

# The Canadian Friend

Volume 109, Number 3

Summer 2013



A Fine Balance – The Youth Issue

# The Canadian Friend

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 Publications and Communications Committee. The Canadian Friend is sent to all members of Canadian Yearly Meeting and to regular attenders. It is funded from Meetings and members of Canadian Yearly Meeting, with assistance from funds administered by the Yearly Meeting to further the work and witness of the **Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada.**

- **Submissions:**

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Annual subscription rate for Canada is \$30, US \$44, all other countries \$54.  
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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage.



## Editorial:

More than four hundred people recently filled a small church to capacity. It had commonly seated such a crowd in the mid 1900s when attendance at Sunday service was the norm. As I waited for the concert to begin, I reflected that this same United Church gave our daughter a vibrant youth group in the 90s, when she was bored and lonely in Quaker Meeting. I thought of how the Religious Society of Friends is currently listening and working to be relevant and welcoming to our youth [note the *50 Youth Challenge* for Canadian Yearly Meeting]. While I regret our daughter is not among the Quaker Youth attending CYM, these days she is back in that same church, and with her fiancée is involved in its music ministry. They believe that music can reach out to youth and young families, can revitalize the church. I understand what Mathew Guest is saying in his article *What Quakers Can Learn*.

We crowded in that night to hear a young gypsy-jazz band – the youngest, the founder, only fifteen. They were full of spirit, talent and wisdom. The master of ceremonies said: “Never let anyone tell you that youth is wasted on the young”. I have to agree.

This issue is full of the wisdom, joys, concerns and passions of our youth. Each submission is worth a careful read. I met Joel Bock at the recent *Quakers United in Publications (QUIP)* conference in Oregon [pg.25]. He recommended his wife Cherice as a writer. Her call for *Eco-Justice* is timely and I note, echoes the cover article of *BeFriending Creation* (May-June 2013): *Placing Concern for Earth Centre-Stage*. Read them both.

While we do and must strive to live in sync with nature, we can still love fashion. I celebrate Amie Trofymow who shows up without apology in high heels. Being Green and conscious for the Earth does not preclude dressing with style. We judge wrongly by appearance. What matters most is that we celebrate each other's unique gifts and inner Light.

I am excited to see common threads that weave between articles. Daniel Allen of Ontario is thinking of ‘out of the box’ ways to give and nurture membership for youth, while the *Youth Epistle* written recently at Western Half Yearly Meeting (BC) reflects the same yearning. In 1936 Pierre Ceresole stated the need succinctly: “It is more and more clear to me that it is only in the bosom of a religious family, freely but very strongly constituted, that the individual can render to the world the services it sorely needs...” [3.51, Chapter Three – *Testimonies: Faith and Practice*, Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends]. It seems that the youth are asking for flexibility. Could that be the “freely...constituted...” Ceresole refers to?

The importance of being embraced in community is voiced by several writers. Along with Ben von Schulmann, I hope too that the Religious Society of Friends will be alive and thriving, still able a few years from now to welcome his children into the joys of celebrating God's presence within everyone.

My appreciation goes out to each youth writer who willingly shared in this issue, and I look forward to being with some of you as you respond to the *50 Youth Challenge* to participate in Canadian Yearly Meeting. I will be blessed to meet all Friends as we gather to learn new insights from Ben Pink Dandelion's *Quaker Study*.

Summer Blessings,  
Sherryll



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**Photo Credits:** Photos taken by David Cheately at Western Half Yearly Meeting May 2013.

**Front cover** Top: Harmony Morris. Middle: Jessica Klaassen-Wright and Alyssa MacKeen. Bottom: Clayton Sterling, Simon James, Adrian Zimmerman. **Photo above** of Jessica Klaassen-Wright balancing with Harmony Morris. **Back cover:** Jessica Klaassen-Wright with Simon James from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.



# Eco-Justice: The Issue of Our Time

Guest Writer

Cherice Bock



I spent several hours of this unseasonably warm First-Day outside on the little plot of land under my care – a suburban lot in Oregon that my family bought just over three years ago. Since my husband and I moved in we have created a garden space and a chicken run. My mother-in-law, a professional landscape designer, drew up a landscape plan and the beautiful native plants she suggested are growing into their spaces. We try to keep up with the weeds!

Along with the plants (and the weeds), another thing growing over the last several years is my sense of calling to be involved in caring for the Earth. For me, this is deeply connected with my faith and my calling to ministry as a Friend. As Friends, we've often been on the forefront of movements for social justice. Over the last three hundred and fifty years we've responded to the social issues of our time by stepping up quietly but boldly: witnessing with our lives and the ways we spend our money; refusing to cooperate with injustice by opposing slavery; fighting for women's suffrage;

standing for our right to object to participation in war due to conscience, and addressing many other issues. In my opinion, eco-justice is the issue of our time. Without doing something now, today, and being willing to make sacrifices, it seems that we are literally on the verge of leaving our grandchildren with a very inhospitable world.

It's not just me who thinks this. *The Canadian Friend* printed a copy of *The Kabarak Call for Peace and Ecojustice* a year ago. This document was created by Friends from around the globe at the Friends World Committee for Consultation World Conference, 2012 in Kenya. This is an issue about which many Friends feel passionate, be we "liberal" or "evangelical", "Christ-centered" or "non-theist", "programmed" or "unprogrammed". The prophetic strain of our tradition binds us together to see the writing on the wall: this is not an issue we can ignore.

In my own life I try to walk and bike as much as possible. I have two young boys, and people recognize us around town because of our triple-trailer system: my bike, my six-year-old's tag-along bike, and a bike trailer for my two-year-old. We grow some of our own food and are learning a little more every year about growing and preserving food. This year I'm in charge of a community garden, and in a few weeks when our small town's farmers' market opens, we'll be eager customers. We try to buy things that are locally produced, and we almost always buy our clothes (and other items, if possible) used, or get them used from friends and pass ours on to friends when we're done with them. We "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" with the best of them. These things are good and important, but if we're the only ones, it isn't enough. And if we don't learn to do more, it isn't enough.

**"this is not an issue we can ignore"**

So Friends, what are we going to do? Abolitionist Friends refused to buy products created by slaves. Do we have the courage to do something similar regarding products that destroy the Earth? Are we willing, for example, to limit travel to places to which we can walk and bike, so we don't use fossil fuels which put carbon dioxide into our atmosphere? Are we willing to eat only locally-grown foods, so as to limit fossil fuel use that contributes to the destruction of bio-diverse

tropical forests that are converted into cash crops for us? Are we willing to let go of our sense of entitlement for more, faster, better? Are we able to do this as a worldwide community so that our actions might make at least a small impact?

As I weeded today in my garden I thought about John 15, the chapter upon which our name “Friends” is based. Here are a few verses from John 15:1-14:

1) “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine dresser. 2) Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, the Gardener takes away; and every branch that bears fruit is pruned so that it may bear more fruit. 4) Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in me. 5) I am the vine, you are the branches; the one who abides in me and I in him or her bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 12) This is my commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. 13) Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down one’s life for one’s friends. 14) “You are my friends if you do what I command you.”

### “The prophetic strain of our tradition binds us together”

I’m reminded of the importance of pruning and weeding. These physical acts bring life and health to the plants we intend to grow, and make bearing fruit possible. Are we willing to allow the Gardener to prune from us those things that are keeping us from bearing as much fruit in our time? We’re extended the opportunity of friendship when we abide in the True Vine, that *life-connectedness* or Inward Light we encounter in the stillness of worship. We’re allowed a glimpse of what it looks like to live in abiding love. Will I, will we, live up to our name “Friends” of God in this generation, facing the challenge of being pruned, and trusting the True Vine that more fruit will result?

*Cherice Bock, Northwest Yearly Meeting  
Teaches at George Fox University  
Newberg, Oregon*

## Unity with Creation

Many of us are deeply concerned about the deterioration of the environment, which can rightly be seen as a menace to our health and lives.

As a Quaker, my view of the world and my fellow beings is rooted in the recognition of divine immanence. This is expressed by the Society of Friends as “that of God in everyone”.

The idea of immanence affirms that God is present, implicit in the very life of the planet itself on every level of being. This view gives me no right to oppress others, who also bear within them the innate Light of God’s spirit, nor to ignorantly suppress the divine gift of God’s life in all things.

The Quaker concept of God as immanent enables me to believe we may experience God’s presence directly, for God is not distant and detached from creation, but close, here and now, in every facet of existence.

In this Light, I may not treat Earth as a mere physical resource existing for my benefit nor as we do, by human logic, for the benefit of those who have acquired legal privilege or access to the world’s bounty and goodness meant for all, and have awarded themselves the right to ravish the planet we share.

The present crisis of materialism versus nature is calling for a similar witness to peace with the Earth, and is, in effect, an extension of the traditional Quaker position on war.

These are powerful claims and demanding goals, yet we must transform our collective behaviour into this higher level of reverence for the Earth and for each other, or where are we headed?

4.68 – *Frederick E. Parent, 1989*

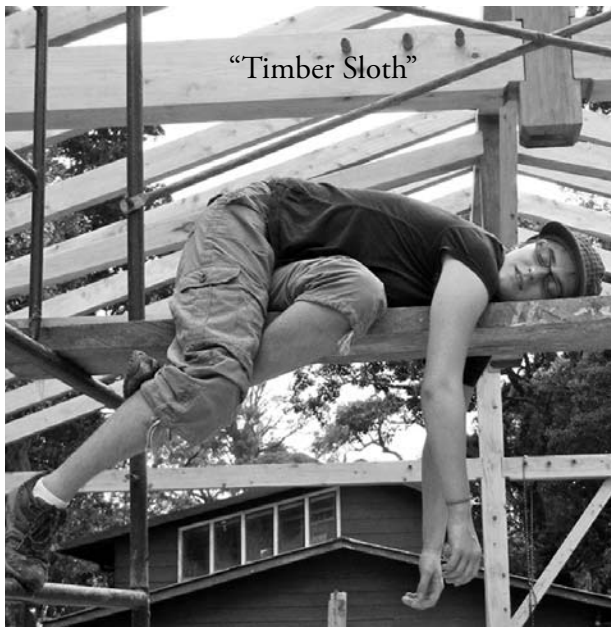
\* \* \* \* \*

“The living soil, the plant and animal forms – the biosphere – is the larger body of the human community. Each is...the Spirit home for the whole realm of life.”

4.69 – *Keith Helmuth, 1989*

*Chapter Four – Testimonies: Faith and Practice  
Canadian Yearly Meeting of the  
Religious Society of Friends*

# Community and Work in Monteverde *Jessica Klaassen-Wright*



My life in Monteverde will always come to me in snatches of colour and sound. I will see the Gulf of Nicoya stretching out below me, oxen pulling milk carts to be filled, dancing bodies silhouetted by waves filled with bioluminescence, the flood-light full moon, and the smiling faces of my friends and neighbours. I will hear the wind, almost indistinguishable from ocean waves, the stomping of feet on the Meeting House floor, the jumbled call of many birds, singing voices mingling with the crash of a waterfall, and the wisdom of Sunday ministry.

Before I left Canada in August 2012 for Costa Rica, many people asked me, “Jessica, what will you do down there in Monteverde?” Their tone often suggested: “What in the world is there for a person to do in a tropical country other than lounge on the beach?” But I could never answer in a satisfactory way. I knew I would volunteer at the Monteverde Friends School. I knew I would play music. But I was totally unprepared for the amazing work and community that I found.

Easter Sunday, after a three-day hike in the rain through the jungle, having almost forgotten that a world apart from green, brown, and birdsong existed, I went to a Sunrise Meeting at five in the morning. It was the first Meeting in the skeleton of the new timber frame Meeting House, under construction

since January, but in mind for many years. Seeing the figures in the house, almost unrecognizable in the hushed twilight, I felt that I had come home. Despite the rain and the chill, we gathered, wrapped tight in blankets and sleeping bags, ready to worship and share the magnificence of a building created by many hearts and many hands. It was truly magnificent.

I was one of scores of volunteers, some of whom volunteered full-time for months on the project. David Hooke, the director of the project, humbled me with his patience with us. Often, I would go to him with a crooked saw cut. Kindly, he would get me back on track. “This often happens when making saw cuts. Next time, try it this way”, David would say, showing me the technique. With the help of a fantastic team of experienced builders, he was the steady heartbeat of a workforce comprised entirely of volunteers. The raising itself was momentous. To see the incredible work a group of people can do together with the power of their bodies filled me with awe. Huge timbers were lifted safely into place, passed from hand to hand, shoulder to shoulder. I felt as if we were defying gravity. Success and gratitude was shared each day with good food and a final circle of silence.

A number of Friends have said that Monteverde is a place where age boundaries are broken. This is often true of Quaker communities but is especially true in the cloud forest. The variety in age of volunteers – a group that spanned from under five years old to over eighty – was inspiring. Work was found for all. Sharing work with so many people of different generations and different truths, building a community centre, and bringing stories, skill, and laughter together, will not easily be found elsewhere in my life.

Monteverde is a community like no other I have experienced. Its members are open and caring and they look out for each other in times of happiness and sadness. Speaking of all the travelling volunteers leaving for home after weeks and months of service, a Friend said in Meeting that the Monteverde community members are touched and enriched by all the visitors, and that Monteverde is blessed with the amazing work that volunteers provide. When they return home they will carry memories of community and love with them throughout their lives. This is truth.

*Jessica Klaassen-Wright*  
*Saskatoon Monthly Meeting*

# Gratitude to the Education and Outreach Committee

*Victoria McKinnon Lazarro*

“Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.” [George Fox, 1656.]

Last year, Friends General Conference was held in Rhode Island USA at the University of Rhode Island. I had been to the USA only one other time and I had never traveled without a parent, so it was really exciting for me to be able to go to FGC. It was also an exciting year to go to FGC since it was held in Rhode Island. When learning about FGC I found out that Rhode Island was the first place on the North American continent to welcome Quakers. Both George Fox and John Woolman visited and worshiped there.

The theme of FGC [2012] was “all gods’ critters got a place in the choir”. This theme was chosen to remind us all that everyone has their place on earth and we all are equally important.

I was a participant in the high school program for youth in grades nine through twelve. We had a separate dorm from the larger gathering which was called Tucker. There were about one hundred participants in the high school program, which was sometimes a bit overwhelming. It was a little nerve wracking too because I was the only Canadian.

The program had support groups of five to six people each. We met once a day to play games and see how everyone was doing. The groups made settling in a bit easier because I was able to get to know a few people at a time. I feel this was an important part of such a large Quaker gathering where the size of the group can be overwhelming to new or shy people.

We had many scheduled activities such as Wink, a dance, business meeting for youth, and an out-trip to tour a local farm. The farm had about one hundred head of cattle and was located right next to the ocean. That was really cool because I had never seen the ocean before!

Everyone at FGC chooses a workshop. The one I chose was called *Meeting for Worship for Healing and Laughter*. The workshop was open for high school participants and young adult Friends. In this workshop we learned about healing and how we can help a person heal through worship. We learned a little bit more each day. This was really neat because I had not previously known that it was possible to heal through worship. I also learned that a person does not need to be present to be healed. Another person can represent then if they cannot be present. Laughter was not a big part of the workshop but we would always spend a bit of time at the beginning settling in, which is when the laughter usually happened.

Overall, it was a really good experience for me because I am not able to travel often and it was very nice to attend a different kind of Quaker gathering than I am used to. It was exciting to meet new Quaker F/friends and witness such a large gathering.

Thank you so much for supporting my journey to FGC. I am very grateful for the opportunities it provided.

“...everyone has their place on earth  
and we all are equally important.”



*Victoria McKinnon Lazarro  
Simcoe Muskoka Monthly Meeting*

# Children of Parents Sentenced to Death or Executed

*Haifa Rashed*

Following many years of work with children of prisoners, the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva has recently begun to focus on the issue of children of parents sentenced to death or executed. Quakers oppose capital punishment in all circumstances and we are concerned about its impacts while this practice continues.

When QUNO looked into this issue we discovered that there is a real lack of attention to, and support for this group of children. In 2012, QUNO published its seminal paper: *Children of Parents Sentenced to Death*. This study found that children are directly and powerfully impacted by their parents' involvement with the capital justice system. The death of a parent is a deeply painful loss for a child, however, knowing that the death was deliberately caused by the State is distinctly traumatic. These children see one protector figure (their parent) killed by another (the State). Children and families of the executed speak of experiencing feelings of deep alienation and betrayal of trust.

The paper also highlighted specific difficulties faced by these children. For example, in countries where the death penalty applies in cases of death by domestic violence, the child may be orphaned when their remaining parent is executed by the State. In this instance, where the State executes the child's only parent, the child may end up on the street. This raises the question of the State's obligation to fulfil the child's rights to housing, health, and education, among other needs.

Often having a parent sentenced to death can result in the child being stigmatized, affecting relationships with their peers, and limiting their acceptance by the wider community. In all circumstances, having a parent executed by the State can result in a very traumatic and isolating bereavement for the child. Given the lack of acknowledgement or validation by others for their loss – normally a crucial part in acknowledging the grieving process – the child may experience 'disenfranchised grief'. This can make it difficult for the child to publicly mourn his/her loss. They may feel isolated due to the stigma associated with their parents death, as well as shame, guilt and diminished self-esteem.

*Children of Parents Sentenced to Death* concludes that there is a serious need to examine the effects of the capital punishment system in its entirety, including the social, psychological, and economic impacts on lives that were not intended to be the targets of the death penalty. Even children in abolitionist countries may be affected when a parent is on death row abroad (for drugs charges, for example). There are hundreds of people worldwide in this situation. What consideration is being given to the effects of death-row incarceration on their children?

In February 2013, QUNO held a workshop to bring together academics, representatives from non-governmental organizations, and social workers from a variety of countries, to discuss the issues affecting this overlooked group of children. During the *World Congress Against the Death Penalty* in June 2013, QUNO presented a new paper highlighting this problem. Thanks to an initiative led by the Belgian government, the UN Human Rights Council (where the world's governments meet to discuss human rights without a vote) decided to consider the effects on children of a parent sentenced to death or executed.

In September 2013 the United Nations will, for the first time, discuss the issue of children with a parent on death row. This is a major step forward in considering the wider impacts of the death penalty. The resolution that mandated this discussion also acknowledged the negative impact of a parent's death sentence on children, and urged countries "to provide those children with the protection and assistance they may require". A panel of experts will address the assembled diplomats and their discussion will increase international awareness dramatically.

Further information will be available from QUNO publications. We draw on published research, questionnaires to governments, and the results of workshops with expert practitioners from around the world. Copies of *Children of Parents Sentenced to Death* are available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic, and like all QUNO publications, can be downloaded free from our website [www.quno.org](http://www.quno.org). Hard copies are available on request.

*Haifa Rashed*

*Geneva Monthly Meeting*





*Haifa Rashed  
Program Assistant (Human Rights and Refugees)  
Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO)*

## **Opportunities for Young Friends at QUNO:**

### **Program Assistant Positions in Geneva and New York**

Each year, QUNO recruits young people to work in its offices in Geneva and New York for one year as Program Assistants (PAs). These are entry-level positions for those who are interested in international affairs and the United Nations, and who have a commitment to Friends' (Quaker) principles of peace, non-violence, and equality. These positions are advertised at the beginning of the year to start in August/September. For more information on PA vacancies in Geneva and for vacancies and information of the PA positions in New York, go to [www.quno.org](http://www.quno.org).

### **International Summer School**

Every summer QUNO Geneva runs a summer school for young people (aged 20-26) with an interest in international affairs. The summer school lasts for two weeks and provides an introduction to the work of the United Nations, as seen through the programs of QUNO Geneva.

## **Education and Outreach**

Education grants and loans encourage expanded awareness, visioning, and discernment within the context of supportive Quaker institutions and communities. The Education and Outreach Committee (E&O) offers various grants and loans, or supports referrals to other funds, for members and attenders of Canadian Yearly Meeting who wish to pursue educational opportunities in various contexts. We have chosen to interpret "education" in a fairly broad sense. Examples include attendance at Friends General Conference, Pendle Hill, and various Quaker-related conferences. In some cases the Pendle Hill scholarship has provided the space and supportive nurture for writing or artistic projects.

Applications for financial support from these funds must be accompanied by a Minute of Support from the applicant's Monthly Meeting. Applications are normally reviewed at the next scheduled meeting (October – March each year). However, applications may be fast-tracked when time constraints outside the applicant's control require an earlier decision. Friends receiving grants or loans are expected to submit a report to Education and Outreach, and write an article for

*The Canadian Friend* or share their experience through a blog, workshop, video or other medium.

Friends may be awarded an educational grant or loan only once in any three-year period. A combination grant and loan may be awarded. A Friend may only receive the Pendle Hill Scholarship once. Monthly Meetings are asked to especially encourage young Friends and those who have not previously been involved with Quaker education to apply.

For complete information on *Education Grants and Loans* go to the CYM web page and follow the links from the EDUCATION box. Applicants may also phone or write the Grants & Loans Officer, Brent Bowyer, RR2, Wingham, Ontario. N0G 2W0 (519-357-1883).

### **Education Grants and Loans:**

- \*Quaker Studies Fund
- \*Pendle Hill Scholarship Fund  
(One week may include an educational workshop)
- \*Dorothy Muma Memorial Bursary  
(Limited to residents of Ontario or Quakers wishing to pursue a leading in Ontario)
- \*Quaker Youth Pilgrimage (biyearly – next in 2014)
- \*Referrals to other funds

## “No cares and woes (or heels) beyond this point”



*Amie Trofymow*

When I was growing up and attending Meeting on Vancouver Island, British Columbia, I often heard of the famous “Camp NeeKauNis”. Maggie Knight was my baby sitter and she talked about a friend from camp, or an experience at camp, that sparked my curiosity about the place with “no woes”.

Though I never was able to attend NeeKauNis as a child, I had the opportunity when I was in senior high school to go to camp on a working basis. In the summer of 2011 and I was on my way to Camp for the first time, on my first real trip alone across Canada, to spend what would be an amazing summer! I was hired as a Junior Lifeguard and flew across the country with curiosity, independence, and excitement in my pocket.

Of course, for those who know me, I am not your typical Quaker. My passion tends to lean toward fashion and always has. So, as you can imagine, when I stepped onto Camp property I was a little hesitant. Naturally, I was wearing heels and had snakeskin luggage, which immediately put me in the hot seat with the few who were there early to help set up camp.

Though I was known as the “city girl in pink” I quickly made friendships that I believe will last a lifetime. My attire soon adapted, as well as my “glitzy-like” attitude. Sweats for breakfast, and dresses after work period. My days were long, consisting of early mornings, washing dishes, laughing, caring for children, swimming, Meeting for Worship, washing more dishes and sitting around the occasional camp fire. I sailed through the summer before I could blink and returned home in time for school in the fall. It was hard to leave all the new friends I had made in eastern Canada. I knew from the moment I pulled away from Camp that I would be back.

“Camp gave me the courage to believe in loyal friendships and to cherish one another...”

The following year I attended Teen Camp. It was a blast! I made new friends and gained a whole new sense of independence. Whether I was working cleaning Kibos or dancing in the kitchen, I knew that Camp was no longer just Camp NeeKauNis, but it was ‘Camp NeeKauNis my second home’. It was a place in the world where I could be anyone. Being accepted for myself was so liberating.

Though I will be travelling to Europe this summer, I am trying to make it a priority to get back to Camp in the near future. I feel as if Camp gave me the courage to believe in loyal friendships, to cherish one another, and it gave me a peaceful state of mind. I admire camp and all the gems that come with it.

*Amie Trofymow (right), Victoria Friends Meeting  
Rachel Urban-Shipley (below left, at camp)  
Ottawa Monthly Meeting*





## location

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

## real world skills

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

## campers : staff

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

## camp experience

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

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

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

**For more information on camps and travel bursaries, or to download registration forms, please visit our website at [www.neekaunis.org](http://www.neekaunis.org)**

# Notice Board

## Interested in starting a new Quaker meeting or worship group?

FGC's *New Meetings Project* can help you:

- Receive nurture and support
- Learn about valuable resources
- Benefit from others' experiences

Send inquiries to Brent Bill  
Friends General Conference  
New Meetings Project Coordinator  
brentb@fgcquaker.org



**FGC**

NURTURING FAITH AND QUAKER PRACTICE

photograph by Joanne Clapp-Falligan

The Publications and Communications Committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting would like to post the full text of the recently published *Faith and Practice* on the newly-developed website at [quaker.ca](http://quaker.ca), when it launches in the summer of 2013.

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50 Washington Street,  
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# Letting our lives speak...



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**Canadian Friends Service Committee  
(Quakers)**

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

# On Membership *Daniel Allen*



Membership in the Religious Society of Friends is a peculiar discipline. We become members of the Society, but attachment is nearly universally through a Monthly Meeting. For some Friends, becoming a member feels unnecessary after years of attending

and contributing to Meeting. At one point years ago I went through the question myself: “non-members are only restricted from serving in a few roles such as Clerk, so why bother?” But many Friends, including me today, would articulate membership with the Meeting as a statement of mutual relationship and commitment one to another; a deliberate step to take on one’s life-long spiritual journey. For Friends who are unable to hold a membership with a community where they live, the absence of membership can be a painful lack.

Friends who are in a transitional stage of life have particular need for faith community support. This support can extend beyond sympathetic understanding and fellowship. We Friends have clearness committees in order to use our spiritual discipline of discerning God’s will for us in our lives. People in transition who are making major life decisions have particular need for clearness committees, and are challenged in finding such support after they have moved away from Quakers and the people who know them well.

Before they leave home, Young Friends who grew up in the Society of Friends have particular challenges navigating the transition to adulthood within the context of the Meeting where they grew up. I’ve spoken with a variety of Friends with concerns on this. They note that their Meeting may, despite best intentions, persist in treating the young adult as the child they once were. For birthright Friends, leaving their home Meeting might feel as critically important as leaving their family home. Additionally, membership for birthright Friends is often pro-forma. At a certain preset age (defined in Canadian Yearly Meeting as

“upon maturity” between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, at discretion of the Monthly Meeting) the young adult is asked by their Meeting if they wish to transition onto the adult membership list. There is usually no clearness process. This works fine for some Young Friends, but others wish they had a formal clearness committee to discuss their connections to Meeting and their understanding of Quaker ways, to mark their adulthood in the Meeting.

For some Friends in transition, other Quaker bodies are more like their spiritual home than the Monthly Meeting they grew up in. These can be among their most stable lasting connections for fellowship and possibly for spiritual support after leaving home.

In the same way for all Friends, a strong connection to Quaker bodies outside a Monthly Meeting can be sustaining and enriching. I had an important opening a few years back when I realized that, given sufficient Light and prompting by Spirit, we might consider this as ‘travelling in the Ministry’. We travel, connect deeply, and then return home to our Meeting with the fruits of this connection, be they a sense of *batteries recharged*, new ideas, or perhaps old ideas seen in new Light.

I believe the fruits of the Spirit come from exposure to Friends who are different from us and also quite similar to us, be they aspects of age and life-experience; social class; urban verses rural life; faith history; racial background; sexual orientation or gender identity. It is quite important to me that I have both the differences as well as the similarities at various times. Having both is fairly important to me as an individual, and to the balance within a Meeting. So many of our Meetings lack diversity and this seems like a great deficiency.

Considering all of the above, I think we are due to re-visit how we treat membership and belonging. I note the proposal by Young Friends of Canadian Yearly Meeting to extend membership to Quaker bodies other than Monthly Meetings, such as to Yearly Meetings, Half-Yearly Meetings or any other body that Friends call their spiritual home. This feels like a strong invitation to engage with. It feels like a statement of: “We would like a deeper faith and connection. How can we do this together?”

Canadian Yearly Meeting’s Discipline Review Committee has proposed that instead of “transitional membership” as suggested by Young Friends of CYM, that any Meeting – Half-Yearly Meeting, Young Friends YM and Allowed Meetings – could hold membership if they can: convene a membership committee; be in

relationship with the person requesting membership; fulfil the administrative tasks of a Meeting toward membership; hold a Meeting for Business for the approval of membership; keep minutes; file statistical reports with Yearly Meeting; respond to requests for travelling letters as well as financial assistance.

Their proposal poses the need for additional clarity: Does convening a membership committee and filing statistical reports with Yearly Meeting fulfil the heart of the commitment to members of the society? What constitutes being in a relationship with the person requesting membership?

I am convinced that a relationship of ongoing mutual accountability between members is necessary. The challenge is in managing this with a geographically diffuse Meeting where its members only meet face-to-face once or twice a year, or perhaps less frequently.

How might CYM's membership proposal be fleshed out to become complete? It should support Friends in geographic and other forms of isolation, and Friends who want a formal membership relationship while they are in a transitional period of life. It should strengthen the Meetings as well as its members.

I believe that building ongoing relationship and mutual accountability is only possible if there is frequent contact. I wonder if this could be accomplished with the use of audio and video conferencing.

I currently have a Care Committee consisting of two members from my Meeting and one Friend from another Meeting a few hours drive away. We regularly meet by conference call and this has worked well for us. My Monthly Meeting holds our Ministry and Council (M&C) meetings with speaker phone and conference call, in order to include members of our two worship groups which are forty-five minutes or two hours' drive away from the main Meeting. This has been embraced by Friends concerned about the environmental effects of driving long distances in automobiles, and is additionally helpful in the winter when it allows for M&C meetings that would otherwise be cancelled by snow storms. Although initially I was quite skeptical about discernment over the telephone, I can speak to the experience of Spirit working over the phone.

Neither phone nor video calls have quite the same presence as being together in the same room, but they are better than no connection, and they seem better alternatives for an individual than joining a local non-Quaker church, not having any spiritual community, or leaving one's job and moving. I'm convinced these can be effective tools for offering spiritual nurturing

and community when physical meetings can only happen at most once or twice a year.

Possibilities for non-physical community could include weekly worship; discussion and/or "second hour" learning programs, clearness committees, or spiritual nurture programs such as Friendly Eights.

I wonder about how this might strengthen the Meeting involved, be it a worship group, Half-Yearly Meeting, or another Quaker body. Might we look to the existing model of worship groups that exist within a Monthly Meeting? Could there be an ongoing relationship between this non-physical community and another Meeting in partnership, and members of one another? I am imagining a quality speakerphone in the centre of a Meeting room and a conference call into a number of peoples' homes. The non-physical Meeting, spread over a wide area, might provide some welcome additional diversity, and in turn benefit from the diversity of the physically centred Meeting. If the non-physical Meeting needs administrative support for the requirements of holding membership, this might best be accomplished by a Meeting that already has clearness committees, established membership rolls, and the ability to respond to request for travelling letters.

As with membership clearness committees, the joined Meeting as a whole might be able to better support Friends seeking clearness for Marriage (with a merged on-site care committee component) or other forms of support. As a support structure for isolated Friends where there is no current Meeting or worship group, I feel fairly clear about the appropriateness of this idea.

I think there needs to be additional clarity over seeking membership through a remote Friends group when there exists a local Meeting as well. However, if this model for some Friends means the difference between having a faith community of peers, and not having any faith community, I believe the stronger option is to have a faith community and as such it is worth the experiment to try. [See postscript on p. 26]

*Daniel Allen, Kitchener Area Meeting*

[Daniel divides his time between Quaker projects and writing software for the University of Waterloo.

For a few references see <http://after-the-dazzle-of-day.blogspot.ca/2013/03/finding-place.html>]

# Seeking Balance With My Computer

David Summerhays

*A group of men and women with stone hatchets stoop in a shimmering field of wheat. Domesticated sheep baah grumpily in the distance.*

\* \* \* \* \*

When today's archeologists find sites of humanity's first few thousand years of agriculture, the differences are stunning. The first humans to depend on farming suffered from more disease, fought more wars, and were shorter and less robust because of malnutrition, compared to humans today, or even compared to the hunter-gatherers who had lived for 140,000 plus years before them, for that matter. After all, we evolved socially as much as nutritionally to be hunter-gatherers, not farmers.

It took thousands of years to find a more stable cultural, political, and agronomic balance (i.e. corn/beans/tomatoes/potatoes or wheat/barley/peas/oats). And really, even after 10,000 years of farming we still haven't fully adapted. Telltale green thumbprints of farming pock our globe. The self-reinforcing cycle of population growth, poverty, and ecological destruction is a tricky one to stop. Who knows if we will survive species collapse or climate change for that matter?

A famous exhortation comes to mind: "In every deliberation we must consider the impact on the seventh generation...even if it requires having skin as thick as the bark of a pine." Imagine standing there in the first tilled field of wheat and trying to imagine where it would go in seven generations. I don't see how anyone could begin to imagine.

I think about all this in relation to the personal computer. This invention has only been popular since the 80s, and the Internet only started in the 90s. Those humble few decades represent about two millionths of our time on earth. Sometimes, when I've just been sucked down a nasty wikipedia wormhole (like history of farming for example) I wonder how we evolved to live together. I know we have a lot of faith in technology, but is it even possible for me to play nicely with this machine within my lifetime? It may take us thousands of years to adapt. More often than not, I feel like it's in control.

This past month I have easily sunk eighty hours into Dune II, an old computer game from my childhood, sometimes staying up until two in the morning. I go onto the computer swearing I'm going to just check

the weather and I end up replying to four e-mails and looking at funny pictures of cats for half an hour. And I don't even really care about cats.

I grew up in a house in the suburbs of Chicago. I lived there for twenty-five years without meeting more than four of my neighbors. Now, every night, either in Montreal or Chicago, when I look into many homes I see a familiar blue glow.

I wonder if we're in another cycle. If farm-living cycles between poverty and ecological destruction, maybe today we're cycling between barren community life and technological entertainment.

Moving to the forest isn't the answer for me. I hate mosquitoes. Besides, I think about a phrase I heard once, that to cure an alcoholic means that he can drink again without getting drunk. Someday I'd like to say "I'm just going to check the weather" and only use the computer to check the weather. So I'll have to leave the Luddite revolution behind me. The good old days are certainly old. But as a history major, I can tell you all the reasons they weren't really all that good.

My bet is these crazy technologies are here to stay, yet how can they help us create community rather than killing it? I am far from having answers. But I think this is part of the challenge and the great experiment of our species. And we may fail.

The cavalier and single-minded way we introduce new technologies is almost inspiring in its total recklessness – like watching a bike courier weave through rush hour traffic. I understand much better now the hand-wringing from older generations who say: "Things didn't used to be this way". It's more than cheap nostalgia. The way we perpetually revolutionize society, to paraphrase Marx, is unlikely to be wise. Even my relationship to cell phones is different from my sister's. Yet so many people's jobs and livelihoods revolve around revolutionizing everything constantly, from medicine, to websites, to technology. I wonder if this way of relating to each other - this society we've created - can really be stopped?

I wouldn't go so far as to call myself an addict to computers, but I am not shy about saying that I don't think I'm alone, and also that I need help – maybe a little short of divine help, but help nonetheless! I've installed a timer that goes off every half hour so that I stand up more often. This thingy also pops up on my screen after six hours of computing. Not that I always listen to it, but it's a start.

*David Summerhays, Montreal Monthly Meeting*



# Quaker Book Service



***Deep Roots: A Fresh Look at the Origins of Some Quaker Ideas*** by Simon Webb. Quaker Bookshop, London, UK 2007.

The author refers to the literature of, and about, the time of George Fox, to examine the influences of mysticism and anti-clericalism in Fox's teachings. Good list of references. (44 pp. \$10.00).

***Holiness in the Everyday*** by David Cadman. Quaker Bookshop, London, UK. 2009.

In sections on Love, Simplicity, Peace and Prayer, the author weaves references from Quaker, Christian and Buddhist literature, to explain how love can sustain the holy in our daily lives in relationships with others and with the environment. List of related references. (88 pp. \$17.50).

***Letters to a Fellow Seeker: A Short Introduction to the Quaker Way*** by Steve Chase. Quaker Books of FGC, Philadelphia, 2012.

Well-versed in the ways of Quakers, Steve Chase provides a straightforward and excellent explanation in simple language of what it means to be a Quaker today. An excellent study for members and non-members alike. (98 pp. \$11.80).

***The Essence of George Fox's Journal***. Edited by Hunter Lewis. Axion Press, Mt. Jackson VA USA 2012.

Here are selected passages by George Fox telling of his ministry, his travels, his beatings, his times in prison, and his refusal to take an oath or to remove his hat when greeting others. (260 pp. \$15.60).

Reminder:

***Christian Faith and Practice in the Experience of the Society of Friends***, London Yearly Meeting, UK 1960; reprints to 1988.

This foundational collection for Quakers is still available. Very good for all members and attenders to explore and understand our faith. (677 short, selected inspirational passages; sources and references. \$9.75).

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***“Don’t blame Friends when you get stuck on a mountain because of miscommunication.”***

## Quakers Lost on a Mountain

*Ben von Schulmann*

Last August, my brother Daniel, Shaun Bartoo, Tom Mathieson, Maxine Kaufman-Lacusta, Ron [last name withheld by request] and I carpoled to CYM in Camrose, Alberta. Instead of booting it to Camrose we took our time and decided to visit Banff National Park in the Rocky Mountains. We thought it would be nice to go on a “small” day hike. I don’t quite remember what the details were, but to me, a Scout, that meant two or three hours there and back. The plan was to pack a lunch and eat it on the mountain. We made our sandwiches and put them in Ron’s backpack (remember that now). Tom dropped us off at a lodge by a glacial lake, and he and Ron took both cars to where we would eventually exit, before heading back in one car to the trailhead.

We went inside the lodge and Shaun got a Gatorade, I got an O’Henry, and Daniel got some Nutrigrain bars. Daniel found another Gatorade outside unopened. Free drink! The three of us enjoyed our snacks on a lookout point then we came back down and looked for Ron and Tom. We sat and waited and waited. I read a book that I had with me while Shaun and Daniel went to look for our cars. They found one but no sign of Tom and Ron. Eventually Tom and Maxine found us and explained that they had been looking for us too. They thought we might have started without them. Ron had gone up the mountain to look for us there. If we started right away and hiked quickly we could probably catch up with him. Tom had hurt his ankle a bit, so stayed behind. We decided to catch up with Ron who was probably not far ahead.

Back and forth we hiked on many switchbacks, gaining altitude but not a lot of distance. We thought we would see Ron at a fork in the trail, but we didn’t see him there. After a while we ran into people who said, “We saw your friend Ron, he’s just up ahead of you”. Once we got into alpine terrain on a rougher trail with more small rocks, Maxine decided to turn around and go back the way we had come, to where Tom was waiting. In the alpine we saw patches of snow and small glacial ponds. The sun started to go down. Near the top of the pass, we saw one last group who told us: “Your friend Ron, he’s just up ahead”.

Behind us the path was clearly marked, but on the

alpine pass all there was to mark the trail through rocky glacial fields were little cairns. We were going pretty slow because we were tired and hadn’t had lunch! By the time we got over the pass toward the trail going down, there was a sign saying there was a campground 4 km forward, and a lake 10 km to the left. The other car must be at the campground or nearby, we thought. We walked the 4 km to the campsite but found no road – just a few bear caches. By this time every step was an effort since we were high up, and had eaten only cereal for breakfast, followed by chocolate bars and Gatorade!

Back we went 4 km to the junction at the pass. By then we knew we were stuck. We had wasted 8km and the lake was still 10 km ahead (where the road was, no doubt). Daniel had been taking pictures the whole time and had only five percent battery left on the phone. It was time to phone Search and Rescue. Shaun and I were exhausted and we knew we weren’t going to make it off the mountain before nightfall. The operator asked us to turn off the phone and put it on standby. But Daniel didn’t have a paid plan so nobody could phone us back!

We tried unsuccessfully to make a fire and the calls of the marmots all around sounded like people whistling for us. The sun went behind the mountains, the mosquitoes came out, and we were completely demoralized. Daniel used the very last juice in his battery to call Search and Rescue again and give our location. They were about to ask if we needed an airlift out when Daniel’s phone died.

The next fifteen minutes were the longest of my life. We had no idea if Search and Rescue were coming or not. At last we heard a low rumble. It was a helicopter coming to get us! The helicopter came around the corner of the mountain straight toward us but passed right by. It turned around again as we waved our shirts madly at the rescuers. The Search and Rescue guy looked at us in our street clothes and our runners, with no equipment for spending a night on the mountain. In spite of our lack of preparedness I felt like an action hero getting into the helicopter and wearing the headphones. The helicopter took the same route we had hiked, to get back to the trailhead. What

took us five hours to hike took the helicopter only a couple of minutes.

When we landed it was pretty hilarious! Tom and Maxine were looking around for us and were surprised to see us get out! Daniel felt really embarrassed about having to call a helicopter but I thought it was pretty cool. I wish we'd had our picture taken with it.

Meanwhile on the other side of the pass, Ron was waiting for us, worried that we weren't showing up! Once we were reunited, instead of eating the sandwiches that had been in the pack ahead of us all day, Tom took us out to dinner. All of us were very thankful to be together again!

*Ben von Schulmann (with brother Daniel – left below)  
Victoria Friends Meeting*



## YouthAround theFamilyYouth the

**Marika Haspeck** accepted a new job as an environmental engineering technologist with a focus on water and wastewater treatment.

**Peter Stevenson** and Jesse Thompson are tuning pianos, running a home day-care, and raising their son, Effie (2) in Prince George, BC.

**Knoll Stevenson** has been chosen by the Young Friends to be the Teens' Adult Resource Person (TARP) for next year's Western Half Yearly Meeting.

**Nori Sinclair** just finished work with the Sierra Club and is now a communications officer for Camosun College in Victoria BC. She is married to Nathan Dick who says that at thirty-six he is no longer a youth.

**Sara Dick and Scott McRae** live in Calgary. Their children are Finn (5) and Johanna (2). Scott works at the Heart and Stroke Foundation and Sara is currently staying home to nurture their children.

## YouthAround theFamilyYouth the

**Shaun Bartoo** is studying animation at Emily Carr University of Art and Design.

**Thea Walmsley** just finished a circus performance at the PNE with Circus West, featuring trapeze and dance.

**Daniel von Schulmann** graduated in 2012. He is working to make money for travelling in Europe.

**Ben von Schulmann** is in Grade ten at Esquimalt High School. In 2012 he went to England, France, and a Scout Jamborette in Scotland with the Pacific Explorers Scouts.

**Stephen von Schulmann** is at Colquitz Middle School and will be leading the Canadian Improv Games team for his school next year.

**Jessica Klaassen-Wright** recently arrived home with her family from the Monteverde Friends School, in Monteverde, Costa Rica. [See page 6.]

**Nativeh Sterling** lives in Prince George. She enjoys reading, gymnastics, and acrobatics.

**Angelica Dixon** did a Trek program in outdoor wilderness adventures. This had a profound impact on her outlook.

**Max Dixon Murdock** is narrowing his focus and becoming more passionate about chemistry and the sciences. He is a rationalist and in the philosophy program in high school.

**Flynn Dixon** is graduating from Grade twelve. He plans to study engineering at one of Vancouver's universities. This summer he is travelling to Ireland, Istanbul and Paris.

**Camille Dixon** is in Grade three and is enthusiastic about the harp and gymnastics.

**Annie Takaro** is in Grade ten. She likes dance, soccer, and travel. She lived with her family in Nicaragua last year. Annie did the Peace Fest across Canada with Children's International Summer Village.

**Ben Takaro** loves basketball, is learning electric guitar, and is active in Children's International Summer Village.

**Zahira North** is in Grade four and enjoys a variety of sports, theatre, and loves to read.

**Katrina McQuail**, in addition to being the Youth Secretary for CYM, works for a non-profit organization called *10 Cardon*.

**Harmony Morris** likes Barbie dolls, balancing, and gymnastics.

## Young Friends Epistle

As is customary for Young Friends, we gathered together in the small hours of the morning to reflect on our experience over the past three days. Our group of Young Friends was smaller than in past years but our energy and enthusiasm remained the same. Though the majority of Young Friends arrived late on Friday, we began the weekend with balancing.

On Saturday we discussed the possibility of Western Half Yearly Meeting holding membership, [then we became] properly reacquainted during a trip into town to buy provisions for our campfire. Over the marshmallows [we shared] fond memories and enjoyed reminiscing about past Half-Yearlies.

On Sunday we rose late to enjoy our free lunch before helping plant potatoes and pull weeds on the Sorrento farm with Farmer Dave. Before dinner Young Friends gathered at the playground to enjoy an extended game of “grounders”. After dinner we all attended Family Night where several Young Friends entertained with a variety of music. We completed the weekend with another great campfire that lingered late into the night.

*Shaun Bartoo and the Young Friends of  
Western Half Yearly Meeting, May 2013*



Balancers bottom up: Clayton Sterling, Simon James, Joe Ackerman, Nateevah Sterling. Jessica Klaassen-Wright and Aiden Zimmermann are facing the camera. Sorrento BC. Western Half Yearly Meeting.

## St. Lawrence Gathering

The St. Lawrence Regional Gathering on May 3rd to 5th was warmly hosted by Ottawa Monthly Meeting with attendees from Montreal, Thousand Islands and Peterborough Monthly Meetings. Our theme, *Active Hope*, was facilitated by Rose Marie McMechan and Anne Trudell of Peterborough.

Using activities from *Active Hope: How to Survive the Mess We're In Without Going Crazy* by Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone, we embarked on a weekend of inner discovery and deep sharing. Friday evening we made masks and allowed various beings – spring peeper, sardine, deep waters, house, star, wind, bullfrog, tree species, and others – to speak through us in a *Council of All Beings*.

On Saturday morning we pondered our circles of being in the world and what effect we have on the world through them. During this process many of us found new insights in how we relate to the world. While brainstorming what the world would look like after *The Great Turning*, we decided to focus on *Wise Forms for Making Decisions and Choices, Based on Respect and Compassion*. In smaller groups we discussed how to achieve the transformation.

There was agreement that corporations as presently set up are a major impediment. One group realized that the world needs more Quaker decision-making skills. They proposed that we should participate in cooperatives, community and neighborhood groups, and encourage the use of Quaker process in the other organizations we belong to. Another group focused on the importance of local political effort – supporting local candidates, participating on civic committees, and even running for local office.

Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting supplied us with a glorious supper. Afterward, there was much laughter and joy, as some Friends stayed to share stories of an imagined future twenty-five years from now: a man whose life was altered through local currency; someone who reincarnated as a reforester of Madagascar; a politician reformed by a weekend session of the *Alternatives to Violence Project*; a grandmother travelling by electric car to trade soap for maple sugar; and the positive impacts of hemp farming. On Sunday many of us joined Ottawa Monthly Meeting for worship.

*Anne Trudell*

*Peterborough Allowed Meeting*

Summer 2013 – The Canadian Friend



Opinion: by Greg Woods

## The Need for Intimacy in Quaker Worship

Do we know our fellow worshippers? Do we know the people to whom Christ refers in the Book of Matthew chapter 18, verse 20? “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

Often our Monthly Meetings do not function as [a close caring group of Friends]. I attended a large Meeting for well over a year, and one day during worship I looked around the room to name the people I knew. Even though I attended regularly and was active in organizing the Young Adult Friends, I was embarrassed to realize I knew only half of the names of the people gathered that day. After attending another Meeting regularly for six months, I was called by a member of the Outreach committee and asked if I was still attending worship. Even though I had a more positive experience with this Monthly Meeting and knew most of the community, I had never met [the caller]. Furthermore, when I asked the clerk of the Meeting to point out the person, she could not recall who the woman was.

Recently I read an article in *Friends Journal* recommending that the Religious Society of Friends talk about having a testimony of intimacy. I agree with the need to talk about intimacy in our community, but this Friend referred only to sexual intimacy.

I utterly reject using the term intimacy to mean only romantic relationships. By relegating this word to mean one type of relationship, to mean just one of its definitions, we are losing a valuable aspect of our community. When worshipping together was considered a criminal act, early Quakers knew what being intimate with each other meant. Later, during our Society’s isolationist period - in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries - when Quakers lived in their own communities away from others, they knew each other and set up ways to monitor each other. This is why we have travelling minutes and marriage certificates. Both of these traditions were introduced as ways to watch over people and to make sure that our collective faith stayed pure. Friends were definitely involved with each other in an intimate manner.

I am not arguing that we go back to our isolationist period, but our spiritual ancestors definitely knew who they worshipped with every First Day. Do we? Can you name everyone in Meeting on Sunday? If so, do you know what their recent struggles and triumphs are?



Quakers do not believe in outward forms of sacraments. Rather, we believe in sharing holy communion inwardly with each other. Through waiting worship we should be offering each other the proverbial bread and wine. It is a communal experience. If it isn’t, why do we gather each week? Why pay for the upkeep of our Meeting Houses? Instead we could just stay at home and meditate alone. Sharing God’s body with fellow worshippers each Sunday is an intimate holy act. Do we treat each Meeting for Worship as a sacred time? Do we come to Meeting for Worship expecting to be changed through this weekly time for sharing inward sacraments with each other?

One of my favorite Meetings for Worship took place in the aftermath of *Superstorm Sandy* that hit the eastern coast of the US last October. The Sunday after Sandy hit, the Meeting House was still without electricity. Yet we gathered on a rather cold morning. We huddled together around the fireplace for an hour of waiting worship. Our bodies were touching as well as our souls as we sat in God’s presence. That day I felt a part of my worshipping community in a whole new way.

By the next Sunday the electricity to the Meeting House was restored and we returned to our usual seating pattern, spread throughout the room with two or three on a pew instead of a dozen. The only people who sat close together were couples and families. Months later I still miss the intimacy I felt that one cold Sunday morning as we huddled together, simultaneously seeking the warmth of the fire and the Holy Spirit.

How can we reclaim intimacy within our faith community, before we just become strangers who gather together for a personal time of meditation?

*Greg Woods*

*Member of Columbia Friends Meeting in Missouri,  
is currently attending Princeton Meeting, New Jersey*

# What Quakers Can Learn from Evangelicals



Mathew Guest

I have spent the last four years researching the ways in which religion is expressed among young adults in the UK, and have been repeatedly impressed by their sense of conviction. As I am now closer to my forties than my twenties, I am unsure how qualified I am to describe myself as 'young', but I like to think I am not beyond aspiring to the ideals characteristic of this generation. They have taught me a lot about what matters in life and what can be achieved in the time we have. Age has sadly confirmed that as one gets older, inertia and cynicism somehow find it easier to sit at the forefront of one's perspective. The things I used to see as unquestionably achievable, are now often put aside with a resigned shrug as simply good ideas that someone else, someone younger, will have to pursue. Speaking to young people across England's universities about their religious beliefs and moral convictions, and about how they express these in practical terms, has re-instilled a bit more ambition to my worldview.

However, this is not borne of an encounter with lots of passionate young Quakers challenging the status quo and speaking truth to power. A few inspiring Friends aside, the visibility of young Quakers in UK universities is very limited indeed, and at my

own Meeting in Durham we often struggle to attract students beyond occasional or one-off attendance. This is in part a consequence of the limited numbers of Quakers more generally in the UK. While our last (2011) national census confirmed that a majority of the population still consider themselves Christian, only around ten percent of this number actually attend church regularly. Moreover, the churches that thrive the most are Evangelical and Pentecostal, especially among young people. Young adults appear most attracted to exuberant worship and conservative theology, rather than silence and the theology of open questioning that distinguishes the typical Quaker Meeting.

We do, though, have much to learn from our Evangelical and Pentecostal friends. Anyone who has been to a Pentecostal service or been witnessed to by an Evangelical Christian, will know that however uncomfortable they might find this, the conviction they are faced with is unquestionable. Evangelicals are undoubtedly 'firm in the faith', and while many have softened the tone of their evangelism and fostered a greater warmth in welcoming outsiders, their sense of passionately promoting a message of Truth remains. I have had many first hand experiences of this, including when I researched a large charismatic Anglican church as a postgraduate student. I could not affirm all aspects of the theology professed by my evangelical friends, but their hospitality and passion for furthering the work of God as they understood it was inspiring.

Since I became active in the Quaker movement around five years ago, I have been thankful to have found a tradition I can affirm with integrity, steadfast in my belief that the testimonies of Truth, Simplicity, Equality and Peace have universal validity. And yet I have also been disappointed in how quiet the Quaker voice has been. **With such an amazing set of values, why are there not more Quakers proclaiming their message from the rooftops?** We are not short of passionate believers in the Quaker way, so why do I not hear more from them promoting their message with the same kind of conviction and purpose as the Evangelicals? My sense is that Quakers associate the vocalization of religious convictions in public – and perhaps in less public contexts – with an unhelpfully dogmatic form of faith. They do not wish to be tarred with the same brush as the Evangelicals because that would make them preachy, confrontational, and

offensive within a liberal and inclusive society. This is understandable, but in my view we risk throwing out the baby with the bath water. It is possible to be convinced and fervent in one's beliefs without implying that all those who disagree are consigned to hell, or are somehow less legitimate than ourselves. What's more, if we genuinely believe in what lies at the heart of Quaker tradition, should we not tell others about this? Studies of cultural attitudes in Western nations suggest many would be sympathetic and supportive of the positions we take.

Don't get me wrong, Quakers achieve a great deal in public life. The Victorian era when Quaker industrialists set new standards of social philanthropy in England – when Quakers and Evangelicals were often the same people – is echoed today in the concerted efforts of Quakers to further the cause of equal marriage, nuclear disarmament, and continue peace work across the globe. My concern is that Quakers are far too quiet about this. I'd love to hear more from Quakers in public life, defending their work with reference to Quaker tradition. The quiet revolution of the Quakers needn't be all that quiet.

*Mathew Guest, Durham Monthly Meeting, Britain*

[Senior Lecturer in Theology and Religion at Durham University, UK. Mathew currently teaches at the University of Victoria, BC. He is coauthor of *Christianity and the University Experience: Understanding Student Faith*, published by Bloomsbury in September 2013]

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## Boundaries of Illusion

*Sarah Katreen Hoggatt*

I considered myself prepared. At least I was as prepared as I could be going into such an intense experience. About to leave on a five-week trip to Britain and Europe to speak on the book *Spirit Rising: Young Quaker Voices*, I knew all the Meetings I would visit were unprogrammed. Having been raised in a Christian church and an attendee at a semi-programmed Quaker Meeting, a weekend retreat of unprogrammed worship is difficult for me, let alone five weeks. Having heard about the Quakers on the other side of the Atlantic through my studies of Quaker history, I believed nearly all Quakers in Britain and Europe had long since left their Christian roots behind, and I would be carrying a vastly different theology in my heart.

Thus, you can imagine my surprise when I was sitting in Meeting one Sunday and heard someone speak of Jesus. I thought the Quakers in Britain and Europe didn't believe in Jesus. Then I heard him spoken of in another Meeting, and yet another. By this point, my preconceived notions of the people around me were crumbling at my feet and I realized I had been wrong. I was wrong to have put these Friends in boxes before I had met them. I was wrong to think I could predict what they would be like. By putting them in a box I had shut myself off from seeing their Light, when their Light spoke of one I too loved.

Even after helping write and edit *Spirit Rising* and encouraging the diversity it proclaimed, I still struggled with the fact that diversity isn't only with Friends in another country but diversity is in the seats on either side of me. A good part of what the book is about is introducing the wider Quaker fellowship to who our fellow Friends really are; what inspires their lives; and to what sounds their souls turn to listen. Above all, we wanted *Spirit Rising* to be personal; we wanted it to be an intimate look at the people around the world who call themselves Quaker. What I failed to realize as we tried to gather diverse voices together into one volume, was that it wasn't so much the diversity that mattered, but the fact that they stood next to each other, one beside another with differing views, but Friends just the same. I should have learned then you can't qualify someone's experience and view of the truth under a label. You can't describe their experiences with a preconceived idea of what you want them to believe for your own convenience. I realized all kinds of Quakers live in all different parts of the world.

To illustrate this idea, think about a pointillist painting. A canvas is painted with thousands of tiny dots of different colors, one right next to another. From about six feet away you can see different shapes and shades, and one believes these shapes are clearly defined. But if you stepped closer and took an intimate look at the canvas, you would realize what you thought were shapes are simply a large variety of colored dots, and the simple colors are no longer simple but a vast array of hues bound together.

When I met my fellow Friends and sat with them in open worship, I walked up to the *painting* and started examining the dots. At that point I found what I had thought to be the subject, was misperceived. It wasn't simply a matter of being European or British unprogrammed Quakers; they were as diverse as we are in the United States.

By ignoring this diversity and retreating into our theological camps we cut ourselves off from each other, from the strength, encouragement, and truths we could all share. Instead, we are busy drawing boundaries, clarifying how we are different from *them*, only meeting with, and knowing those whom we assume are like ourselves. We do this to such an extent that a surprising number of Quakers are unaware of the vast array of Friends. What have we lost by not getting to know each other? What have they lost by not being friends with us?

I hear so often of division, of one group misrepresenting another and insulting their value. I wonder why we feel the need to do this? What benefit do we get out of hurting someone we perceive to be different from ourselves? After a great deal of thought and observation I have come to believe [we are fulfilling a] need to be right and to be validated.

If I can put someone on the outside of the fence, I can be certain I am on the inside. I can feel safe knowing I believe the right things while I look down on you for believing the wrong things. Is it that I can only feel good about myself if I put you down? We do such a wonderful job of dividing ourselves and then wonder why we live in such a fractured culture. Whether the lines are about theology, sexual orientation, social class or age, we take our large pencils and busily draw lines all over the *ground*. For example: "We have open worship, but they have paid pastors so they aren't really Quakers".

We tend to be so concerned with drawing lines, assigning camps and knowing the factions, that we often forget those in our own camp come from vastly different backgrounds, both those born into Quaker families and those from other journeys of beliefs. The theologies we are raised in form part of who we are. We can't ignore them. No matter what Meeting we attend we carry our past experience inside us. This makes us quite diverse. It's like looking at a pointillist painting. The shapes may seem distinct and separate from a distance but if you step up close to the canvas and gaze intimately at the drops of paint, you'll see a vast array of color, lines blending one into another with no definitive boundaries.

In the microcosm of ourselves, we also find this to be true. We are not as defined as we assume ourselves to be. Inside, we all ponder things beyond our basic professed beliefs – which we rarely discuss with anyone because the ideas are beyond words and certainly beyond the theologies accepted in our social circle.

So we keep quiet about them and people assume they know what we believe about God, the world and each other. After all, they often assume one of two things: we either look like them or look very different; but if they looked just a little closer they would realize our thoughts are not what they assumed they were. If this is true of you why not true of them? **Why do we feel the need to separate ourselves, to draw lines so we never truly get to know one another?**

If we are unable to find the sureness of who we are inside our own souls, we will always be looking for it in others by creating false divisions, and constantly coming up dry and thirsty. Our value does not come from our place in the world, what we believe or who we know or even what we do. Who we are comes from inside us. Our value comes from God, from the Light of God emanating from our souls. No one can change our intrinsic essence. No one can touch it. Who I am is not dependant on who you are. When we know that for certain we are no longer threatened by the diversity around us, or feel the need to take out our theological pencils and start scribbling.

*Sarah Katreen Hoggatt  
Riversway Friends, Tigard, Oregon  
Northwest Yearly Meeting*





## The 2013 QUIP Report - Connecting Our Legacy to the Future

*Sarah Katreen Hoggatt, Reporter for QUIP*

As a group founded when the printing press was in full swing and printed material was the communication medium of choice, Quakers have had a rich history of the written word. Whether through pamphlets, journals or printed tracts, the spirit of Quaker faith has been fed by the word for generations. The forms may be changing, new voices emerging, and our audience shifting, but the word is still precious in whatever form it takes.

Quakers Uniting in Publications (QUIP) has been at the helm of this work among Friends for the past thirty years. Dedicated to writing, publishing, editing, and distributing, we have a deep passion for providing a place where we can talk about God and ask hard questions. Whether in the form of printed books, journals, online articles, or discussions via social media, the Light shared, one with another, is the same Divine Light. Each word is a step in the journey we are taking together.

Printing on paper is no longer the only way to share our thoughts. Now there are numerous possibilities including e-books, blogs, online discussions, and no doubt options previously unknown to us will emerge in the future. Each tool opens up creative ways to share our stories. What can we learn about how we've published in the past that can guide us as we look for relevant ways to share our words in the present and in the future? In addition, we are asking how we can ensure the ministry of the written word is supported – in whatever form it takes – so Friends called to this work can continue on. The answers that once spoke to these questions are no longer as applicable. The culture continues to change as it always has and we are helping each other find new ways of being publishers of the word. We feel a broader perspective is needed from a wider variety of Friends. As each person brings with them a bit of divine wisdom, we can accomplish far more together than we can apart. QUIP wants to reach out to musicians, artists, Friends who speak and work in radio, to bring them into the discussion. We wish to share our struggles, where we can improve, our joys and our concerns, with all publishers of Truth. By coming together and combining our experience, we will be able to come up with answers and ideas one group could not come up with on its own. We need to hear each other's words first in order to spread them.

Each year's QUIP conference is a chance to hear these words and to ask these questions. This year, by reviewing our history and our work in publishing, we rediscovered the value of our community as we supported and encouraged one other. We find great value in regularly meeting together: to educate; to converse about what is going on; to hear about new projects; and to make a difference by sharing our diversity and wide-ranging skills.

By teaching each other new ways of sharing our Light, whether through e-books, *Quaker Quest*, academic online learning, or a fresh look at memoir, we learned new skills. By celebrating the legacy of over fifty years of *Quaker Religious Thought*, listening to and asking questions of author Jennifer Kavanagh, we celebrated the footsteps of others and learned from their insights. We asked what mediums are relevant today and how people are hearing the word in 2013; but more than that, we learned that relationships and relevance are key, so we agreed that meeting together face-to-face on a regular basis is vitally important. We love our conversations, hearing about what is going on, who is working on what, who needs support, and which projects are embracing the theological diversity of Quakers – a diversity we treasure.

Jennifer Kavanagh, quoted from an article in *The Friend – The Legacy of the Written Word*: "...writing is an expression of ministry and a profound engagement of the Spirit". It is a ministry in which we passionately believe. We want to be instruments of the Spirit to make sure the gift of the written word is passed on to future generations, so they have the same foundation we were given for engaging with the Spirit. God spoke to our predecessors, God is speaking to us today, and we are quite sure God will be speaking in new ways to Friends in the future.

The next QUIP conference is at Woolman Hill Quaker Center in western Massachusetts, May 1-4, 2014. Our theme is *The Tools of Communicating*. There will be workshops on the tools and mechanics of the trade, such as social media, graphic design, layout, and e-publishing. We ask you to please join with us, share time together in discussion and ask your questions. We want to hear your voice and hear the words you have to say; we would love you to join our conversation at [Quakerquip.org](http://Quakerquip.org).

*Sarah Katreen Hoggatt*

## Postscript on Teen Membership from Daniel Allen

The Meeting I was first part of, Ithaca [New York] Meeting, is blessed with many young people and has what I think is a very wise approach toward teens growing into adulthood: The *Out of the Nest and Into the World* program. Briefly, a teen requests a clearness committee, chooses an adult mentor who is not related to him/her, and embarks on a service project outside

of Ithaca. After the project's conclusion, the Meeting celebrates the teen's transition to adult membership, and the teen may indeed find his or her gifts are considered by Nominating Committee. Could this program be fruitful for other Meetings with teenagers approaching adulthood? [Full article on page 14; also see <http://www.nyym.org/pubs/net/dec99.html>]

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## Whither Quaker Employment Structure in Canadian Yearly Meeting ?

This article does not represent the views of the CYM Personnel Policy Committee of which I am the current Clerk. It is my personal reflection, written at this time as I believe we have reached a point where the structure to support our employment relationships needs re-examining.

My connection with personnel matters in CYM began in the 1980s as a member of the Personnel Advisory Committee and continued with clerking the YM Office Oversight Committee. There were fewer employees then and the mandate seemed simpler, with a *Guide to Personnel Practices* that was available to employing committees as a resource. Many of the headings bear a close resemblance to elements in the present policy but are much less detailed.

Employment relationships and responsibilities were questioned then too. There were Friends who were not comfortable with a "hireling ministry", although the position of Recording Clerk of London YM was first established in 1657! Lines of accountability were not always respected, with employees wondering if they had several bosses.

Now we have tried to confine that accountability to specific committees, although employees can still find the Quaker discernment process takes time, when there is a need for a decision to be made. How can we ensure that there is clarity in our employment relationships regarding various roles and responsibilities?

Our Personnel Policy has evolved in recent years based on both our testimonies and the legal requirements we have as an employer. As we aspire to reflect our Quaker beliefs in our employment relationships, do we hold Quakers to a higher standard as employers, than those in the secular world?

Are we able to deliver the support within volunteer committees to implement the various legal responsibilities that CYM holds as the employer, while remaining true to our Quaker values?

Personnel Policy Committee now comprises staff and committee representatives from the six committees that employ staff. There are other committees who could act as employers in the future. Is this the right forum to develop and implement policies and practices?

How do we provide training in Human Resources expertise and consistency in the implementation of our policies for all the members of these employing committees?

We have been given many gifts by the Consultation and Renewal (Cn'R) recommendations for implementing support for Young Friends, Quaker Education, and our Publications and Communications. Do we have the capacity in the future to provide the support for these ventures?

An ad hoc working group is looking at the needs recommended in the Cn'R report as well as what further needs should be identified. They will be exploring with other Yearly Meetings how they structure similar programs and employing responsibilities.

Personnel Policy Committee will be participating in Reporting and Clearness at CYM in August. I hope the questions I have posed will help Friends to engage with this important aspect of the Yearly Meeting's work as they prepare to come to Kemptville.

*Virginia Dawson*

*Yonge Street Meeting*

## Reports: Representative Meeting

The spring meeting of representatives from all Canadian Yearly Meeting committees and Meetings, took place April 26 and 27 at Friends House in Toronto. We were as usual warmly welcomed and looked after by Toronto Friends, and all was glorious green, blue, and yellow outdoors.

Inside, was somewhat duller in colour but illuminated with flashes of Light. Friends on our committees have been working valiantly to address big issues, many of which have only surfaced within the last few months.

Excellent work is being done by the Program Committee to make the *50 Youth Challenge* a success. More good work is being done by Publications and Communications on the website and communications plan, and by Education and Outreach with the Quaker Education Project.

The Trustees, Personnel Policy Committee and Finance Committee are all responding to newly emerging issues around governance, employment policies and budgets.

Generous and truthful sharing of problems within some small Meetings brought us face to face with our vulnerabilities and the comfort of knowing we are not alone with them, while some larger Meetings have strengths and accomplishments to celebrate and share. Spirit was at work. An opening-up to truths around needed change began to take place.

The representative of your Meeting will have received all the reports that were presented. We hope that you will circulate them in your Meeting and discuss the points made so that thoughtful discernment may be started at Yearly Meeting.

We look forward with pleasure to Yearly Meeting at Kemptville, the success of the *Youth Challenge*, and the opportunity of our revised schedule and exciting presenters to shake up and renew our days together.

*Carol Bradley*  
*Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting*

## Nominating Committee Needs You!!

The Canadian Yearly Meeting Nominating Committee is still looking to fill several vacant positions. Each year our task is to seek out the person best fitted for each position, and the best position for each person who comes forward. This process of discernment is both demanding and rewarding. We weigh interest, qualifications, and often geographical considerations as well. Friends do not need to be nominated. If you think you are perfect for a position, ring your own bell! The only proviso is that each nominee must provide a Minute of Support from their Monthly Meeting.

### **We need your talents, faith and enthusiasm!**

Contact Nominating Committee for information:

Peter Stevenson	peterstevenson@telus.net
Patty Lembke	p.lembke@sasktel.net
Svetlana MacDonald	Svetlana@bellnet.ca
Barbara Horvath	barbarahorvath@sympatico.ca

### **Vacant Positions:**

CYM 2014 Recording Clerk		1
Contributions Committee	Central	1
	East	1
Finance Committee		1
Camp NeeKauNis Comm.		7
Nominating Committee	East	1
Program Committee	East	1
	Central	1
	West	1
CYM Youth Program Coordinator		1
Publications and Communications		1
Records Committee		2
Canadian Council of Churches		
Governing Board		1
Commission on Faith and Witness		1
KAIROS		
Movement Building		1
Global Partnerships		1
Dignity and Rights		1
Church Council on Justice and Corrections		1

# Toward A Strategic Communications Plan for Yearly Meeting

## Strategic planning for communications requires that three things be known:

1. we need to know **what** we want to communicate
2. we need to know **how** we want to communicate
3. be aware of existing and needed policies and procedures that inform and constrain these efforts

In 2011 the Publications and Communications Committee (P&C) was asked to take the lead in the work of developing a Strategic Plan for CYM. By itself, P&C can't make a comprehensive communications strategy for a whole Yearly Meeting. That will involve extensive consultation across CYM committees, Monthly Meetings, and regional bodies.

## Typically a strategic plan has four elements, each making the next one possible:

- Vision statement: describes the reason for the organization's existence
- Mission statement: describes what the purpose of the organization is
- Clear goals identified to support this mission
- Action plans for each goal which describe how each goal will be met

To our knowledge our Yearly Meeting does not have a formal **vision statement**. P&C worshipfully discerned:

**“A community grounded in loving kindness seeking the Divine”**

Our **mission statement** for the communications plan is simply:

**“To support this community by fostering communication and publications”**

It seemed more productive to look at CYM's various target audiences as the focus for strategies, rather than build a plan around specific media, whether current or future.

## **Five broad areas of focus emerged, each with its own type of audience and needed approach:**

1. Outreach to public: Marketing and Promotion
2. Facilitating our Quaker Process
3. Education: Internal and public
4. Networking and collaboration with other bodies (Quaker & Other)
5. Communication between and among Monthly Meetings and individual Friends across our Canadian Quaker community. (This is not within our mandate, yet can hardly be left out of the overall picture.)

## Outreach

### **Suggested Emerging Goals and Actions :**

#### **Goal O-1 Represent Quaker Values Through Media**

(Create a representation of CYM that is accurate, attractive, inviting and recognizable)

- Publish The Canadian Friend in a timely fashion with excellent material
- Issue press releases on issues (with CYM Clerks)

- Broaden scope of *Quaker Learning Series* with the Education and Outreach Committee
- Build content from multiple perspectives on the website to enable interactive dialogue on issues

### **Goal O-2: Reach out to Others and Answer that of God in Seekers**

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- Produce and distribute Outreach material with Education and Outreach (E&O) and others
- Locate outreach material from outside sources
- Announce and promote Quaker events

## **Facilitate Quaker Process**

### **Goal F-1: Build and Sustain our Committees and Yearly Meeting**

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- Post/maintain website material: minutes, discussions, descriptions of committees' mandates, projects
- Promote CYM events widely: annual sessions and special events, with Program Committee and others

### **Goal F-2: Support Community Action by Facilitating Decision-Making Processes**

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- Set up and evaluate trial on-line decision-making
- Hold regular educational/training processes for members and attenders (with E&O and Program Cttee.)

### **F-3: Celebrate the Joys and Challenges of Quaker Practice**

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- Create and/or disseminate existing materials that inform Friends of Quaker business practices: clerking, recording, decision-making, record-keeping, and encourage on-line discussion of these
- Encourage on-line discussion and local workshops on *Quaker Spiritual Practices* (Patricia Loring's books would be good inspiration). Encourage publication of output of these meetings
- Develop and/or disseminate existing strategies and/or training programs for skills related to leading and participating in virtual business meetings, and virtual Meetings for Worship

## **Education**

### **Goal E-1: Create and Offer Internal Resources**

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- Offer the annual Sunderland P. Gardner lecture with Program Cttee. Make transcript, audio and video widely available. Live-stream during CYM if possible. Same with CYM Quaker or Bible Study
- Post resources in most appropriate locations and media
- Track other sources of appropriate resources with E&O
- Make core documents easily accessible: *Faith and Practice*, *Organization and Procedure*, CYM minutes, manuals and programs, etc.
- Coordinate with Goal F-3

### **Goal E-2: Reflect the Breadth of Historical and Current Quaker Resources**

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- Maintain records of our own publications and web sites
- Work with Records to build archival requirements for CYM

### **Goal E-3: Evaluate Work in Light of Vision, Mission Statement and CYM's Changing Priorities**

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- Revisit after three years, and after that evaluate at least every five years



## Networking

### **Goal N-1: Establish contacts with other Yearly Meetings and Organizations to Collaborate on Developing Content and Evaluating New Media Platforms**

- Seek permission from Britain Yearly Meeting and Friends General Conference to use some of their materials to seed content on the quaker.ca web site
- Share and evaluate appropriateness of applying aspects of communication strategies from other bodies to CYM's needs

## Supporting Quaker Community

### **Goal C-1 Build and Sustain our Communities**

- Provide on-line, print, and face-to-face opportunities for sharing our individual and corporate journeys
- Determine in detail what technology is currently available, practical and affordable, what the training needs are, and what the costs in dollars and volunteer or staff time are

### **Goal C-2: Truthfully Represent Controversies within Quaker Community**

- Open The Canadian Friend and other media to multiple viewpoints expressed appropriately
- Promote use of *Conflict Management* materials (with E&O and Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Council (CMMC))

### **Goal C-3: Evaluate Media and Technology, and Introduce for Appropriate Use**

- Develop and promulgate email guidelines
- Develop and promulgate Twitter guidelines
- Develop and promulgate Blog/Facebook guidelines
- Develop use of decision-making software as appropriate
- Provide ways for all Friends to interact and learn from one another, even if geographically isolated or in small Meetings
- Encourage Friends to create multiple informal spaces for social media interaction that are not under the care of CYM

### **Goal C-4: Listen to and Involve Quaker Youth**

- Dialogue with Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting (CYFYM) about social media guidelines
- Collaborate with CYFYM about appropriate choices and techniques for virtual community (Facebook, Buddybook, Diaspora, WordPress, Twitter, etc.)
- Consult with CYFYM about their use of online technology as a platform for meeting, including its effectiveness; seek their advice about introducing online technology as a meeting platform for CYM

\* \* \* \* \*

These lists were generated from a threshing session at Yearly Meeting 2011, and elaborated within our small committee, so is not representative of the creative thinking, or desired actions of the whole Yearly Meeting. There will be a Special Interest Group at CYM 2013 to further the process, but we need an ongoing and repeated process. It is a dialogue that started at the Spring Representative Meeting, with a report (in more detail than this article) that will lead the Yearly Meeting to clarity and practical actions, as to what, how and why it communicates, internally and externally.

Consider and comment now or at CYM to the Clerk Carol Bradley. If you are a person who enjoys the planning and consultation processes P&C needs you. Contact Peter Stevenson, clerk of Nominations Committee.

## Last Words *Ben von Schulmann*

My earliest memories of Quaker worship are from the living room and acreage of Trevor and Sarah Chandler's house, where the Lillooet Worship Group meets. It's surprising to me that a town as small as Lillooet would have a Quaker Meeting, but I loved its smallness. Often, it was just Trevor and Sarah Chandler, my parents, my two brothers and me. I liked it when one of my parents would take my brothers and me on walks through the Chandler's orchard and down to the rocks beside the Fraser River. One time Trevor came as well. He brought a little tin boat in which he put a tea light. I don't know how it worked but Trevor put it in a small pool and it pattered around.

When I returned home it took awhile to sink in, but reflecting on my experience in York I could tell that Quakers all over the world were part of my extended family. You don't always know they are your family until you enter through those doors. "Religious Society of *Friends*" is probably the best name to describe who we are.

I understand better what it is to be a Quaker since going to Scotland, experiencing other faiths and meeting Quakers, then shortly afterward, attending CYM with my brother Daniel. Being a Young Friend is another big draw – there are other youth like me who are part of the same tradition.

One last point I'd like to make about discovering Quaker faith for myself is about how we support the work of Friends. Christian services pass around

**"I don't want to see Quakers disappear before my kids can enjoy the Religious Society of Friends."**

We moved to Victoria when I was six years old. For several years I didn't really consider myself to be a Quaker. If you asked me if I had a religion I might have said "I'm a Quaker", without knowing what it meant. I didn't understand what it was until last summer, when I went to England and Scotland with a group of Scouts and saw other religious services. I didn't even really know what people did at church until I went on that trip. From the various cathedrals and church services that we visited I learned, that for me, churches are confusing and alienating with the minister giving his interpretation of everything. I realized in the cathedrals that I wasn't at home there. My place was sitting in silence in the Meeting House for an hour, giving ministry if the Spirit moved me.

Half-way through our trip, while everyone else went to York Minster, my Scoutmaster arranged for me to attend the York Quaker Meeting. It was the same as attending Meeting for Worship at home, except there were more people and they met in a newer Meeting House than the one on Fern Street. There's something about being in Meeting for Worship that is friendly and comforting. It was wonderful to be in the company of other Friends – although I felt a little awkward being in my Scout uniform when everyone else was in regular clothes. The Friends were very interested in who I was and where I was from. At the end of the Meeting I introduced myself as a visitor from Canada and found it tricky to explain exactly where Victoria was!

a collection plate so the large cathedrals can stay in business. It never occurred to me that the same thing happens in our Meeting without the plate passing. In York, they gave a percentage of the collection to a charity to help bring clean water to African towns. At the end of the Meeting the donation box was pointed out. [I realized that] we have to give more than just our presence and time because I don't want to see Quakers disappear before my kids can enjoy the Religious Society of Friends.

*Ben von Schulmann, Victoria Friends Meeting*

[Pictured below at the Blair Atholl Jamborette in Scotland]



# *The Canadian Friend*

Editor: Sherryll-Jeanne Harris

Editorial Support: Gerald Harris, Catherine Novak, Michael Phillips, Margaret Vallins, R. Claire Weintraub

## **Themes & Deadlines for Submissions**

Fall 2013

C Y M Issue

Deadline for submissions:

September 1

December 2013

Quaker Thought

Deadline for submissions:

October 1

View *The Canadian Friend* online at: [www.quaker.ca/cfriend/cfriend.html](http://www.quaker.ca/cfriend/cfriend.html)



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Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

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91A Fourth Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1S 2L1