from village to village in the hills of Pennsylvania. Clinging on from behind was his youngest daughter (my mother) ready to play for the hymn singing. I grew up singing in church choirs and later conducted them. I was also deeply inspired in my later adult life and work by the stories of the great medical and teaching missionaries I heard as a girl.

The rigid format of the traditional church service and being talked down to from the pulpit did not match the meaningful inspiration I found in the silence out on a hilltop or under the stars. Later, at Syracuse University, Norman Whitney, a Quaker professor, offered intimations of another way, one that spoke to my condition and to the condition of a world rushing to war.

When that war erupted, my new husband and I became Conscientious Objectors. Fortunately, our Alternative Service Unit in Maine came under the sponsorship of the Religious Society of Friends. Soon after the war and following the sudden death of our young son, the loving care from the community of Friends in Syracuse Monthly Meeting led us both into the full commitment of membership.

For over 65 years, the values and examples of Friends have continued to inspire and challenge me.

**W**hat has Canadian Yearly Meeting meant in your life?

As a rather late “Come From Away” to Canada, I felt CYM was a kind of cohesive magnet for all my experiences and learnings. Twenty-six years ago, I first represented Halifax Monthly Meeting on Canadian Friends Service Committee. My service began on the Quaker Committee on Native Concerns where I quickly recognized the similarities

to my years with the Civil Rights Movement in the South. Later, serving on Home Mission and Advancement Committee, with its many complex responsibilities for CYM, broadened my understanding of the comprehensiveness of CYM and the central role it plays among Friends. Lastly, my work on the Ecumenical/Interfaith Committee taught me how essential for our mutual survival are deep respect and dialogue among different faiths on a corporate level.

**W**hat are your spiritual practices?

While called to a lifetime of activism for good causes, I’ve tried to remain centred and grounded in a deeper Reality. “Practicing the Presence” throughout the day in little thoughts, acknowledgements, thanks, sharings, blessings, is sustaining and meaningful to me. There are also times of intentional reading, pauses to breathe deeply, to wonder and to give thanks. I believe in leadings, or inner guidance, and a Way that can open if one waits for it. There is a Universal Spirit, a mystical Source that is accessible to all.

**W**hat is your message of hope for the young?

I have a concern for young people today. There is so much de-bunking, cynicism and loss of faith in politics and organized religion amid an accelerating rate of change. It affects us all. Yet I know young people who are finding new ways to meet this challenge. Grounded in our testimonies of peace, integrity, equality, and simplicity, they act on these unchanging principles to try to bring an end to poverty, hunger, inequality and incessant war.

I say to them: Carry on!

\* Betty Peterson and Donna Smyth are members of Halifax Monthly Meeting. \*

# A Conversation With Betty Polster

By Celia Cheatley

When Norm and I married, we agreed that we would find a religious affiliation we both felt drawn to. Norm was Jewish, and I was Episcopalian (Anglican). Each Sunday, we would visit another church in our search. The Unitarians felt almost right, but not quite.

At the same time, we were also looking for a place to live. We wanted to be part of a community where all races and religions could live together. We had heard of a community outside of Philadelphia called Bryn Gweled Homesteads. While we were in the process of applying for membership [in BGH], we went to Southampton Meeting. After Meeting, as we walked out, we looked at each other and said, "This is it."

That was in 1948. Our Friend, Faith Hastings, got us involved in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Cape May Conference (precursor to Friends General Conference), and American Friends Service Committee weekends. I remember one just after Ghandi was assassinated, where we gathered with some of his followers.

We never saw any reason to leave, as Quaker beliefs fit our own beliefs. We became members sometime in the mid-1950s, when a Friend said, "Betty, it's time thee became a member".

I don't know if this is a message of hope, but I think there is always something worthwhile to do in the world to make it a better place, and Quakers are almost always there doing it. So I guess the hopeful part is that a lot of things that seemed impossible when I was growing up, are now realities. Things like equality between men and women, and many churches being involved in peace work. We didn't think much about the

environment in those days, except to enjoy nature, but now we have to figure out if it is right to drive to Half-Yearly Meeting.

I think that one thing that attracted me to Quakers is that you don't have a spiritual life and another life. It is all one. Everything is part of everything; you just can't separate your spiritual life from everything else. Quaker thought and practice fit with how I felt, but also reinforced growth in that direction.

What role does Canadian Yearly Meeting play in my life? None at all ... and if you believe that, you'll believe anything! If you think of Yearly Meeting as all its parts – worship groups, committees, Half-Yearly Meeting, Yearly Meeting, and service around the world, then you see it is a huge part of my life. I think I have served on every Yearly Meeting committee except HMAc. And CYM in session – I like it!

If I were to pass on words of encouragement, it would be that it is helpful to the Yearly Meeting and to each other to participate in as many Quaker activities as we can, however much we are able. That may be your local worship group,

or committees or Yearly Meeting in session. It's ours. No one else can make it happen. We have to be together – whether on a local committee or Representative Meeting. All of these bits make up the fabric of Yearly Meeting. We must contribute of ourselves and our money as much as we are able to make this happen.

\* Betty Polster and Celia Cheatley are members of Victoria Monthly Meeting. This article was composed from an interview done as they drove from Victoria to Water Valley, Alberta for Western Half Yearly Meeting. \*

**...one thing that attracted me to Quakers is that you don't have a spiritual life and another life. It is all one. Everything is part of everything; you just can't separate your spiritual life from everything else. Quaker thought and practice fit with how I felt, but also reinforced growth in that direction.**

# Giannne Broughton

By herself, with encouragement from Caroline Balderston Parry

I grew up in a faithful United Church family outside of Montreal. My parents and the Gospel taught me compassion and to live in search of peace. When I left home, I encountered people who believed that their concept of Christianity was the only true one, and that it was their job to change me. This stimulated me to do quite a bit of research and reflection, often in a feminist vein, and by the time I had my B. A. and B.Ed. and was ready to teach English as a Second Language to give immigrants and aboriginal people a chance of prosperity in our society, I was convinced that any concept of an all-powerful God, even a loving one, was psychologically debilitating. I described myself as an atheist.

After two years in Nigeria with CUSO, I taught French Immersion in Palmerston, near Guelph, Ontario, where I met Beth Brennenman. One day in the staff room she mentioned what being a Quaker meant in her life. Later, while studying Rural Planning and Development after the birth of my son Kofi, and in search of a community that shared my values, I visited Kitchener Monthly Meeting. I came to recognize that I felt reverence for the sincerity and courage that I witnessed in Meeting for Worship, and the minor miracles of reconciliation during Meeting for Business. Now, I can say, "I believe in the Spirit that moves the Meeting."

In 1998, Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) hired me to look after their International Program, giving me the privilege of visiting Friends across Canada and around the world. My studies had given me a sense of where poverty comes from, but this experience taught me where war comes from. In fact, one of the first tasks I had was to send a small grant to Burundi Yearly Meeting for charitable work in a displaced persons camp. In Sierra Leone, D.R. Congo, northern Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, Burma, Columbia, and Palestine/ Israel, war in our time is more about destroying the lives of civilians than about armies annihilating each other. And there is often an international market for some local resource that is financing the armed actors. Is the problem "over there" or is it "over here"? In most cases, it is in

both places. Recognizing this, CFSC decided in 2004 to amalgamate the committee that had co-ordinated international projects with the committee that had co-ordinated peace and social justice work in Canada.

In July 2005, American Friends Service Committee seconded me from CFSC to go to Burundi to set up their Central Africa program office. In preparation for that service, I studied Vern Redekop's "From Violence to Blessing", about the dynamics of deep-rooted conflict and how it can be healed. He points out that human beings learn by imitating, and if imitated, a loving act can have an enormous impact. Blessing is the sincere desire for one's own good AND the good of the other at the same time. I decided to try and see if I could model blessing in every encounter in that most traumatized part of the world. The attempt required every skill, every resource of my being, and sent me often to prayer. I was upheld by the Friends I met who also had chosen this path, though maybe not using the same phrasing, and certainly in the face of more terrible realities than I had ever seen. Their courage is my inspiration.

So, I decided to see if I could start a business in Bujumbura that could generate enough income to support me if I were to go back two years from now, after Kofi is launched into his adult life. The prerequisite was a few Burundians who would see their interest in the success of the business, and thus keep it running well with minimal supervision from me. We began small, and on the basis of openness and sharing benefits, and soon it was clear that we could succeed. We have built a wind-powered rice mill on the outskirts of Bujumbura. The words painted on the wall for all to see are "Work is Love Made Visible." Canadian Yearly Meeting has provided the seed bed which has nourished me, and these accomplishments are yours as well as mine. Congratulations!

\* Giannne Broughton is a member of Kitchener Area Monthly Meeting, residing in Ottawa. Caroline Balderston Parry is a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting, sojourning in Columbus, Ohio for 2006-07. \*

# Dana & Vernon Mullen

By Erika Koenig-Sheridan

## Dana

### *1. What brought you to the Religious Society of Friends and why did you stay?*

I've told the story of what brought me to Quakers in an earlier article in *The Canadian Friend*\* so I'll be brief. The Quaker meeting I attended as a young person, quite by chance, impressed me with the power of the silence. At the time I was not ready for religion, but I remember thinking, when that time comes, this is the place for me. I began reading about Quakers, and making contacts with Friends in England and the Wider Quaker Fellowship. What impressed me most about Friends was that they lived their lives with integrity. It wasn't just their great deeds I admired, it was the fact that their actions sprang from their spiritual life. But reading can be dangerous! Books present the best, the ideal of Quaker life. The course of living in an actual meeting doesn't run quite so smoothly, as I found out. So why do I stay? It occurred to me that the wonderful Friends I read about were also members of meetings that were frequently contentious and troublesome.

### *2. If you were to offer a spiritually-based message, a message of hope - especially to Young Friends, what might that be?*

Pay attention to the Spirit within you. Seek to ground yourself in that Spirit. Young people have so many demands on their attention, so many distractions. But when you're grounded in the Spirit, the vicissitudes of life cannot harm you. The message of hope is already present in the spiritual life, and you can always come back to it. Of course, nurturing the Spirit requires regular attention.

### *3. Would you say something about your spiritual practice?*

I enjoy a daily practice of reading and reflection. For years I've kept a commonplace book, in which I record things—thoughts, quotations—gleaned from my readings. I review them periodically and always find something fresh and new in them. I've also used my

commonplace books in study groups. Regular attendance at meeting for worship and meeting for business is also an important part of my spiritual practice. These are things most people can arrange for themselves.

### *4. What role does CYM play in your life?*

Yearly Meeting has two aspects—there's the week during the summer when Yearly Meeting is in session, and then there's the work that goes on throughout the year. I support CYM through my work on the Quaker Book Service and the Faith and Practice Development Committee— all constant commitments, as is my financial support of CYM.

\*May-June 2005 issue

## Vernon

### *What brought you to the Religious Society of Friends and why did you stay?*

Almost fifty years ago when Dana and I were working in Sarawak, now a state in Malaysia, I read a lot of Hindu philosophy. I liked especially the writings of Professor Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, a philosopher-statesman who was the second president of independent India in the 1960s. I was impressed with his Vedantic view that everything, from rocks to living beings and the whole universe, is part of Being, within the totality of the Divine. This idea of the "Divine in Man" impressed me, and I later wrote my MA thesis in philosophy on that theme as expressed by Radhakrishnan. I was attracted, at the same time, by similar views taught by Meister Eckhart, a 14th century Christian teacher, priest and monk. I attended some Quaker meetings in Halifax in 1964-65 with Dana, and was pleased and even excited to learn the Quaker expression "that of God" in every person. I am a regular attendee at Quaker meetings because I like the silent,



corporate worship, along with its basic mystical approach to the Divine. I have been happy to serve Ottawa MM by caring for the hearing system. I genuinely like people and I've been told that I'm a friendly and welcoming presence to visitors to our meeting. I've also looked after the "Members and Attenders Photograph Board" for the last fourteen years or so, and I have been pleased to help some others in the meeting by serving on several Committees of Care.

*2. If you were to offer a spiritually-based message - a message of hope - especially to Young Friends, what might that be?*

All I can say is that I would advise, as Jesus did, that young Friends, or any Friends, for that matter, seek the Kingdom of God within and then act accordingly. That which is sought is holy, the Seeker is holy and the Search itself is holy. Theology, ritual, scripture, and formal membership may be helpful to some, but the important relationship in the end is between the individual and his or her own understanding of the Divine, the presence of God within themselves.

*3. Would you say something about your spiritual practice?*

I meditate and I enjoy the silent worship in Quaker meetings. I read spiritual material all the time, especially in the philosophy of religion. I try to commune with, and stay in harmony with what I see in the world and in the universe around me. Most important is to be aware of my "Self", the "spark" of the Divine within me, what the Hindu scriptures

call the *amsa*. I try to "walk cheerfully" over the world, aware of the Divine in nature, in people, in the evolutionary process of life, and in the expanding universe.

*4. What role does CYM play in your life?*

I don't participate in the Yearly Meeting business meetings and the various committees. I attend Yearly Meeting to serve the Quaker community by working with the hearing system for the hearing disabled, and with the Quaker Book Service. I love books, and like to help provide them for others.

\* Dana Mullen, Vernon Mullen and Erika Koenig-Sheridan are all members of Ottawa Monthly Meeting \*



# Friends in the Family

By Sue Starr

*Reminiscences about Mordecai Starr  
(Clerk of Canada Yearly Meeting  
Conservative for several years), Harriet  
Starr (his wife), Arthur Starr, now 88,  
(their grandson and Sue Starr's father).  
Arthur lived much of his youth with his  
Quaker grandparents.*

**A**rthur talks about his grandfather, Mordecai:

"I didn't really see him in action very much as clerk of Yearly Meeting, though I went to Yonge Street Meeting with him in the 1920s – up until I was about 12.

I remember seeing him sitting in the facing seats at Yonge Street Meeting House and recording during business meetings. I never heard him speak in meeting other than in business meetings.

From the earliest meetings back in the 1920s, I cannot remember wishing that meetings would be over. I can remember being at Yonge Street Meeting, and there was an elderly friend from Norwich there. He was so earnest in his speaking that his voice shook, so I naturally believed that's why we were called Quakers.

I do remember my grandfather getting the family bible down from the shelf in the kitchen every morning, opening the bible, and reading - frequently a psalm. We would have ten minutes of silence. Then he would replace the bible on the shelf.

I also remember very clearly seeing him sitting in the kitchen reading the jokes in the Farmer's Almanac to my grandmother. I think that's some indication that he had a sense of humour.

I remember too, the only time I saw any sign of anger from my grandfather. I must have been about ten. We were going to do the milking in Uncle Elmer's (Starr) absence. I sat on the stool and started, after he showed me how it should be done. In a very short time, the cow put her foot in the pail and pushed me off the stool and the milk was spilled. When it was obvious to Grandpa that I wasn't harmed, he hit the cow very hard with the stool on the back. Grandfather passed away in 1934,

eleven years before my grandmother died in 1945."

About his grandmother, with much feeling Arthur says:

"I recall that when I attended university, she was the only one who wrote me letters. I also remember hitch-hiking home to Aurora and then walking five miles just to be with her.

The last time I saw her alive was in the spring of 1945. She was lying in the parlor of the red brick house. She suffered much from facial neuralgia at that time. She asked me to please get the family bible and read the 91st Psalm to her. I got the bible and there was no bookmark, but as I opened it on my knees, it opened at the 91st Psalm, and I noticed at the bottom of the page had been patched with scotch tape. As I read slowly to her I would look up and notice that the painful look was disappearing. By the time I finished, she was asleep and her face was very serene, - a picture that I shall never forget."

About his own faith, Arthur says, "Since moving to the Ottawa area in 1981, we attended meeting in Ottawa, monthly, as long as we were able. While attending meetings in later years, I have listened to a voice from within. And whenever I have had personal problems when meeting started, they were not there when meeting ended. From my grandparents, I learned that you learn more from listening than talking, that silence can be relaxing, that it is more satisfying to give than to receive, and more satisfying to find better ways of doing things.

In my mind there is no question that I am still a Quaker. I think you will have to decide why I am still a Quaker."

When faced with a difficult problem, Arthur has been known to pace up and down, quietly repeating, "Faith and Practice. Faith and Practice." Sometimes he will simply sit in his grandmother's rocker, her journal in his hands, listening to his Elders.

\* Sue Starr is a member of Prairie Monthly Meeting. Arthur Starr is an attender of Ottawa Monthly Meeting. \*

# Maxine Kaufman-Lacusta

by Rose Marie Cipryk

What brought you to the Religious Society of Friends?

My first glimpse of Quakers was in a magazine I read in my teens. A fictional Quaker librarian used the phrase, "The God in me speaks to the God in you." Something about that appealed to me, I think because it seemed to reflect a deep level of respect for the other person. Quakers further came to my attention when I was a bored 15-year-old, impatient at being too young to work. I applied for an American Friends Service Committee work camp, but didn't actually attend one until the year after I returned from my first trip to Israel following high school. Over one long weekend we learned something about migrant farm workers' issues and did a few hours of strawberry picking. I subsequently spent a summer living with a Quaker family in California's Sacramento Valley, helping in a project providing child care so migrant workers could leave their small kids when they went off to the fields. I was particularly impressed that these Friends had chosen to live out in the sticks rather than in town where they could have had much higher paying jobs, specifically so that they could live in accordance with their social and spiritual concerns. This was something I hadn't run into elsewhere. What really brought me into the Society, though (after I'd been an attender for quite a few years) was attending CYM, where I truly got the sense of Friends seeking to "speak to that of God" in each other, and to reach spirit-led decisions.

What role, if any, does CYM play in your life?

CYM has been of major importance to me, partially because I've lived in so many different areas. Whatever is going on elsewhere, that intense week of Yearly Meeting allows me to come home with spiritual resources, my batteries recharged.



"If you were to offer a message of hope, especially to Young Friends, what might that be?"

I get totally overwhelmed when I look at the "big picture" of what's going on in the Middle East - not to mention the rest of the world, what with Bush and Co. and the North Koreans acting like tough kids in the school yard, too macho to back down. What keeps my hope for the future of the world alive and revives it when it falters is what's going on at the grass roots - where ordinary folks are doing amazing things and building human bonds between people who are supposed to be enemies. Focusing on the Middle East conflict (because that's what I'm most familiar with), I'm talking about people like the Israelis in groups like the Israeli Committee Against House Demolition, who join Palestinians and internationals to rebuild Palestinian homes demolished by their (Israel's) own government - And the Palestinians in Bil'in village (among others), who welcome Israelis as well as internationals to join them in resisting the encroachment of the "separation wall" being built by Israel on their land, hospitably receiving even Israeli settlers and soldiers who come out of curiosity to find out what's going on with them - and the folks from both communities who come together in the Bereaved Families' Forum - and many, many other groups and individuals who really show how their shared humanity can be kept alive despite what else is going on or being done in their names. A good place to find out more about such hopeful initiatives is on a website I recently found out about when I saw the film "Encounter Point" at the Vancouver International Film Festival - [www.justvision.org](http://www.justvision.org).

\* Maxine Kaufman-Lacusta is a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting. Rose Marie Cipryk is a member of Pelham Executive Meeting. \*

# Getting To Know Margaret Slavin

By Carol Leigh Wehking

In the past two years, many Meetings have been visited by Margaret, who while travelling in the ministry has shared much about creativity, spirituality, and social change with Friends from coast to coast. Now here is a chance to become acquainted with some aspects of Margaret that you may not have had the occasion to explore.

What brought you to Quakerism and why did you stay?

Margaret revealed that she “felt shoved in at the Meetinghouse door.” Four factors converged to get her to Meeting for the first time: first, her son came home from attending an alternative school in Toronto where he had encountered the Quaker peace testimony, with which he had felt deep connection, and announced that he was a Quaker. Naturally, Margaret felt some curiosity to see what this meant. Second, she had had repeated invitations from Sylvia Powers, whom she had known for a long time. The third factor was Margaret’s grief over her father’s death; she was not finding the way back to herself. She found herself looking for spiritual connection. And on a practical level, Margaret had been at open mike poetry readings at the Meetinghouse, so the place itself was known.

When she finally did allow herself to be shoved in the door, she immediately had “a sense of coming home.” One aspect that struck her was that people stood and spoke from the heart about their spiritual journeys. This was a new experience: related to the oral poetry readings in the speaking from the heart, but of a spiritual nature.

Margaret applied for membership about a year later. The Membership Clearness Committee evening was memorable. Afterward, Peter Harkness, one of the committee members, said he felt that “this is the correct next step in your spiritual journey”. This remark struck Margaret, implying as it did respect for the possibility that there could be another path at another time. So far, that hasn’t happened.

She stayed because she felt at home: “I need other people in my spiritual life - companions on the journey. What I want from my meeting – and what I get from my meeting – is also what I get from

Canadian Yearly Meeting: companions on the journey.”

We spoke of Quakers as being spiritual seekers, not people who believe they have arrived somewhere and need seek no further. Margaret noted that sometimes our sense of not arriving keeps us from sharing our “bits of light” or insight as they are revealed to us. Is it because we are trying not to be arrogant? Do we short-change our companion seekers?

Regarding Margaret’s personal spiritual practice:

Margaret practices yoga: three times per week is her goal. She spends half an hour in disciplined position/meditation, maybe with quiet music, then moves into silence and her own form of prayer. She uses the discipline of five-part prayer, which she learned in childhood:

Confession (Margaret interprets this as check-in), Thanks (this is her sense of fullness; sometimes it is the same list as in the check-in), Praise (Margaret uses this category for meditation, or opening to the presence), Intercession (holding people in the Light), and Petition (thy will, not my will be done).

“THEN I feel like going at my day. It holds me steady and I do it as often as I can ... Otherwise, I look for quiet spaces. Because of Friends, I notice them. Otherwise, I might override them. A mark of Friends is that we do notice and value quiet spaces.”

Margaret went on to observe that, “In Quaker Meeting, there is not much direct addressing of the deity, praying out loud. Why is this? It’s not shyness – could it be not wanting to thrust one’s assumptions on others? How can I know for sure when it is just me, not my ego showing off in front of other people?”

She remarked on a response by Joy Newall, when she was thanked for her presence at a gathering. Margaret said, “I could maybe say, ‘Not me, but the Spirit moving through me.’” Joy said, “SAY it!” It is perhaps this diffidence to ‘say it’ which keeps us from giving vocal prayer.

Says Margaret, "I accepted a long time ago that I am a creature who needs to address God. I don't care whether God needs to be addressed. I gave myself permission ... I feel comfortable talking to my good old friend. This is how I am shaped and I recognize that others are shaped differently.

"God, to me, is a force in the universe that desires wholeness and healing. Not just within, but it is a force that makes the trees push up into the air – the same force pushes my spirit. This force is not just within people, but everywhere in the universe."

If you were to offer one spiritually-based message especially to Young Friends, what might that be?

"I think that most of us, not just young people, think of life as a web – ecology is a web of life. I think it's very arrogant to believe that human beings are the one thing that doesn't belong on this planet. Our job – our mission – is to discern why we have been called into being within this web of life, collectively and individually, and then to be faithful to it.

"We reject the triumphalism which puts humans on top, ruling the world. But we suffer from a reverse form of this if we suggest that humans shouldn't be here at all, that humans are the worst thing that has happened to the earth. It's not true of humans any more than for other species. It's wrong to say we're a mistake. We shouldn't be eradicated – any more than crocodiles or grizzly bears. You've got a reason for being: find it! There is a force in the universe – moving us all – you're not an exception! Don't think you are! There is a connection of responsibility to each other built into the web of life.

"A publisher of children's literature was asked what the difference is between children's and adult literature. The answer: 'Children need a line of hope to grow up into.' So do adults!

"Listen to your inner guide and test your leadings. The idea of individual journey seems to be overshadowing the honoured Quaker tradition of corporate discernment, testing our leadings. We support individuals a lot, but the testing has weakened. We should not lose the collective spirit and greater strength and wisdom on which corporate discernment draws. Testing of our leadings is crucial."

Margaret also spoke of writing letters to one's later self. As a young person, she did this: wrote letters to herself at later ages, sealed them, preserved them, and opened and read them at their appointed times. I can see that this would be a most interesting and enlightening exercise from which one might benefit through the years. For myself, even beginning at this late stage, I can see what a rich experience this could be.

\* Margaret Slavin is a member of Wooler Monthly Meeting who worships with Peterborough Allowed Meeting. Carol Leigh Wehking is a member of Hamilton Monthly Meeting \*



# Connie Mungall's Commitment to Every Living Thing

By Joy Newall

Last week, at her home in Victoria, I had the privilege of having a conversation with Connie Mungall. Surrounded by her many plants, rocks, shells and flowers we explored her memory so I could write about what epitomizes her: her deep understanding of the Quaker testimonies of compassionate care for all life.

In my fascination with discovering how individuals identify and then follow their life-passion, (as if they were attracted by a magnet ever pulling them on), Connie generously obliged me. As a child she was fascinated by all life, and when her sons, Robert and Alex, were quite young, she saw that the education system was lacking so much that she set out to raise the bar of standards. She led a team of like-minded people and established what the children named "Super School". Connie ran that school in a large building not far from the Toronto Meeting House, and in the course of time, the magnet pulled Connie through those doors to experience Meeting for Worship.

Her professional life led her in many directions. Doris Anderson, editor of "Chatelaine" magazine, a pioneer of women's rights, regularly depended on Connie for ideas. Connie also wrote books, of which eight were published. She edited the magazine "Geos", a quarterly focused on earth's resources. Further, she edited and co-wrote the "big book" titled "Planet Under Stress". During this time, Connie made her home in Ottawa, and there became a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting. I chuckled as she said of that time in her busy life, "I realized I was actually becoming a Quaker!" The magnet and her compass were aligned.

Moving to Victoria she contributed to the publication "EcoNews: a vision of sustainable life on Vancouver Island". Her committee leadership in her own Meetings as well as CYM is outstanding. "If I think something should be done – I do it!" she declared. The October sun lit up her grin.

But in her private life, Connie found herself called upon to open her heart as none of us would voluntarily choose to do. Both her sons had contracted multiple sclerosis, and Alex had many disabilities forcing him to life in a wheelchair with technical aids to speak his thoughts. Victoria Meeting had welcomed the membership of both Connie and Alex, and were as supportive as they could be during the time of his decline. Friends formed a group of volunteers to help Connie in her caretaking of Alex, but the time came

**"We do have a  
choice...Opening one's  
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It will take commitment and  
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choice."**

when Connie had to make a choice ... the most difficult and painful for any parent: making the decision to help the medical people choose the time to end her son's life.

Connie herself has written about choice in The Canadian Friend in 1998 under the title "The Planetary and the Personal". "We do have a choice...Opening one's heart may seem hard, risky. It will take commitment and practice ... we do have a choice." The planet earth and Connie's life on it has led to this understanding and practice in her life. It belongs in our collective faith and practice.

\* Connie Mungall and Joy Newall are both members of Victoria Monthly Meeting \*

# The Inevitable Plea For Money.....

## Please donate to the Canadian Friend

**Y**ou knew this was coming. Every year around this time, the pleas for donations come in from every worthy cause in creation, from local to national to international. Crafty charities know that Canadians give the most money at the end of the year, so December can be a smorgasborg of requests for cash. Over the years, some people have developed fundraising radar, which has already deflected them from this page. They're happily browsing page 26, and trying to figure out what on earth "bullfrog power" would be. So it's to the rest of you I'll make my plea. Then you can consider whether you wish to write a cheque, following which you can go join everyone else on page 26.

In order for everyone to benefit from the Canadian Friend, it is sent on a complimentary basis to every member and attender of every Meeting in Canadian Yearly Meeting. Therefore, most of the people who read it can receive it at absolutely no cost to themselves. Obviously publishing a magazine can't be done for nothing, so someone, somewhere, has to pay the bills. For most of the cost, that someone would be Home Mission & Advancement Committee (HMAC). HMAC oversees the Canadian Friend, hires staff to run it, and devotes a large chunk of their budget to the operation.

The key word to notice above is that they pay "most" of the cost. Next year it's projected that about 59% of the income for The Canadian Friend will come through HMAC. The rest will from small applications to trust funds, postal subsidies, advertisements, subscriptions and donations. Mostly donations, in fact. Come to think of it, the whole system pretty much falls apart without those donations. And that brings us to you.

Here's one way to picture the scenario: everyone's subscription has been 59% paid for. You just have to coax the magazine the last stretch of the way:

\* If you live in Regina, without help your copies of The Canadian Friend are going to get about as far as the Alberta border.

\* If you live in Toronto, your copies are going to land somewhere in Rainy Lake, Ontario. This will make them soggy, and alarm the geese. No one wants that.

You might also consider making a donation to cover the costs of someone else's subscription, who might not be able to make a donation themselves, or your Monthly Meeting might consider making a group donation.

Look for the handy pull-out card in this issue (and most issues) to help with sending in your donation. Whatever you feel led to give, you're helping everyone who benefits from the Canadian Friend.

PS: My guess is that the bullfrogs are on little treadmills.

### On This Day

By Roger Davies

On this day  
next to nothing  
was spoken  
out loud. The  
next to nothing  
was  
thank you  
said in a whisper  
as I heard, then, too,  
the sound of an arm  
sliding out of a sleeve --  
the sound of the deed  
and the sound of the thank you --  
these nestled in the blessed  
nothing -- the two meeting  
again and again in the Light.

\* Roger Davies is an attender of Halifax  
Monthly Meeting \*

## Help Wanted

# FOOD CO-OP CO-ORDINATOR

To co-ordinate the food co-op at Canadian Yearly Meeting 2007, Windsor Nova Scotia.

Plans shopping lists and menu choices in consultation with the Continuing Committee of Food Co-op and the local arrangements committee, facilitates food preparation, manages food storage and ensures safe food-handling practices.

The co-ordinator has available a host of volunteers for site set up and maintenance, financial control, food shopping, preparation and clean up.

From mid-day Thursday August 2 to mid-day Saturday August 11. (A two day start-up shopping-planning period precedes the Saturday evening first meal). Attends for four hours at each of two meals a day (Breakfast is completely in the hands of co-op members)

We are seeking someone who is familiar with volunteer organizations and sensitive to the Quaker values of simplicity and community building. The person may or may not be a member of the Religious Society of Friends. An honorarium of \$800 is available.

For further information and for application form, please contact:

-David Stevenson, [dgsteven@telus.net](mailto:dgsteven@telus.net), 250-564-5695


-Don Alexander, [dalex@cogeco.ca](mailto:dalex@cogeco.ca), 905-684-9924

-[clerk@annapolisvalley.ca](mailto:clerk@annapolisvalley.ca)

Box 4052, Station E, Ottawa, K1S 5H8

QUAKER BOOK SERVICE

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 We require an extra 20% to be added to the total cost of the order, to cover the extra mailing charges.



# Update on the Foxfell Project

by Ed and Vivien Abbott

**F**riends: At long last Foxfell is under construction. Some of you perhaps remember that dreaming of this development began almost forty years ago when some members of Toronto Monthly Meeting started gathering together in the home of Lies and Dick Smit to discuss the feasibility of acquiring or constructing a residential community to meet a felt need for such accommodation.

Although several possible desirable locations were given consideration it was not until a suitable property in Orillia became available that a committee of Yonge Street Half Yearly Meeting was formed to carry the project forward. By good fortune, the sewer and water service were extended along the street fronting the Meeting House the next summer. The committee consisting of Jim and Bobby Adamson, Pearl and Leroy Jones, Dick and Sarah Preston and Frank Myles and Fritz Hertzberg collected the necessary money and purchased the ten acres of land that were offered in the south part of Orillia adjacent the Orillia meetinghouse.

It was at first planned to develop the whole ten acres, but there was not adequate interest or resources among Quakers to undertake such a large project. It was therefore decided to sell the bulk of the property and retain approximately two acres for a smaller development.

Negotiations with the Orillia Council received approval of a plan to build a twelve unit residential building on this property. It was dependant, however, on road access and sewer, water, light and telephone services being made available by the purchaser of the balance of the land. This again entailed considerable delay while appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board were processed. During the long wait some of the former Foxfell promoters and several who had hoped to reside there were deceased while others gave up waiting and moved elsewhere. It fell to a

small local committee to keep the project alive.

At all times it has been the objective of the Foxfell Board to make this development a model of pleasant, energy efficient, and comfortable residential housing. To this end we have planned for in-floor heating, sun porches on each unit, ground level access to all units as well as wheel chair access to the top level and eventually to all units.

It has been the hope of the Board that some members of the Society of Friends might find in Foxfell a happy home and the Board is prepared to give applications from them due priority. We recognize that for financial considerations this non profit building must be fully occupied quickly after completion next April 1st. Therefore if Foxfell interests you, the time to act is NOW. In financing the building it was found necessary to use some Government funds available for affordable housing. This places restrictions on occupants and on the rents chargeable to a level set by the municipality in accordance with provincial guidelines.

The projected completion date is March 31st. Application forms are available from Vivien Abbott (11 Rowanwood Road RR 2 Oro Station, Ontario, L0L 2E0). Applications should be received by December 31st, 2006.

\* Ed and Vivien Abbott are members of Simcoe-Muskoka Monthly Meeting. \*



# Reflections on Marriage

by Rob Hughes

As in many Quaker homes, a framed vellum document hangs in a prominent location on our living room wall. This is our Quaker marriage certificate. These certificates had their origins in the mid-1600s in England when Quaker marriages were not legally recognized because Quakers refused to go before an Anglican priest or to a magistrate to get married. From its beginning, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has stressed the conviction that marriage is a binding relationship entered into in the presence of God and of witnessing Friends. Before this public commitment is made on the day of the wedding, the proposed marriage must receive the approval of the Monthly Meeting, which is given after careful consideration by an appointed committee. Quaker Meetings will only consider taking marriages under their care where one of the partners in the couple is a member or regular attendee. The wedding itself is a meeting for worship, held after the manner of Friends, within which the marriage takes place. The couple signs the certificate that sets out their vows and everyone who witnessed the marriage also signs. The Quaker marriage certificate became a permanent record of the public nature of a marriage that conformed to Quaker practice.

Just as in centuries past, when Quaker Meetings would celebrate marriages before they were legally recognized, Quakers have been celebrating same-sex marriages long before the law recognized them. The first one in Vancouver Meeting was in 1992.

Our certificate records the marriage under the care of Vancouver Friends Meeting of me and my spouse, Allen Hunt, on May 1, 2004. This was the first legal same-sex marriage under the care of a Quaker Meeting anywhere in the world. Originally,

Quaker marriage certificates were plainly written with no adornment. This was at a time when Quakers found bright colors a distraction and wore only gray to avoid excitement and keep to the Light. Our certificate (like our relationship) is a blending of traditions and is colourfully decorated with a border of Aboriginal dream catchers interwoven with Celtic knots and symbols that reflect Allen's First Nations culture and my Irish-Scottish roots. Our vows to each other of promising with Divine Assistance to be a loving and faithful spouse so long as we both shall live are carefully recorded on the certificate. A black silhouette of Oomakin, our beloved Chow-Samoyed dog, lays majestically in profile in the centre. Underneath are our signatures and those of about 110 people who gathered with us for the wedding. The importance of others witnessing our marrying each other is common to both Aboriginal and Quaker traditions.

**This was the only time in our lives when many of the diverse people in our lives - Quakers, family, friends, neighbours, and co-workers - gathered together in one place for one purpose. There were tears and laughter. We were warmly welcomed into each other's family and received support that was expressed both in the silence and through words of encouragement spoken during the meeting for worship.**

I had no idea what impact the marriage would have on our lives. It ended up as being much more than just being issued a piece of paper from the government or receiving the beautiful Quaker marriage certificate. The wedding brought our relationship out of the closet with everyone. We experienced tension with a couple of people in our families whose religious

beliefs prevented them from accepting our marriage. However, at least one person changed their mind and accepted it so these challenges have turned into blessings. Despite all of the stresses of wedding planning that continued up to the last minute, when we walked into the gathered meeting for worship we felt enveloped in love and that our relationship was held in the Light by all of those present. This was the only time in our lives when many of the diverse people in our lives - Quakers, family, friends, neighbours, and co-workers - gathered together in

one place for one purpose. There were tears and laughter. We were warmly welcomed into each other's families and received support that was expressed both in the silence and through words of encouragement spoken during the meeting for worship.

It is a joy in my life that I was able to celebrate my same-sex marriage with my faith community and also have it legally recognized. Quakers in the past have been faithful to minding the Light by following their leadings to speak truth to power on such unpopular issues as the abolition of slavery and for women's suffrage, even though religious tradition and scripture were cited in support of the status quo. I am proud that Quakers today are participating with many other religious groups in embracing equal marriage rights for same-sex couples.

Thomas and Mary Ellwood, reflecting on their marriage in a Quaker Meeting on 28 October 1669, wrote: "We sensibly felt the Lord with us and joining us, the sense whereof remained with us all our lifetime, and was of good service and very comfortable to us on all occasions." (#488, Christian Faith and Practice in the Experience of the Religious Society of Friends) When Allen and I look at our marriage certificate we share the same experience. Although the Ellwoods would no doubt be surprised at both the artistic flourishes on our marriage certificate and that it records a marriage between two men, when I look at it, I feel that same sense of the Lord with us and joining us.

\* Rob Hughes is a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting.\*

## African Summer Workcamps 2007

The African Great Lakes Initiative (AGLI) is a project of Friends Peace Teams. We are again sponsoring international workcamps in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. Pre-service training begins Sat. June 23 near Washington DC. Workcamps end on July 28. Workcampers assist with building or rebuilding clinics, schools, or other community buildings. Visit <http://www.aglionline.org> or contact Dawn Rubbert: [dawn@aglionline.org](mailto:dawn@aglionline.org).

	<p>Friends World Committee for Consultation SECTION OF THE AMERICAS</p> <p>Comité Mundial de Consulta de los Amigos SECCIÓN DE LAS AMÉRICAS</p>	<p>Connecting Friends Vincula a los Amigos</p> <p>Crossing Cultures Sobrepasa Barreras Culturales</p> <p>Changing Lives Cambia Vidas</p>
		<p><b>"I feel...in possession of a large measure of hope for the future of Quakerism"</b></p> <p>Christine Van Regenmortel, leader, 2006 Quaker Youth Pilgrimage to the US Midwest</p>
<p><i>Working alongside Habitat for Humanity in Richmond, Indiana... was a very hot but enjoyable time, where we all learnt new skills such as building walls and roofing. ... It was rewarding to see the progress that had been made in just three days. From the epistle of the 2006 pilgrimage</i></p>		<p>Friends World Committee For Consultation Section of the Americas 1500 Race Street, Philadelphia PA 19102, USA 215.341.7250, <a href="mailto:americas@fwccamericas.org">americas@fwccamericas.org</a></p>
<p><a href="http://www.fwccamericas.org">www.fwccamericas.org</a></p>		

# Friends and Electronic Media

by Gale Wills

The last ten years or so have seen a phenomenal increase in the use of electronic media among Friends. We have reached a point where it is difficult to serve on a Yearly Meeting committee and impossible to clerk Yearly Meeting or represent CYM on an outside body unless one is "online". Many Monthly Meetings are now using it routinely for administrative matters as well as outreach. Isolated Friends and seekers often find internet links the only reliable connection to Friends that is available.

While the use of email, teleconference and our website has some obvious advantages, there are limitations and concerns associated with its use. The primary concern is for the potential exclusion of those who are not online for economic reasons or for reasons of conscience. There are concerns that email, teleconference and use of web based "meetings" do not allow understanding of the emotional content of discourse. In the extreme, some fear that this practice may even displace conducting our affairs in face to face worship. Added to these concerns are technical problems, privacy problems and concerns for the polluting effects of discarded hardware.

In the face of the inevitable increase in the use of electronic media, it seems imperative that CYM as a faith community address the concerns, as well as the effective and proper use of email and other media. First of all, we need to hear

In the face of the inevitable increase in the use of electronic media, it seems imperative that CYM as a faith community address the concerns, as well as the effective and proper use of email and other media.

and come to an understanding and support of the concerns among Friends that its use can be contrary to our practices as a faith community. There is a need for guidelines for the use of email and teleconference.

Availability and access for all who wish to participate needs to be addressed. Privacy matters must be attended to. Advocacy for and use of proper recycling of old hardware could become a Friendly witness.

We need to get a firm hold on where Friends are and where we ought to be with regard to the use of electronic media before it overwhelms us.

Ironically, the full version of this essay was too long for publication and was therefore posted on the Yearly Meeting website. This illustrates one of the serious problems we face, that of restricting much that is descriptive and/or analytical in nature to those who have access to the web. It can be found at:

[www.quaker.ca](http://www.quaker.ca)

.....under CYM Committees - Consultation and Renewal Group. It can also be obtained in paper form from the author: 6472 Diana Dr. Duncan BC, V9L 5V3.

\* Gale Wills is a member of Victoria Monthly Meeting and is currently serving on the Consultation and Renewal Working Group. \*

# How CYM Finance Committee actually managed to have a worshipful committee meeting over VOIP

by Adrian Dolling and Pauline McKenzie

The weekend of October 14 was a new experience for this committee. We tried VOIP, which is "voice over internet protocol"; a bit like a phone conference actually. Our clerk, Dan Cooperstock, set us up with a program called Skype, which currently enables North Americans to participate in free conferencing for up to five groups or people. It is a new thing! Some Friends used their phones, but it was free for Dan to call them into the conference.

We actually had a few minutes opening and closing worship in this conference! It was peculiar to sit in silence with others across the country, not seeing them, but hearing them breathe. Being in different time zones, we had to start late and end early by Ontario time, in order to accomodate those for whom it would otherwise have been 5am, or midnight. It certainly helped that we all knew each other from Finance Committee or other meetings. In the first session we checked the technology, numbered the pre-circulated reports, and learned that "muting the mike" improved everyone's experience.

At the end of the agenda, we reflected on our experience using Skype technology for our meeting. It was generally positive relative to our expectations. We saved about \$1,850 in travel funds. The telephone cost was zero. Some minor personal investments in headsets, etc. preceded the meeting.

We did not have to take two and a half days off work and more personal time to travel to the meeting (usually held in Toronto). This was a real

**It was generally positive  
relative to our expectations.  
We saved about \$1,850 in  
travel funds**

bonus for three of us living at opposite ends of Canada!

We accomplished our full agenda in three sessions totalling about six hours. The process was a bit different than face to face, in that we members had to indicate by voice to the clerk the desire to speak. We needed to interrupt if the clerk was beginning to close an agenda item or gather the sense of the discussion, because he could not see that someone was leaning forward eagerly or putting up their hand! Occassionally, one member unwittingly interrupted another as both began to speak at the same time, and then lots of respectful instances of "go ahead" or "that's ok, you go first" ensued. Those members at Dan's home experienced the value of the discipline of passing the microphone (rather like the Indian talking stick).

We were reminded that other teleconferencing means exist. We recognized that existing working relationships, pre-circulated materials and strong clerking greatly enabled us to be productive during this virtual meeting. It isn't easy to sketch an idea on paper and say "Oh, here, take a look at what I mean!", unless you sketch, scan and email an attachment ahead of time, or between meetings. The nice thing was to have one's own computer at hand to check emails!

We missed the group experience and camaraderie of being together for meal breaks and we look forward to meeting together in Toronto in March, 2007.

We hope other committees will give it a try, by one means or another. There are a few committees that have done phone conference meetings in the past, and we do thank them for helping to be thrifty with the budget.

\* Adrian Dolling is a member of Victoria Monthly Meeting. Pauline McKenzie is a member of Vernon Monthly Meeting. \*

# Thoughts On Running the Half-Marathon at the OutGames

by Nathalie Brunet

How was it?

It was a long way.

Both physically and emotionally.

I started small, sad and lonely, suspended in the general excitement of the starting line between the bright blue sky and the deep blue waters of the St-Laurent, tracing the graceful curve of Jacques Cartier bridge with my pounding footfalls.

pound-pound-pound-pound

I was feeling small and lost that no one would be at the finish line to cheer for me at the end. That I was there on my own was the result of choices I had made, and circumstances I knew of, and other people behaving in whatever ways they needed to, and normally I'm fine with that. But I was battling the ghosts of difficult relationships, and just at that time, solitude hurt.

And then someone gave the starting signal, and we were off and running.

pound-pound-pound-pound

Even carrying my sorrow, my body surprised me with joy several times during the run. It started off with several of the happy jumps by which it often greets the beginning of a run or a tae kwon do class. Somewhere in the middle of the course, a celebratory resident has set up a large speaker to blare cheesy old rock-and-roll tunes, and I bopped to Tequila as I ran. And even at the end, I found some leaping long joyful strides to greet the final downhill just before the finish line.

But still for most of the run, I was carrying sadness and feeling cast out. Several times I felt so weepy that something tightened in my chest and I wheezed hard as I ran as if I had asthma.

pound-pound-pound-pound

I made a good choice though.

I decided that just because there was no one coming to cheer especially for me was no good reason to run with my eyes down on the pavement and miss all those hundreds of people who came to cheer for everyone. Volunteers in yellow t-shirts, athletes from other disciplines, and GBLT people waving Pride flags, and an old lady with a cane and a sore on her leg who smiled at me as I ran and said "Vas-y!", and then more quietly again to herself "Vas-y!" as she looked down to carefully place her cane and take her next step.

pound-pound-pound-pound

After a while, so many faces cheering me on just because I was there and running reminded me that I am still part of the human family. Loneliness is part of everyone's lot. It may make me feel removed from humanity, but that is precisely the human condition.

I thought about why it is that we cheer for marathon runners no matter how much time it takes them to complete the distance, why the Tely Ten run in St-John's is lined with people cheering friends and neighbours and everyone else. It's about painful and long effort, and the courage and endurance to continue. More than that, it's about the journey that brought the runner to the race in the first place, the months of training and the years it took to become a runner before that. Everyone's life has journeys, in reality much harder and longer than it is for an athlete to run a marathon. The marathon runner is just a conveniently visible symbol that embodies all our journeys. That's why we cheer.

And so I thought of my own journeys that brought me here. Both the satisfying journey that it took me to become strong and secure in my own body, and the much more muddled, incomplete journey that brought me to the OutGames.

I wheezed hard at this point.

pound-pound-pound-pound

And I thought that I had earned the encouragement in exactly the spirit it was given.

They were cheering for a hard journey just because they knew there had to be one, even though they didn't know me from Adam. So I met their eyes in greeting and smiled, and sometimes said thank you for being there.

Not that these thoughts eased the wheezie-weepies, you understand.

It just made it okay to be having them.

pound-pound-pound-pound

So I just came home to my body as it pounded slowly up the last hill to the Olympic Stadium, then galloped downhill again to the arrival, heard my name announced and the cheers of the crowd of people who didn't know me, and crossed the finish line.

Afterwards, I drank some water, cheered some

other runners, had some lunch which had never tasted so good, and ordered a copy of my official finishing-line picture from the photographer's kiosk. Then I climbed up the hill overlooking the area to sit in the shade of a tree, and hold the experience in the Light, by writing it in my journal until I could share it later.

As I was finishing, I heard that the last of the marathon runners was approaching the finishing area. So, I rejoined the crowd, and we all cheered ourselves hoarse as he crossed the finish line, still running at the end of more than five hours.

Peace be.

\* Nathalie Brunet is a member of Annapolis Valley 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. Listeners seek to be present from a place of spirit-centred openness - to hold the caller and the situation in the Light, and to listen with tenderness. Knowing the healing that comes from simply being heard, we offer you a safe and confidential space in which to speak. One call might be all you need. If not, we have the task of discerning with you what a next step could be: whether a committee of care, of clearness, or of oversight might be appropriate; or how to find other possible resources. The National Listeners for adult Friends are:

- |                     |                           |                                |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| * Ed Belzer:        | Telephone: (902) 384-2730 | E-mail: belzer@ns.sympatico.ca |
| * Dorothy Janes:    | Telephone: (416) 929-8812 | E-mail: dorothyj@idirect.com   |
| * Lesley Robertson: | Telephone: (250) 763-5698 | E-mail: lessismore@telus.net   |
| * Jay Cowsill:      | Telephone: (306) 652-2407 | E-mail: jmc590@mail.usask.ca   |

Additionally, the following National Listeners for Young Friends are now also available:

- |                             |                           |                               |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| * Kelly Ackerman:           | Telephone: (204) 774 2282 | E-mail: quakerkello@gmail.com |
| * Rachel Singleton-Polster: | Telephone: (905) 685-1022 | E-mail: twinflower@telus.net  |

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

# Friends United Meeting Report

Dear Friends of Canadian Yearly Meeting,

I have just returned from a remarkable meeting of Friends United Meeting's General Board. As in June, our October meeting was preceded on Thursday afternoon and Friday by a facilitated strategic-planning session.

After some time of updating those who had not been part of the process in June, we divided into four areas of interest – Communications, Administration, Identity and Evangelism.

The Communications group, which looked at developing web-based, print and audio-visual information, and the Evangelism group, which looked at training leaders and spreading the good news, finished by early afternoon Friday. The Administration group, of which I was part, looked at crafting proposed policies to run the organization so as to avoid future financial and staffing crises. We finished in the late afternoon.

The Identity group worked past the supper hour. The tasks it faced were the most challenging. How can FUM be inclusive within our diversity? How can we address the divisive elements of the employment policy, which states that for employees and volunteers, sexual relations are only within a marriage – defined as one man and one woman?

Although I was not in that group, the tension was evident as they laboured to bridge the gap between the most liberal and the most conservative members. Due to some very skilled clerking, each side was able to admit that they were afraid others would try to change their church and condemn the faith that was real and alive for them. Slowly, as the afternoon progressed, we could hear laughter periodically from their room – a very hopeful sign. At the end of the day, they presented proposals for us to reaffirm our commonalities and the framework within which to have our continuing conversation about the employment policy – a tremendous piece of work!

At this General Board meeting, we affirmed

Sylvia Graves as General Secretary. As a retired elementary school principal, she has sweetness and sparkle, combined with a “no non-sense” attitude. She is a real asset to FUM. I hope someday that others in CYM will have the opportunity to get to know her.

I had the opportunity to meet Patrick Nugent and Eden Grace, who are field staff with projects in Africa. The next GB meeting will be in Kenya (which I, sadly, will miss). Eden impressed upon those who would be attending that, under no circumstances, should they give money or promises, no matter how poor and deserving people seem. Money gifts can put the recipient into great danger, and promises of help, outside of projects that are structured and accountable, perpetuate paternalism and dependency, and lead to hurt when these cannot be fulfilled.

Joyce Ajlouny, the head of Ramallah Friends School in Palestine, was also there. With a mandate to cultivate ethical, moral and spiritual values within their students, the school is well respected by all.

Patrick, Eden and Joyce showed great passion about and commitment to their field projects. I was impressed by their ethical approach to development. As members of FUM, we can be proud of the work they are doing on our behalf.

If you have held back donating to FUM in the past because of the employment policy, or if you have felt concerns about the evangelical nature of the missions projects, know that as your rep I am convinced that there is honest and ethical work being done in both areas. If you do donate (after giving generously to CYM, of course), consider dividing your donation between the general fund and the field staff.

In Friendship,  
Signy Fridriksson

\* Signy Fridriksson is a member of Ottawa  
Monthly Meeting \*



# Epistle from Western Half-Yearly Meeting

8 October 2006  
Camp Valaqua  
Water Valley, Alberta  
Canada

To Friends everywhere,

At Valaqua amid towering spruce and golden-hued poplar, fifty-five Canadian Friends met for fun and fellowship on the aptly named Thanksgiving Weekend. Swing-dancing, eco-walking, obstacle-course running, ping-pong games, music and singing kept Friends in motion. Interest Groups on "Plastics: what is toxic and what is not?", "War as Disease" and "Reiki Healing" fed our intellect while Worship Sharing and Meeting for Worship fed our souls. Canadian Yearly Meeting's Consultation and Renewal Document received lively discussion. Spread over the two days, Business Meeting was small, light and lively. Young Friends were delighted to reconnect, but also noted the absence of two Young Friends no longer alive whose last WHYM was spent at Valaqua. Junior Young Friends bonded indoors and outdoors.

We held Friends elsewhere thankfully in our hearts.

Mick Monroe, Clerk

Western Half-Yearly Meeting

## Classified Advertisements

**M**AKE FRIENDS, MAKE MUSIC: Friends Music camp at Olney, ages 10-18. 2 or 4 week summer program emphasizing musical growth, caring community. For brochure, video: FMC, PO Box 427, Yellow Springs, OH45387, U.S.A.

.....

**H**ANNAH REGINA - Britain's Quaker Queen. Read her fascinating story. Buy at a discount from [www.cardinalpress.co.uk](http://www.cardinalpress.co.uk)

## Call for Articles for What Canst Thou Say?

by Mariellen Gilpin, Urbana-Champaign  
Meeting, Illinois

What Canst Thou Say? is a newsletter on Quakers, mysticism and contemplative living -- a worship-sharing group in print, with each writer contributing his or her experience in response to a central theme.

More information at:

[http://www.geocities.com/what\\_canst\\_thou\\_say](http://www.geocities.com/what_canst_thou_say)

# AROUND THE FAMILY

## Hamilton Monthly Meeting

Recently Peace and Social Action Committee recommended, and Hamilton Meeting accepted, the wish to take an initiative towards joining with other Hamilton region peace groups, to form a chapter supporting the setting up of a Federal Department of Peace.

## Ottawa Monthly Meeting

It remains a concern that some vocal ministry is inaudible. This is of great concern as it diminishes the involvement of many in our Meeting for Worship. It is suggested that Meeting as a whole take the opportunity to emphasize clear, well-enunciated speech. Guidelines exist for the process by which vocal ministry arises and for its proper presentation. Ministry and Counsel will continue to carry this concern.

A dinner was held at Steve Fick and Signy Fridriksson's home Saturday, September 16, 2006 to welcome Tasmin Rajotte and her son Sasha into membership in the Religious Society of Friends. Joining in the celebration were Norman deBelleFeuille, Murray Thomson, Peter Harkness, Rose Mae Harkness, Janet Martin, Kofi Broughton, Reykia Fick, and Lilia Fick. A very pleasant evening was spent chatting and eating. Tasmin was presented with "Christian Faith and Practice" and "Engaging Scripture" by Michael L. Birkel. Sasha was presented with "Give Me Grace: A Child's Daybook of Prayers" by Cynthia Rylant.

Ottawa Monthly Meeting has joined bullfrog power ([www.bullfrogpower.com](http://www.bullfrogpower.com)) as a way of supporting environmentally friendly and sustainable electricity.

Note from Caroline Parry: I have taken a one year position as Interim Director of Religious Ed at an Ohio Unitarian Church, and left Ottawa the 31st of August. My house is finally rented and I scurried around to do all the last minute everything there was to do, am finally well settled here til next August, and THEN India, I hope.

## Pelham Executive Meeting

Friends in Pelham Executive Meeting were saddened by the death of Janet Nunn on 24 October 2006. Although Janet had just been diagnosed with multiple myeloma and begun chemotherapy, this was an unexpected event. Please hold Janet, her husband, Rob, and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

## Saanich Peninsula Monthly Meeting

Saanich Peninsula Monthly Meeting is happy to report a wedding, under its care, on October 22, 2006 of Victoria Josephine Ross and Joseph Eugene Fasciani.

## Toronto Monthly Meeting

Beth Potter, attender of TMM, was married to Sean Wilmot on August 10th, 2006.

Community Worship Group (formerly Mid-week Meeting) gathers on Wednesdays evenings for Meeting for Worship, followed by a potluck meal and a community activity.

## Victoria Monthly Meeting

A memorial was held for Howard Horsburgh on July 15 at Fern St. meetinghouse.

Charlotte Carey and Rufus Stewart were married on August 20.

About 30 Friends gathered for the Island Gathering, a day of friendship, sharing and worship on September 23-24. The theme was "Towards Community" and we explored this in worship sharing groups, interest groups, community worship experiences, a great potluck fellowship in the evening and coffee-house entertainment. Thanks to the organizing committee: Tara Davies, Catherine Harding, Pashta MaryMoon, Arnold Ranneris, Diane Wallrich, Toni Bacon.

Saltspring Island Worship Group was formally laid down in September.

# Be a Part of the Canadian Friend

Keith Macgowan, Editor of The Canadian Friend

Editing the Canadian Friend (AKA: the Voice of Canadian Quakerism), is at heart an awkward position. This is because all Canadian Friends are at the same time both my employer, and my sole resource for overcoming those oppressive, empty white pages five times a year. Without you, all that would be left of this magazine would be blank space and layout errors.

In short: Boss, I need your help.

I'm looking for interesting submissions from as wide an array of Friends as possible. If you've never submitted anything before, now's the time to start. An obvious way would be write an article on an upcoming theme (next issue's theme will be Young Friends, so those my age and younger might be in for some extra nagging this time around), or you could write about something completely different. But also consider all those other ways to contribute to the Canadian Friend, such as sending in some short notes about news in your Meeting. For years the first things I've read in every issue has been the "Around the Family" section, but far too many Meetings are never heard from.

I'm also hoping to establish some short, regular features which readers can look forward to on a regular basis. Here are some of the features I'd like to explore in upcoming issues:

\* News from other parts of the Quaker world. Are you in touch with Friends in Yearly Meetings elsewhere in the world? Will you be travelling somewhere and be able to report on what the Religious Society of Friends is like in other lands or cultures? Consider becoming a "foreign correspondent" for us.

\* Jokes, either original ones by contributors or jokes with a Quaker slant. Mostly these would be short, only a line or two, and could be tucked into nooks and crannies between other items.

\* Quaker-themed crossword puzzles. Yes, you could write a crossword puzzle. Think of it as an outlet, putting your creative mind to work frustrating others. Most people have to work for large organizations for a similar opportunity.

\* Quotes. Send in quotes (recent or historical) which you think are wise, meaningful, or simply very well said. I'll save them as they come in, and let them loose in future issues. I'm primarily looking for short, pithy comments, although a whole passage might be appropriate every once in a while.

\* Question and Answer columns on Quakerism. Is there something you've been wondering about for years? Someone out there will know the answer.

\* Short ethical examinations of the objects and choices we include in our lives. What's the societal effect of buying mutual funds? Is your shampoo throttling the environment? This column would be a three minute tour of right and wrong in areas we don't often think about.

\* Trivia. I'll be collecting any trivia questions Friends wish to send in, and hopefully sprinkling a selection in every issue. The categories are tentatively Quaker History, Canadian Quakerism, Friends Around the World, Friends Theology, and Scuttlebut (personal trivia about individual Friends in CYM). All the questions and answers must be short, clear, and questions must have only a single possible answer. Submissions for the first four categories must have a citation, and "Scuttlebut" trivia must have the permission of the person whom the question is about.

\* Pictures, poetry, cartoons, etc. I'm hoping to maintain a stockpile of Friends' art, which can be dipped into as the magazine has need for that special something. Send in the fruits of your creativity, or let me know if you're interested in being an "on-call" artist, willing to supply that missing piece to complement other submissions.

Not all submissions will end up being used, and many might not be used right away. All are appreciated though. Do any of these ideas sound like something you might be called to take on? Or do they bore you silly but you have a great idea for something else that could be in The Canadian Friend? Either way, talk to me about it. I look forward to hearing from you.

# The Canadian Friend

December 2006  
Volume 102, Number 5

## For this issue

Editor ..... Keith Macgowan  
Editorial Support ..... June Etta Chenard, Stephanie Deakin, Judith Monroe  
Graphics ..... Sarah Chandler, Rose Marie Cipryk, Erika Koenig-Sheridan,  
Clare Singleton, Sue Starr, Carol Leigh Wehking

## 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: January 15, 2007 (for the March issue)

Theme: **YOUNG FRIENDS**

The lives, experiences and role of youth in our meetings.

\* Due date: March 15, 2007 (for the May issue)

Theme: **MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES: FEELING DESPAIR, FINDING HOPE**

"Try to find a spiritual wholeness which encompasses suffering as well as thankfulness and joy. Prayer, springing from a deep place in the heart, may bring healing and unity as nothing else can. Let meeting for worship nourish your whole life. What has been your experience or your Meeting's experience in dealing with mental health issues? Where have you felt despair? Where have you found hope?" - Quaker Faith & Practice 1.02.10

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

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