

The Canadian Friend

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Living in the Spirit: Honouring the Earth

- Ecosystem Restoration: Respecting that of God in Everything •
 - Bouncing between “I believe” and “I act” •
 - Human - Earth - Spirit Relationship •
 - Learning to Love the World •
 - What Is a Moral Economy? •

The Canadian Friend

December 2005
Volume 101, Number 5

From the editor's desk ...

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• **Articles, Poetry, Photos and Drawings**

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As I write this editorial, it is “thanksgiving day,” (October 10) although every day is a day of giving thanks. I am at my home in Victoria with late-afternoon sun streaming in after a showery day. A bicycle ride has quickened my sense of connection with Earth.

David Newlands, in the Canadian Quaker Pamphlet #55 (*Quakers and the Economic Order*), includes this prayer: “We thank you God for new initiatives that will make a change and will help to defeat the tyranny and enslavement of economic structures. We thank you for the vision of a new creation in which everyone has a share. We thank you for the small changes in people that alter their extravagant and wasteful ways. We thank you for the beauty of the earth, for harmony and balance and for the opportunity to speak truth to power.”

It is a joy to experience the energy and hope emanating from the submissions for this issue, most of which came from members of the Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN). The group’s spiritual energy and actions had also provided a visionary position at these Canadian Yearly Meeting sessions: in 2001, minute on sustainability; in 2004, endorsement of the Earth Charter; and in 2005, renewed consideration of the Earth Charter.

The variety of articles, poems, reviews and letters bound together between the covers of *The Canadian Friend* can be seen as a metaphor for our growing understanding of the interconnectedness of all things. There are articles about our faith perspectives, work on environmental concerns, poetic reflections, historical appreciations of our testimonies on ecology, and understanding our economic system as it influences the environment. Separate articles, a variety of writers, yet all is connected, and offered to readers as a fruit of our individual and corporate concern for our planet.

Advices and Queries #42 is very clear about this environmental concern: “We do not own the world and its riches are not ours to dispose of at will. Show a loving consideration for all creatures and seek to maintain the beauty and variety of the world. Work to ensure that our increasing power over nature is used responsibly, with reverence for life. Rejoice in the splendour of God’s continuing creation.”

Arnold Ranneris

The global environment with its finite resources is a concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth’s vitality, diversity and beauty is a sacred trust.

– *Earth Charter*

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Living in the Spirit: Honouring the Earth

Human – Earth – Spirit Relationship	4
<i>Catherine Verrall</i>	
Spiralling Forward: Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN)'s	
Dynamic Six-Year History	6
<i>Peggy Land</i>	
The Path We Are On: Excerpts from Quaker Writings	8
Bouncing between "I believe" and "I act"	10
<i>Lynne Phillips</i>	
When There Were Trees	11
<i>Nancy Willard</i>	
Quaker Institute for the Future: Summer Research Seminar	12
<i>Anne Mitchell</i>	
2002 Statement, World Health Organisation	12
<i>Gro Harlem Brundtland</i>	
What Is a Moral Economy?	13
<i>Quaker Institute for the Future</i>	
Learning to Love the World	14
<i>John Scull</i>	
Poem for the Flicker in the Ash	15
<i>Cornelia Hoogland</i>	
Ecosystem Restoration: Respecting that of God in Everything	16
<i>David Polster</i>	
John Woolman and the Earth Charter	17
<i>Bert Horwood</i>	
Report, Visions and Strategies Sessions, Pre- CYM Workshop 2001	18
Wake Up, Lake Mountain!	19
<i>Lynne Phillips</i>	
We've Endorsed the Earth Charter, Now What?	20
<i>John Scull</i>	
How to Join the Quaker Ecology Action Network	20
A Discussion Group on Ecology	21
<i>Carmen Loisel</i>	
The Prophets Among Us	21
<i>Carmen Loisel</i>	
Eating Food, Taking Risks	22
<i>Tracey McCowan</i>	
Posting from the QEAN Web Discussion List, 22 June 2005	23
<i>David Polster</i>	
Canadian Yearly Meeting Listeners (for Adults & for Young Friends) ..	23
Book Reviews	24
<i>Donald Alexander, Arnold Ranneris</i>	
Quaker Book Service: New Books	26
Letters to the Editor	27
<i>Bill Curry, Kitty Dunn</i>	
Simple Living at Pendle Hill	29
<i>Erika Koenig-Sheridan</i>	
Around the Family	30
Credits, Upcoming Themes, and Deadlines	32

An Excerpt from the Minutes of the 2005 Canadian Yearly Meeting in Session

53. Opening Worship: The meeting began with worship. The clerk read from Quaker Faith and Practice 1995, section 25.01 and excerpts from section 25.02, as follows:

The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age.

(John Woolman, 1772)

Our planet is seriously ill and we can feel the pain. We have been reminded of the many ways in which the future health of the earth is under threat as a result of our selfishness, ignorance and greed. Our earth needs attention, respect, love, care and prayer.

As a Religious Society of Friends we see the stewardship of God's creation as a major concern. The environmental crisis is at root a spiritual and religious crisis: we are called to look again at the real purpose of being on this earth, which is to till it and keep it so as to reveal the glory of God for generations to come.

(London Yearly Meeting 1988)

COVER DRAWING

By Janet Nunn, a member of
Pelham Executive Meeting

Human – Earth – Spirit Relationship

By Catherine Verrall

When we moved to Hamilton, Ontario, in 1978, I became very involved with First Nations people. The Six Nations Reserve was nearby—the Haudenosaunee/ Iroquois people, whose Loyalist ancestors had been *granted* land in Canada by the king after the United States revolution. Many still practice their original Longhouse faith. I began to learn from the elders. Before each meeting, any kind of meeting, and at the beginning of each day, they share some version of the Thanksgiving Prayer, giving thanks to all the beings of Creation because they recognise that each has spirit. They are “all my relations” in the circle of life; they are “kin.” That’s also a term David Suzuki uses a lot.

I couldn’t join the Longhouse, but when a Quaker Friend visited from England, I found Hamilton Friends Meeting—and knew I was “home.” In the silence and the ministry and the readings, it dawned on me that my own deep sense of wonder in creation, my drive for justice, my creative ideas—this is “that of God” in me. I could stop fretting that the theological words used in church didn’t really connect with me. What I experience within myself here is God, Goddess, Divine Spirit, Great Mystery, Cosmic Energy, Allah, or whatever human words we may use as symbols of the experience.

George Fox gave us these words

“Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.” Quakers, like many other faith groups, believe in continuing revelation—the Spirit continuing to lead us to new insights. Even though women were equal with men from the beginning in giving ministry and leadership, the language needed to grow. So the basic testimony of Quakers is to that of God, the divine, in every person. Now, we are led to grow further to seeing the divine in every Being of creation—not just the human, but the whole interrelated cosmos.

**We must discover our kin,
the other animals and plants
with whom we share this planet.
We are related to them
through our DNA and evolution.**

In *A Plea for the Poor*, John Woolman wrote, “The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious Creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age.” ... “May we look upon our treasures, and the furniture of our houses, and the garments in which we array ourselves, and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions, or not.”

In 1763 at the time of the Indian Wars, he had set out unarmed, on a horse, to visit the Indians on the

Pennsylvania frontier. “Love was the first motion,” and hence a concern arose to spend some time with the Indians, “that I might feel and understand their life and the spirit they live in if haply I might receive some instruction from them.”

As he rode along, he saw how the English had pushed the Indians away from the best land, and killed the animals the Indians depended on. And a weighty care came over his mind ... “that we might attend to universal righteousness [work to counter these wrongs] answerable to the will of that Being who hath an equal regard to all mankind. ... And I felt that the seeds of great calamity and desolations are sown and growing fast on this continent ... to the ruin of our posterity.”

Does this ring a bell? All of us, unknowingly, are engaged in a war against the biosphere—a war against that of God in creation.

Two centuries later, in the Canadian Yearly Meeting 2004 Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture, *Arrowhead to Hand Axe: In Search of Ecological Guidance*, Keith Helmuth said, “What is it that makes economics a matter of spiritual concern? It is the fact that economics is a domain of relationships, and our spiritual tradition teaches us, above all else, that the essence of life—the reality Quakers call that of God—is known in relationship. Economics

embraces all persons in a web of relationships. The quality of these relationships and the way compassion, justice, nurture and the integrity of Creation are served in economic life is vital to the deepest meaning of religion.”

This fits in with what modern scientists are urging. In *Wisdom of the Elders*, authors Peter Knudtson and David Suzuki place statements of scientists along with accounts of First Nations elders. Paul Ehrlich, Stanford University ecologist, believes the answer to the global difficulties will be “quasi-religious”—the way we perceive our relationships with the rest of Nature and our role in the grand scheme of things. E. O. Wilson, a Harvard biologist, said: “We must discover our kin, the other animals and plants with whom we share this planet. We are related to them through our DNA and evolution.” George Wald, a Nobel prize-winning biologist, also wrote: “The past few years have made us aware as we have never been before of the depth of kinship among all living organisms ... So all life is akin, and our kinship is much closer than we had ever imagined.” 🐾

Catherine Verrall is a member of Regina Allowed Meeting (Prairie MM).

Recognise that peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which we are all part.

— *Earth Charter*

Meditations

- Think about a time when you felt your connection, your relationship with nature—a sense of the mysterious, luminous presence in the cosmos of which you are a part—surprised by joy.
- We are all made of star-stuff. I am part of the fabric of the universe, and some of the atoms that whiz around in my body may well have originated in distant galaxies.
- Be aware how the life energy of the universe, experienced as love, holds us all.
- As surely as the river of God flows across the heavens and throughout the cosmic deep, we know it flows in nurturing and creative presence throughout the life of earth. (Keith Helmuth)
- We live in the midst of miracles. Let us rejoice and respond. (Tony McQuail)
- We must be action people. What are some of the things you are able to do in your life—to see the interconnections—to live and work for harmony with that of the sacred in the earth/human community? (Art Solomon, Ojibway elder)



PHOTO BY ROSE MARIE CIPRYK

Spiralling Forward: QEAN's Dynamic Six-Year History

By Peggy Land

QUAKERS IN CANADA HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM FOR MANY YEARS. Since the 1970s, Friends have spoken out strongly against uranium mining and nuclear power generation, clear-cut logging, pesticide spraying, and more. It has become part of our history to bear witness and speak truth to power from coast to coast, along with members of such groups as Greenpeace, the Sierra Club, Inter-Church Uranium Committee, Concerned Parents Group, and the Raging Grannies.

At the same time, we have continued to believe that simplicity of lifestyle is an important part of respecting the Earth and all that sustains us. However, until fairly recently, we have not attempted to effectively network and support our efforts as Canadian Quakers with these challenges. This has become an exercise in discovering who we are, and how our vast geography shapes our concerns and awareness of the issues we hold in common.

Quakers in the United States started addressing such issues in an organised way a decade before us, with the formation in 1988 of the Friends Committee on Unity with Nature (FCUN). Some Canadian Friends joined as individuals, and Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) has appointed representatives to attend annual meetings. Of course, CYM is only one of many Yearly Meetings represented in this large U.S.-based

organisation. Though we are making progress, even now we barely know who we are as Canadian Quaker environmental types, what we are up to, and how we might best support each other.

In 1999, a survey in *The Canadian Friend* asked readers to state their level of interest in establishing an environmental organisation of our own, possibly a) within Canadian Friends Service Committee, b) as a standing committee of CYM, c) as an experimental e-mailing working group, or d) other. Feedback indicated strong interest in the experimental e-mailing working group. After CYM 1999, the Environmental Working Group was begun with twelve Friends (several of whom were also members of FCUN) from across the country. A small budget for communications had been granted.

Since then, our network has grown to over fifty members and we are now known as the Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN). We share information on a wide variety of concerns and are supportive of each other's efforts to live more simply and to address environmental rights and wrongs. Currently we have no budget, mainly because we have not asked for funds lately. We have avoided extra travel expenses by meeting in person only at CYM, when we explore issues of concern in person, and decide upon a new clerk or co-clerks for the coming year.

Members are able to take part in

all decisions via our e-mail decision-making protocol, invoked by the clerk as felt necessary for "weighty" matters. If we cannot come to unity via e-mail, then the matter can be taken to our annual meeting at CYM for more personal attention, though not all members attend CYM. Fortunately, so far, we have not had to do this.

At CYM 2001, our Minute on Sustainability was accepted, a "rare statement of Quaker belief and commitment." It had been produced via our e-mail network and one conference call. We produced an energy-auditing pamphlet, with which Monthly Meetings could explore ways to be more Earth-Friendly, and at that CYM, displays on such projects came from ten Monthly Meetings. Our energy audit system for Meeting Houses was later shared with and promoted by FCUN, which is now known as Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW).

We supported the efforts of one of our members who was very involved in the biotechnology and oncomouse patenting case, when it went before the Supreme Court. Another member was supported in the production of the booklet, *A Clearer Look at Nuclear Energy*, advocating the Nuclear Guardianship Vision for nuclear waste in Canada. In 2004, this booklet was used to represent QEAN's position for the Nuclear Waste Management Organisation's consultation.

Two other members wrote articles

in *The Canadian Friend* on transportation issues, sharing concerns and experiences on going car-less. Transportation issues are an ongoing challenge for most of us.

With help from Bruce Dienes, our webminder and technical support person for our e-mail list, we now have a website at <http://www.quaker.ca/qean>. There we have posted the energy auditing pamphlet and the text of *A Clearer Look at Nuclear Energy*, among other things.

QEAN has been instrumental in promoting the Earth Charter to Monthly Meetings, and then to CYM for endorsement in 2004. At this time, there are 96 Canadian organisations who have endorsed the Charter. This includes such other national faith groups as the Canadian Catholic Organisation for Development and Peace, the Canadian Unitarian Council, and the United Church of Canada.

We continue to be in contact with Quaker Earthcare Witness, and many of our members hold joint memberships in this sister group.

Our present challenge is to continue encouraging implementation of the Earth Charter commitments, especially at the local level. Members

of QEAN were asked at CYM 2004 to work with their respective Monthly Meetings to explore how we might do so. This is shaping up to be a long-term project in terms of specific initiatives. Much of what Quakers are about is consistent with the principles of the Charter, including how we live our lives.

Many members are now wondering whether QEAN would be more effective as a resource pool and as discussion and action facilitators if QEAN had CYM standing committee status or if it were a subcommittee of Canadian Friends Service Committee.

Some questions for consideration on these concerns include:

- Is it fair to expect members of QEAN to be the primary “environmental conscience” of the CYM family?
- Can environmentally responsible ways of living be mandated within Quakerism?
- How can we best support each other to make significant changes in our lives?
- Can QEAN represent CYM or Canadian Quakers in any official way?
- How effective can networking be via e-mail when no funds are

allocated for “real time” meetings and many members have never met each other?

- Can expensive air travel for ‘environmental’ meetings be justified when it is also harmful to the environment?
- What are the alternatives, and who has the time for slower travel and more meetings?
- Should we subdivide into bio-regions for meetings and do the rest by e-mail, whether we become a CYM standing committee, or not?

THESE ARE QUESTIONS THAT QEAN MEMBERS ARE ASKING EACH OTHER AND MAY WELL BE ASKING THEIR RESPECTIVE MONTHLY MEETINGS TO CONSIDER IN THE NEAR FUTURE. It is important that asking such interesting but hypothetical questions not distract us all from the ever more urgent business at hand: to simply be and live the changes we want to see in our world. For me, the main issue is how we can best support each other to do this work. ☞

Peggy Land is a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting as well as an active member in QEAN. She was a clerk of the former Ecology Working Group.

From: Arrowhead to Hand Axe: In Search of Ecological Guidance
(Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture 2004, Canadian Quaker Pamphlet #60, Argenta Friends Press)

The way our monetary system works is the central stumbling block over which we trip in our efforts to do the right thing ecologically speaking. The monetary system is like a powerful emulsifying current that engulfs and dissipates the streams of ecologically sound initiatives that arise in the cultural watershed. The monetary system, in its characteristic mode of functioning, rewards behaviour that disrupts and disables ecological and social integrity. Money, as such, is not the problem. It is the particular design of our current monetary system, and the values, mindset and behaviour it engenders that is in conflict with ecologically sound economic adaptation.

– Keith Helmuth

The Path We Are On:

Excerpts from Quaker Writings

• *John Woolman, 1772:*

The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now to support outward greatness appears to be an injury to the succeeding age.

• *London Yearly Meeting, 1988:*

As a Religious Society of Friends we see the stewardship of God's creation as a major concern. The environmental crisis is at root a spiritual and religious crisis: we are called to look again at the real purpose of being on this earth, which is to till it and keep it so as to reveal the glory of God for generations to come.

• *Keith Helmuth, 1990:*

We are building towards the climax of crisis. The spiritual crisis is folding into the ecological crisis and the ecological crisis is folding into the economic crisis. As Christians, it seems to me, we are now required to critically assess the capital-driven market economy and identify it as a false religion, a fabulously productive but ultimately destructive system bringing closure on God's goodness in creation and bringing a creeping atheism to the soul. To look this system straight in the eye and call it to account is a critical test of Biblical faith.

Challenging market economics with a Biblical sense of the goodness of God in creation is to join a spiritual struggle. Faith in God, solidarity with the suffering poor and all other forms of life demands that we take a stand and say, "This destruction must stop." We must be perfectly clear about the implications of undertaking this responsibility. It is more than just setting up household recycling bins, growing organic vegetables or riding a bike to work. It is more than a talking job. It is a renovation which will change everything: the way we do business, the way we eat, the way we travel, the houses we build, the products and services we can expect and the prices we pay for them, the way we feel about trees, and the way we worship God.

• *Canadian Yearly Meeting, 1999,*
Minute from Special Interest Group on Sustainability:

We acknowledge our heritage of social testimonies of

peace, community, simplicity and harmony which govern our relations as Friends with one another and the wider human community.

We feel a strong leading to extend these testimonies to include our spiritual connectedness with all creation, and of our care to live within our ecological capacity, seeing that of God as the governing principle in all of these relations.

Our faith perspective leads us to request Yearly Meeting's approval to form a working group on ecological concerns to:

- a) encourage and support Friends working on ecological issues;
- b) explore and deepen our faith and practice as Friends as we face these challenges;
- c) communicate the ecological faith perspective amongst Friends;
- d) explore how we work with other Quaker groups with these concerns and the ecumenical coalitions.

• *Canadian Yearly Meeting, 2001,*
Ecology Testimony of Canadian Friends:

Friends believe we are all manifestations of the Creator, the Divine Spirit, God. As our knowledge has grown, we have come to realise that indeed all life forms are exquisitely interrelated and interdependent; thus all life is sacred. We envision a Religious Society of Friends in the 21st century that includes in its testimonies a clear call of responsibility to live in harmony with all life on Earth.

We see that our traditional peace testimony of nurturing peace with each other must be clearly expanded to include nurturing peace with all the Created world. We are inspired to do this with a renewed respect for Creation which goes beyond self-interest. We envision a relationship with Earth that allows us to see ourselves as an integral part of God's creation and not as the sole inheritors of it, to use as we will. We seek non-violent ways of meeting the needs of our species with whom we share this Earth. While Friends respect science as a useful tool for understanding aspects of reality, we recognise there are divine mysteries that remain beyond our ability to understand.

While evidence of ecological disaster is all around

us, we can and must make changes now which will heal our spiritual and physical connections with the Earth. In the tradition of First Nations Peoples we work to ensure a better future for, at the very least, the next seven generations. We see that significant changes in the way we live our day-to-day lives are necessary for life on Earth to survive and flourish.

To follow up from this 2001 session, Canadian Yearly Meeting prayerfully encourages all Meetings and individual Friends to take action to measure and reduce our ecological footprints. QEAN offers suggestions and resources:

- Conduct ecological audits
- Establish monthly meeting ecology working groups or networks to address issues and facilitate change within meetings, and as bodies which can network with other faith-based groups and beyond the faith community.
- Make use of resources provided by Friends Committee on Unity with Nature, QEAN and other groups.


• *Canadian Yearly Meeting, 2001, Endorsement of the Earth Charter:*

Wolfville Monthly Meeting asked Canadian Yearly Meeting to endorse the Earth Charter. Friends felt that although this document is not perfect, it is a document that deserves our support because it arises from many groups which have a deep concern for the protection of God's earth. We agree to endorse the principles of the Earth Charter, recognising that this will require us to make changes and sacrifices in the way we live. We ask Friends in Canada to begin a discernment process with respect to this document and with how we might begin to implement these principles in our lives and in our Meetings. We ask our Quaker Ecology Action Network to help our Clerks develop a process for follow-up with Monthly Meetings, the Government of Canada, First Nations associations, and the United Nations.

• *Canadian Yearly Meeting 2005, The Earth Charter:*

Bill Curry spoke on behalf of Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN). He reminded us of the his-

tory of our work on environmental issues. He referred us to section 25.14 in *Quaker Faith and Practice* 1995, written by Keith Helmuth in 1990, and to minute 52 of Canadian Yearly Meeting 2001 on sustainability. The clerk of Yonge Street Monthly Meeting spoke about a minute distributed to Canadian Friends by her Meeting. Yonge Street Meeting is concerned that some statements in the Earth Charter could be seen as in conflict with our Quaker peace testimony, and questions whether this might cause future problems with conscientious objector status. Yonge Street is asking us to consider whether our unqualified endorsement of the Earth Charter may put conscientious objectors in a compromised position. A Friend spoke on behalf of Victoria Monthly Meeting in support of our endorsement of the Earth Charter. They ask us to take part in the review process for the Earth Charter. It was noted that Ottawa Monthly Meeting supports continued endorsement of the Earth Charter and work with non-Quakers on this concern. Wolfville Monthly Meeting has discussed Yonge Street Monthly Meeting's concern and does not see any conflict between the Earth Charter and our peace testimony. Pelham Executive Meeting suggests that one of the parts of section 16 in the Earth Charter, other parts of which are being questioned, was viewed by them as being strongly in support of Quaker testimonies.

We have given prayerful consideration to our 2004 endorsement of the Earth Charter. We have heard both support for and concerns about the principles of the Earth Charter and its implications for our life as a spiritual body. We are left with the pressing question of how to actualise those portions of the Earth Charter that we support without reservation. We will continue to consider this in 2006. We ask that Monthly Meetings and the Quaker Ecology Action Network continue to engage with the evolving Earth Charter review process, expressing our deeply held commitment to our testimonies and engaging in dialogue with the Earth Charter initiative. We note that there will be a review of the Earth Charter in Amsterdam, November 7-9, 2005. 

We urgently need a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community.

— *Earth Charter*

Bouncing between “I believe” and “I act”

By Lynne Phillips

In our Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN) E-mail discussions there has been a thread about priorities: whether we needed to search more deeply and widely into the spiritual basis for QEAN and the reasons for action on environmental issues—or whether we needed to emphasise the use of our energy and time in organising for action, educating meetings and communities, and acting to reform our own lives with a smaller ecological footprint. The reader has perhaps already mumbled, “But it’s not either/or. It is both/and.” Indeed. The Spirit moves us to act, and action opens our hearts to a deeper experience of God’s passion for justice and love of creation.

In such a short article, I can’t give a one-size-fits-all blueprint for effective action, but I can give some resources that every meeting library should have. Perhaps every activist should own them as well. *Earthcare for Friends: A Study Guide for Individuals and Faith Communities* from Quaker Earthcare Witness is an excellent start because it gives both the spiritual nurture and insight we need along with some practical advice for action. Canadian Friends will be particularly interested in chapter 18: The Earth Charter (EC) and Friends’ Testimonies. This chapter deals with the history of the EC, a full text of the EC, and a section on how the EC relates to Friend’ beliefs and testimonies. Spiritual nurture and practical advice are also found in *The Spiritual Activist: Practices to Transform Your Life, Your Work, and Your World* by Claudia Horwitz.

Coming Back to Life: Practices to Reconnect Our Lives, Our World by Joanna Macy and Molly Young Brown is a handbook to fight despair when our spiritual energies are depleted by events that seem irreversibly destructive and beyond human control. We are inundated with daily tsunamis of bad news. The exercises in this book help us to mourn, release, recover, and react with renewed dedication.

It is also helpful to own books that give very specific advice on how to be more effective with personal, political, and social actions to change ourselves, our communities, and our society. *The Better World Handbook: From Good Intentions to Everyday Actions* by Ellis Jones et al gives us much information on how to attain “The Seven Foundations of a Better World: Economic Fairness, Comprehensive Peace, Ecological Sustainability, Deep Democracy, Social Justice, Culture of Simplicity, Revitalised Community.”

Jim Merkel’s *Radical Simplicity: small footprints on a finite Earth* emphasises three tools: ecological footprinting, wise use of money, and learning from nature. He has many practical ideas for personal and social action. If you like to read real-life stories that inspire as well as teach, *The Global Activist’s Manual: Local Ways to Change the World*, edited by Mike Prokosch and Laura Raymond, carries the lessons of how to act within your own community to effect changes on global issues.

The 2001 Canadian Yearly Meeting Sustainability Minute (written by QEAN) concludes with a paragraph containing statements that are pledges which commit us to action: “We work to better understand and respect Earth process. ... We will do our utmost not to upset the balance, and will strive to restore balance where it has been upset. While evidence of ecological disaster is all around us, we can and must make changes now which will heal our spiritual and physical connections with the Earth. ... We see that significant changes in the way we live our day-to-day lives are necessary for life on Earth to survive and flourish. We further pledge to share these concerns with the wider human society outside the Society of Friends, and to support and love one another as we carry these concerns forward.” ☞

Lynne Phillips is a member of Argenta Monthly Meeting, and former co-clerk of QEAN.

... heal our
spiritual and
physical
connections
with the Earth

When There Were Trees

By Nancy Willard

I can remember when there were trees,
great tribes of spruces who deckled themselves in light,
beeches buckled in pewter, meeting like Quakers,
the golden birch, all cutwork satin,
courtesan of the mountains; the paper birch
trying all summer to take off its clothes
like the swaddlings of the newborn.

The hands of a sassafras blessed me.
I saw maples fanning the fire in their stars,
heard the coins of the aspens rattling like teeth,
saw cherry trees spraying fountains of light,
smelled the wine my heel pressed from ripe apples,
saw a thousand planets bobbing like bells
on the sleeve of the sycamore, chestnut, and lime.

The ancients knew that a tree is worthy of worship,
A few wise men from their tribes broke through the sky,
climbing past worlds to come and the rising moon
on the patient body of the tree of life,
and brought back the souls of the newly slain,
no bigger than apples, and dressed the tree
as one of themselves and danced.

Even the conquerors of this country
lifted their eyes and found the trees
more comely than gold: *Bright green trees,
the whole land so green it is pleasure to look on it,
and the greatest wonder to see the diversity.
During that time, I walked among trees,
the most beautiful things I had ever seen.**

Watching the shadows of trees, I made peace with mine.
Their forked darkness gave motion to morning light.
Every night the world fell to the shadows,
and every morning came home, the dogwood floating
its petals like moons on a river of air,
the oak kneeling in wood sorrel and fern,
the willow washing its hair in the stream.



PHOTO BY JUNE-ETTA CHENARD

And I saw how the logs from the mill floated
downstream, saw otters and turtles that rode them,
and though I heard the saws whine in the woods
I never thought men were stronger than trees,
I never thought those tribes would join
the buffalo and the whale, the leopard, the seal, the wolf,
and the folk of this country who knew how to sing them.

Nothing I ever saw washed off the sins of the world
so well as the first snow dropping on trees.
We shoveled the pond clear and skated under their
branches,
our voices muffled in their huge silence.
The trees were always listening to something else.
They didn't hear the beetle with the hollow tooth
grubbing for riches, gnawing for empires, for gold.

Already the trees are a myth,
half gods, half giants in whom nobody believes.
But I am the oldest woman on earth,
and I can remember when there were trees.

*ADAPTED FROM THE JOURNALS OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS,
AS RENDERED BY WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS: *IN THE AMERICAN
GRAIN*

This poem is reprinted from Swimming Lessons (1996, Alfred A. Knopf), and is printed here with permission of the author, Nancy Willard, who is a member of Poughkeepsie Friends Meeting.

Quaker Institute for the Future: Summer Research Seminar

By Anne Mitchell

I spent three weeks in July in Bar Harbor, Maine, with eight other Quakers, attending the Summer Research Seminar of the Quaker Institute for the Future at the Community College of the Atlantic. We stayed with Friends of the Acadia Meeting and enjoyed their friendship, the clean air and beauty of the area, and Acadia National Park.

This was an energising, spiritual and enriching experience. The group worshipped together each morning and helped each other with our concerns. I spent the three weeks considering the development of biotechnologies, how it is impacting our lives, and whether there is a Quaker response. This has been a concern of mine for several years now and is based on the query “What is it in human knowledge and in nature that we have the right to own?”

I plan to take this concern to my monthly meeting, ask for a committee of clearness, and continue to discern how to address these emerging technology ques-

tions – particularly those based on the convergence of information technologies and biotechnologies.

The Quaker Institute for the Future is now incorporated, with a board of trustees. It has a vision of helping to generate systematic insight, knowledge and wisdom that can inform public policy in ways that will enable us all to live more fully in “the virtue of life and power” which leads us to treat all humans, all communities of life, and the whole Earth as manifestations of the Divine. We seek a process of collective discernment on how we are called to witness responsibly to our economic, ecological and social realities. Such a process will be Spirit-led, guided by Quaker testimonies to find and advocate responses necessary to promote a peaceful society and sustainable environment. Our calling is to understand and live up to the responsibility of right relationship in this complex and changing world. ☞

Anne Mitchell is a member of Toronto Monthly Meeting. She, Keith Helmuth and Peter Brown are Canadians serving on the Quaker Institute for the Future board of trustees.

2002 Statement by Gro Harlem Brundtland, then Director General of the World Health Organisation

The challenge is not to choose between environmental protection or economic development, as many have suggested in the past. Rather, it is to recognise that better environmental management is central to both poverty reduction and economic development – through more secure livelihoods, reduced vulnerability, and better health.

First, we need to see health both as a precious asset in itself and as a means of stimulating economic growth, protecting the environment, and reducing poverty.

Second, we can now make the case for investment in health with much greater precision. We know what is required to scale up activities that will improve health outcomes for poor people. ...

Third, we have a growing body of evidence on which to base strategies to reduce the risks to people's health – particularly those that arise from the environment. ...

Fourth, we have to acknowledge the need for long-term and equitable access to the natural resources on which health, and life itself, depend. ... ☞

What Is a Moral Economy?

Quaker Institute for the Future

What does it mean to speak of a moral economy? The economy is a network of institutions and individuals engaged in exchange transactions. It is a network of relationships. Morality is all about relating—about how we relate, directly and indirectly, to other persons, other species, and more generally the world. Economic decisions and economic and financial institutions have impacts on how we relate. So we can properly ask, “Does the economy reflect and support right relating?” “Do we have a moral economy?”

Quaker testimonies are about right relating so a Quaker inquiry would start from our testimonies as criteria to test whether the economy expresses and supports right relating. It would then have to ask what an economy that supports right relating might look like, what would need to change, and what we Quakers need to witness for and against if we are to be strategic in effecting change.

Quaker Institute for the Future has initiated a new project, *Toward a Moral Economy*, designed to start out on this inquiry. We aim to create several workgroups, each deal-

ing with a separate element of the inquiry: the purposes of the economy, its scale, its fairness, the nature of money, and the other institutions that express and shape economic relationships. These groups will produce papers for a conference, which is being planned for the summer of 2006. They may, or may not, reflect unity in the workgroup that produced them. While we shall seek unity, the papers may need simply to reflect different and unresolved perspectives and the dialogue between them.

We seek to identify and assemble Quaker researchers and practitioners interested in contributing to this inquiry. The workshops began in the fall of 2005. We aim to experiment with the idea of Quakerly, Spirit-led reviews of draft material.


The conference would be publicly advertised to attract people from faith communities, corporations, not-for-profit organisations, and academia, some of whom will be specifically invited. A “book of the conference” is envisaged. In addition, somewhat after the pattern used by U.S. Catholic Bishops in 1984 when they prepared a draft Pastoral Letter for public discus-

sion, a letter would be drafted, drawing on the conference and workshop materials, for discussion and response by Quaker and other faith communities and the wider public.

We see this project as continuing in the long tradition of Quaker inquiry and witness, in the spirit of John Woolman, Joseph Rowntree, Rufus Jones, and Kenneth Boulding, to name only a few whose work is our inspiration.

We are seeking funding for the project but hope that some participants will have, or be able to find, funding for their research contribution and participation. We shall seek hospitality from Monthly Meetings for workgroup activities.

We have invited known commentators to respond to these papers in a public conference. We also know that there are many Quakers researching or practicing in relevant fields, and we hope very much to hear from you and have you join in this work.

To learn more about the Institute, please contact Peter Brown at peter.g.brown@mcgill.ca. 

In the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny.

— *Earth Charter*

Learning to Love the World

By John Scull

We do not own the world, and its riches are not ours to dispose of at will. Show a loving consideration for all creatures, and seek to maintain the beauty and variety of the world. Work to ensure that our increasing power over nature is used responsibly, with reverence for life. Rejoice in the splendour of God's continuing creation.

— *Advices and Queries, Britain Yearly Meeting*

Advices and Queries asks us to show “loving consideration” for the non-human world and to “rejoice” in the creation. Can we, in fact, simply choose to love or rejoice? We can decide to act responsibly, but

*Nature is not
a mirror for our thoughts
or a metaphor
for our lives;
it is the medium
in which we are immersed.*

powerful emotions such as love and rejoicing depend on more than just a rational decision. Nature meditation is a process for entering into a loving and rejoicing relationship with the natural world. It has many parallels to Quaker worship but diverges in some important respects. Methods enabling us to connect with nature have been explored by the emerging field of ecopsychology, sometimes called ecospirituality, nature connecting, or nature mysticism. Theologian Marcus Borg has suggested the phrase “eyes-open mysticism,” as a synonym.

Ecopsychologists propose a three-stage process for psychological and spiritual communing with nature:

Preparation. This can take other forms: imagery, queries, discussion, or ritual. The purpose of preparation is to temporarily silence the inner dialogue, leave some parts of our cultural and social selves behind, and open ourselves to the teachings of nature. We show respect by asking natural beings for permission to be with them and learn from them.

Silent time in communion with nature. The contact is framed by the intentions expressed in the preparation phase. At the end of communion with nature we express our gratitude to the beings which have helped us learn and love.

Bringing the experience into our human, cultural, and social consciousness. This is most easily done by sharing our experiences in small groups but it can take other forms: a written journal, artistic creation, music, poetry, sharing with another individual, or even communicating with others by e-mail.

When we follow this process repeatedly, spiritual and psychological changes ensue. As we open ourselves to directly experiencing nature and then integrating these experiences into our lives, we discover many specific insights about interdependence, impermanence and change, diversity, complexity,

cycles, non-verbal communication, the limitation of our linguistic way of being, the importance of our senses, and other lessons. Continued practice can lead to transformational feelings at the deepest level that we share our existence with the entire universe; that we are part of something much larger than ourselves.

This understanding can transform our lives and our environmental activism. Nature is not a mirror for our thoughts or a metaphor for our lives; it is the medium in which we are immersed. As we open ourselves we come to live in ways more in tune with the natural systems of which we are a part. Just as silence in community has traditionally led Quakers to relate ethically to other human beings, silent awareness of the more-than-human community can lead to “consideration for all creatures” effortlessly arising from the love and understanding that grows from direct experience.

Nature mysticism is central to Animism, Taoism and Wicca. Similar ideas can be found in transcendentalists such as Emerson and Thoreau, the Deep Ecology of Arne Naess, the Jungian psychology of James Hillman, and the ethical ecology of Aldo Leopold. The Koran teaches that the Creation is God's first revelation. Buddhism tells us that understanding and love arise together and can only come from direct experience.

Connection to the natural world has not been central to Christianity, but it has not been completely absent, either. St. Francis, Thomas Berry,

Sallie McFague, Matthew Fox, Marcus Borg, and others have brought an ecological perspective into the Christian tradition.

Gathering in silence can help us experience the light within ourselves and other members of our community. In the same way, going into nature in a mindful and feelingful way can open us to the presence of the holy (whole) in every being and in the universe. As in Meeting for Worship, we need to silence the inner cacophony and open ourselves to that which nature reveals. Sharing our experiences with others enhances the experience, helps build a community of common understanding, and leads us to action on behalf of the natural world.

For resources about ecopsychology, visit: <http://www.ecopsychology.org>. ↻

John Scull is a member of Duncan Worship Group of Victoria Monthly Meeting, and a co-clerk of the Quaker Ecology Action Network.

The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society in the twenty-first century.

— *Earth Charter*

Poem for the Flicker in the Ash

By Cornelia Hoogland

The neighbour chops down
the eighty-year-old Chinese chestnut,
two firs half its age and the quince
the lady came by in the pouring rain
to band against coddling moth

a day ago. Apples budding and all week
tanks spray dusty clouds over the orchards.
How long can she hold her breath?
Even the neighbour's grass is eerily green —
the kind of lawn you see pool-side,
wrapped tight as cellophane
around creosote beams that gird
the manufactured oh-so-level terraces.
She can almost smell the bbqs and beer
her neighbour's hoping for except
it's chemicals that soak the air.

His kids? (don't play on the lawn boys
you'll wreck it shouts the father) —
too bad for them she thinks.
Her fear is for the birds, the Flicker
who two weeks straight
belts a song so lusty
it bores a hole in the sky no female fills.

Cornelia Hoogland is a member of Yarmouth Monthly Meeting.



PHOTO BY DONALD ALEXANDER

Ecosystem Restoration: Respecting that of God in Everything

By David Polster

FOR ALMOST 30 YEARS now, I have used my skills as a vegetation ecologist to try to heal the scars humans leave on the land. When we drive in our cars or ride on our bicycles, we are part of a system that leads back to the mining of metallurgical coal in the mountains of British Columbia. We all use the products of mining, we drive on the highways or use products that are shipped on the railways—all of these activities create disturbances on the land surface that needs to be revegetated. Even something as benign as controlling forest fires that once naturally burned the landscape in low-intensity burns every few years causes a disturbance in the natural systems that at one time served to heal the land after disturbance. That is where I come in.

Ecological restoration is defined by the Society for Ecological Restoration as the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been damaged, degraded or destroyed. The concept that the best we can do is to assist in the recovery of natural systems keeps us humble, recognising that there are intricacies that we do not understand and

may never understand fully. This mystery keeps ecological restoration interesting for me—in some cases, I will never know why the work I do can re-establish natural functioning ecosystems on sites that have been destroyed by mining or some other major disturbance.

*We all use
the products
of mining,
we drive on
the highways
or use products
that are shipped
on the railways.*

I have always felt that the best approach to restoration is to follow the pathways that nature sets before us. I have studied natural vegetation establishment processes on talus (loose rock) slopes to gain insights into the reclamation of mining wastes and steep slopes. I have looked at the intricate patterns of vegetation growth in the alpine, where factors such as wind direction and hence snow drifting, create a mosaic of vegetation types in relation to the melting snow.

The understanding gained in these studies has allowed me to approach restoration from the perspective of an interested student seeking to find answers to the ways I can assist in the recovery of “ecosystems that have been damaged, degraded or destroyed.”

One of the most magical experiences that I have with my work in restoration is seeing the ability of seemingly dead sticks to spring to life, and grow into willow bushes or cottonwood trees or red-osier dogwood shrubs.

Soil bioengineering is the use of living plant materials to perform engineering functions. For instance, wattle fences—short retaining walls built of living dormant cuttings—can be used to restore some very difficult sites. When the cuttings used in soil bioengineering sprout and grow, it is like watching some magic performance. It never ceases to amaze me—there must be that of God in everything. 🐸

David Polster is a member of Duncan Worship Group, Victoria Monthly Meeting

The Earth Charter's inclusive ethical vision recognises that environmental protection, human rights, equitable human development and peace are interdependent and indivisible.

– *Earth Charter*

John Woolman and the Earth Charter

By Bert Horwood

John Woolman argued that owning slaves was as bad for the owners as it was for the slaves. The first Friends who recognized that slavery was wrong also knew that Quaker slave owners needed to be convinced to free their slaves before an honest appeal could be made to the rest of the world. Woolman also had concern for the care of creation and all creatures, but his ecological sensibility was secondary to his concern about slavery. I would like to show, following the same Guide, that practicing the Earth Charter is like ending slavery.

During the 20th century, many Friends became aware that the testimony to equality extended beyond fellow humans to embrace creation. We were led to recognize that other species had intrinsic value and the same rights to fulfill their respective natures as we had. Personally, this was opened to me during times alone in the bush, through studying biology, and from the great spiritual power in the teachings of Haudenosaunee (Mohawk) Elders and Faith Keepers through their use of the Thanksgiving Prayer, “the words that come before all others.”

When we abuse the earth and any of its life forms, we prevent them from being true to their “original instructions,” i.e. to live their lives freely according to their natures. We offend against the testimony of equality. It is exactly like owning and trading slaves. Abusive practice is obviously bad for the abused species. Each day makes it grow more clear that it is also bad for us abusers.

When we abuse any part of the biosphere, we weaken the life support system and suffer the consequences. There is no technology to save us. This is apparent, for one example, in increasing environmentally based diseases. Abusing the biosphere is accompanied by ever increasing social injustice. The relentless search for perpetual growth in corporate and personal profits brings destruction of the indigenous ways of life which have been sustainable for centuries. Poverty grows in the cities of the world as rural areas are stripped of inhabitants to fuel destructive agriculture.

Even greater damage is done in the spiritual domain. Instead of living harmoniously with the world around, we are in a continual state of violence against it. We become insensitive, diminished and alienated from the creation in which dwells the creative power itself. Our lives, although materially enriched, become spiritually impoverished. Living in a culture which denies a place in the sun to our fellow creatures destroys our souls and alienates us from God.

It is essential to distinguish between right use and abuse. Every living thing derives its life from the use of other living things. Everyone eats and is eaten, consumes and is consumed. Limited modification of the environment is part of the way the creation works. But how can we tell what the limits are? Most people speak of sustainability as the criterion. The implications of this principle for our culture, based on one-way flow of petroleum and mineral extraction, is horrendous. That's why no one practises sustainability. But as Woolman wrote, when a young man, “Conduct is more convincing than language.” So we must look to our conduct rather than our words.

John Woolman's labour with Friends was loving but hard-nosed. He never failed to urge Friends to free their slaves. He was not reluctant to embarrass his hosts by paying wages to the slaves who carried his bags or groomed his horse. He refused to draw up wills (one of his sources of income) for Quakers who left slaves as bequests. Those of us who feel led in the spirit to liberate ourselves and the earth from our present bondage may need to be as persistent and demanding.

To summarize the points drawn from Woolman and expressed in biospheric terms: Abuse of the earth harms the earth, denies our testimony of Equality, and is an offense to God. Abusive practices also harm ourselves physically and spiritually, despite the illusion of well-being we have. Friends have a burdensome responsibility to get their own environmental behaviour right (free their own slaves) as part of enjoining others to do likewise. 🐾

Bert Horwood is a member of Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting.

A Report from the Visions and Strategies Sessions of the 2001 Pre-Canadian Yearly Meeting Workshop

We encourage Friends to discern the spiritual basis for caring for Creation, and to see how all is interconnected.

As a way to do this, the Visions and Strategies sessions listed personal projects which could make a difference to the Earth. Then we brainstormed on strategies Friends could use in our Meetings, Working Groups and Committees. We offer them under the following headings:

Advocacy:

- National bodies such as Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) could pressure government to act on issues of climate change.
- We could encourage local governments to promote change in local bylaws, e.g. allowing for household systems that are healthful and practical such as composting toilets and use of grey water.

Education:

- We could invite visitation to allow visitors to see Friends' organic farms.
- A work camp concept could assist sustainable development, train youth and ourselves, and share as part of another community in either Canada or the wider world.
- Have youth training in non-violence.
- Have funds for education in appropriate technology.

- Friends' schools and colleges to emphasise sustainable living.

Information and Communications:

- Search, compile resources (from, and on the Web) for the various topics of sustainable life.
- Establish information-sharing exchanges.
- Increase communication via electronic mail for Committees.
- Meet via telephone or teleconference at least half the time.

Economics:

- Reform the national and international credit union movement, starting with our local Credit Union's or co-ops.
- Invest in socially responsible ways.
- Monthly Meetings, Canadian Yearly Meeting and other Quaker bodies should hold their investments only in ethical instruments, giving priority to funds such as Oikocredit.*

Our Homes:

- Design homes that embrace appropriate technology, and nurture environmentalists to live in them.
- Retrofit existing housing for solar energy and heating.

Within our Meetings—Our Structure and Contents:

- Use only re-usable plates, cups, utensils.
- Use compact florescent light

bulbs.

- Hold sustainable meetings free of non renewable energy resources and fast food imports.
- Construct Eco-Friendly Meeting houses.
- Do energy audits on Meeting-houses and correct problems.

Within our Meetings—Programs

- Help establish groups who may wish to join in sustainable living: loans, management, etc.
- Explore ways to change attitudes (our own and the public's) so that "giving up things" evolves to "voluntary simplicity," evolves to a "world of Enough for all."
- Create simple living support groups.
- Monthly Meetings could have discussion groups, share ideas and support other members acting in sound ecological ways.

Within our Meetings—Yard and Transportation:

- Reduce or eliminate the need to mow and water lawns by having less lawn, and by mowing with a rotary mower.
- Make Meeting-houses available for committed groups to reduce need for added buildings.
- Friends could consider whether we are using the world's resources well in the amount of travel we do by our memberships in so many organisations, and consider how much paper we use in our communications.

• Share transportation, encourage Friends to carpool, bike, walk, or take public transport to meeting for worship, committee meetings, CYM.

Within our Meetings— Food:

- Serve only organic, fair trade coffee and tea; compost food scraps; encourage those without gardens to bring their own compost to the Meeting house.
- Set regular or time of prayer for change in humans' use of God's Creation, similar to worldwide Prayers for Peace.
- Hold meetings for business on same day as meetings for worship, to reduce transportation needs.
- Monthly Meetings and Canadian Yearly Meeting could commit to buying fairly traded coffee, tea, chocolate and sugar.
- Share excess food with Friends who have less. 🐾

Note: * Oikocredit is an international organisation founded in 1975 to provide credit for the productive enterprises of disadvantaged people worldwide who are systematically denied access to capital by financial institutions. At the heart of the Oikocredit mission lies the conviction that loans for productive business enterprises provide a stronger incentive for self-development than grants alone.

The foundations of global security are threatened.
These trends are perilous
— but not inevitable.
— *Earth Charter*

Wake up, Lake Mountain

By Lynne Phillips



PHOTO BY DONALD ALEXANDER

It's that time again.
The grey mist of budding trees,
cottonwood, tamarack, alder,
jostle limb by limb with ever green trees,
fir, spruce, pine, and cedar,
dedicated to keeping you decent
in wash 'n wear, serviceable dress all year round.
Green and grey drape down your cliffs,
onto your shelves, into your ravines and valleys.
Places we call Violin Lake, Grouse Ridge, Cambridge Creek.

Spring dresses your granite bones
formed by ancient volcanoes under a faraway sea.
How long you've traveled,
infinitesimal drifting on ancient terrain,
powered from deep within the Earth
to dock and scrape over ancestral North America
eons before human named
this or that or said "mine, not yours."

Who has given us the right to spoil your arboreal glory,
to strip your garments for profit?
Soon you will be naked and alone,
bereft of the white-tailed deer
who shelter under your trees for winter browse.
Soon the grizzly mother and her two cubs, the golden eagle,
the red-tailed hawk, the blue flash of jay will be
evicted
because we now have named
what is yours — "mine."

This was written by Lynne Phillips, a member of Argenta Monthly Meeting, while sadly watching clear-cut logging of a beloved mountain view, formerly enjoyed from her study window.



We've Endorsed the Earth Charter, Now What?

By John Scull

Since the first endorsement by Victoria MM in April, 2003, the Earth Charter has spread through the Canadian Quaker community with uncharacteristic speed. This ready acceptance by most Canadian Quakers is probably due to the way the Earth Charter ties some of the traditional Quaker testimonies to the emerging testimony on ecology and to our growing sense of the urgency of global challenges.

How does the Earth Charter build on our traditional testimonies? What does the Earth Charter add to Quaker traditions? Most importantly, what should Canadian Quakers be doing differently, now that we have endorsed the Earth Charter?

The language of the Earth Charter is beautifully crafted and eloquently summarises an ethics appropriate to the 21st century. The language also reflects the status of the Earth Charter as a grassroots document with roots in many cultures, faith traditions, and academic disciplines. Because of the quality of its language, the Earth Charter can be a powerful

and emotive communications tool when we advocate for peace, social justice, and ecological integrity, both within and beyond the Quaker community.

The Earth Charter provides a common basis for building partnerships and coalitions with like-minded people around the world. It is available in 32 languages and has been endorsed by more than 14,000 organisations globally. By declaring ourselves to be an Earth Charter organisation we become members of an international coalition for an ethical world. It is a call for us to participate in building a worldwide movement.

The Earth Charter embodies the principle that our many concerns cannot be separated. While recognising the need for trade-offs, the Earth Charter explicitly asserts the interconnected nature of its four themes. Endorsement should certainly lead us to re-evaluate our individual and corporate decisions with respect to the principles of the Earth Charter, but it should lead

to much more. We need to reach out and engage with others. The Earth Charter sees the interconnection among the peoples of the world and the interdependence of action at all levels of society – international, government, business, community, organisation, and individual. We need to move forward at all levels.

Endorsing the Earth Charter goes beyond merely reaffirming our traditional testimonies and a new testimony about ecological integrity. In endorsing the Earth Charter, we are committing ourselves to bearing witness by openly co-operating with others in a global partnership for a just, sustainable, and peaceful world. We are pledging ourselves to work in solidarity with all like-minded people and groups for the realisation of the values and principles of the Earth Charter. ☞

John Scull is a member of Duncan Worship Group of Victoria Monthly Meeting, and a Co-clerk of the Quaker Ecology Action Network.

How to Join the Quaker Ecology Action Network

The Quaker Ecology Action Network e-mail discussion list helps promote a national network of people with interests in the environment and in the relationship of faith and ecology.

To join this discussion list, go to: <http://lists.quaker.ca/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/cym-qean> and fill out the

registration form. This link is also found near the bottom of the QEAN web page at: <http://www.quaker.ca/qean>.

For assistance or more information, please contact QEAN Clerk, Bill Curry, at: mailliw@sasktel.net. ☞

A Discussion Group on Ecology

By Carmen Loiselle

In January of 2005, a proposal was brought forward to Edmonton's Meeting for Business to initiate a discussion group on ecological issues. We would focus on the 253-page resource book, *Earthcare for Friends: A Study Guide for Individuals and Faith Communities*, published by the Quaker Earthcare Witness committee (U.S.).

The group met once a month at the home of Susan Carnahan and Gordon Hirabayashi.

We did not follow one chapter after the other, but rather skipped around. In fact we began at the end with Chapter 18, titled "The Earth Charter and Friends' Testimonies."

We were all most impressed by the thought, time and energy that went into this book. Every chapter was produced by a different person. The format was quite varied, utilising stories, songs, reflection questions and prayers. The content represented very well the diversity that is our larger Quaker community. For example, there were some chapters that totally focused on Christian aspects of concern for the Earth, and others that focused on the views of those who find the Divine Spirit in the natural world.

We all had different motivations for taking part in this discussion group. One friend noted that hers was to "find personal articulation of the spiritual in relation to the environment and the pressing need in this area." Another thing that excited us was the abundance of exercises throughout the book that helped individuals assess their own relationship to the environment, plus the numerous resources and activities to strengthen one's relationship with the Earth. For example, chapter six was titled "Applied Simpler Living" and one of the exercises was a personal "Consumption Audit." Another chapter dealt with awareness and activism.

One Friend who attended told me of a brain-wave she had (as a result of attending the Earthcare Discussion Group) to place cards on idling vehicles. The cards listed the effects of idling on one side and on the other side listing all the ways it would be helpful if the motor was turned off for that small period of time. We stopped meeting in the summer and hope to continue in the new year. 🐸

The Prophets among Us

By Carmen Loiselle

There are a few basic rules that are generally adhered to when participating in a Worship-Fellowship Group (WFG). One of these rules is that everything shared in the WFG is held in strict confidence and not shared within the larger Quaker group or in public without permission. However the WFG that I took part in at Fall Western Half-Yearly Meeting this year agreed that the following piece was important enough to be shared.

In our Saturday morning WFG, members had shared their experiences of the modern prophets among us. One Friend explained that he was going to digress from the house rules to quote from another Friend who happened to also be part of our WFG. He considered something she had said in a WFG 20 years ago to be a prophetic witness that is relevant for us today.

She had said that the symbol of the cross as a holy symbol has been replaced by modern photos of the Earth taken from space. All the sacred symbols we have today are from ancient times. Here, at last, is a symbol that speaks to the future preservation of our species and of all living things on Earth—truly a sign of hope. 🐸

Carmen Loiselle is a member of Edmonton Monthly Meeting

Eating Food, Taking Risks

By Tracey McCowan

Canadians, like the Europeans, have been vocal about their scepticism toward genetically modified food (GMF). This is somewhat curious because Canadians on the whole have similar eating habits to their American counterparts, who seem far less concerned about GMF—perhaps because they have ready access to organic food if they choose. On the other hand, Europeans largely hold very strong traditions with regard to their food, and these traditions have developed over hundreds of years, only changing with the introduction and absorption of colonial influences.

This begs the question, What are Canadians afraid of if we don't have a traditional standard of food that is culturally important to us? Furthermore, given Friends' testimony for truth, as opposed to fear, how should we react to the emergence of genetically engineered food?

It is true that many of the arguments against GMF have revolved around safety. However, if we compare the risk of GMFs to the risky behaviour we take part in every day, what does this mean? When we talk about risk, generally, we compare it to something that is familiar to us, such as driving a car, flying in an aeroplane, or smoking. Compared

with all these, consuming GMF is relatively risk-free, but is this the same thing as saying GMF is safe? No it is not.

Risk analysis is about comparing choices and risks; it is acceptable to take part in all sorts of risky behaviour if one does so as a choice, especially if it is an informed choice. As long as the risk is a choice that does not endanger anyone else, society is inclined to view it as a freedom and therefore part of the right to self determination.

GMF is complicated by the fact that society has unwittingly accepted the risks associated with agricultural chemicals on their food for over forty years. As a result, compared with crops sprayed with chemicals, GMF comes out pretty safe in the risk category. When Health Canada does a risk assessment, it compares existing technology. The problem is that it is always easier to determine a known risk compared to an unknown one, and new technologies tend to present new and unknown risks.

So is GMF safe? Compared to food sprayed with chemicals, it is most certainly safer. However, both Health Canada and the United States Food and Drug Administration have avoided addressing the likelihood

of GMF contributing to antibiotic resistance.* Because antibiotic resistance is a pervasive problem that renders some of our most effective drugs useless, and because it tends to affect vulnerable populations such as the elderly and children, there is a compounded ethic to ensure that the government address the potential risk of antibiotic resistance.

Because antibiotic resistance is above the average individual's experience, it is easy for Health Canada to avoid addressing it. In the meantime, may I suggest that you buy "organic" food. It may not necessarily be significantly safer, but it is certainly better for the environment. And if you don't think you can afford to buy organic food, try reading Rod McRae's *Real Food For A Change*. ↻

* IT IS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THIS ARTICLE TO EXPLAIN ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE. HOWEVER, IF FRIENDS ARE INTERESTED IN THE DETAILS OF HOW GMF RAISES THE RISK OF ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE, I WILL BE HAPPY TO EXPLAIN IT IF SOMEONE POSES THE QUESTION ON THE QEAN E-MAIL DISCUSSION LIST.

Tracey McCowan is an attender of Toronto Monthly Meeting, and a member of Quaker International Affairs Programme and QEAN.

The spirit of human solidarity and kinship with all life is strengthened when we live with reverence for the mystery of being, gratitude for the gift of life, and humility regarding the human place in nature.

— *Earth Charter*

We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace.

– *Earth Charter*

Posting from the Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN) Web Discussion List, 22 June 2005

Submitted by David Polster

"As a biologist, I have a problem with 'Care for Creation' as it is very close to the idea that 'God' created the world and everything that is in it—a concept that I can't even come close to agreeing with, and one that I think is part of the root cause of the problems we are facing (if God created everything then God will fix things if we only 'believe' ... a very troubling train of thought that is becoming increasingly common).

For me, God is a much more abstract concept that embodies love, nurturing, and a variety of other heart-felt concepts. Our love of and restoration of the natural systems that operate on earth connect us with a love of God, but to actually make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of the planet we need to use all of our talents, scientific and religious. ...

I tend to find concepts like natural succession, nutrient cycling, evolution and genetic integrity to be more useful in living in harmony with our environment. The concept that we should 'care' for nature is problematic as well in that it sets us apart from the ecological systems that sustain us—we can't care for nature—nature cares for us!!! The best we can do is ensure we don't damage the systems that provide that care." 🐸

David Polster, a member of Duncan Worship Group, under the care of Victoria Monthly Meeting, is also a member of QEAN.



Canadian Yearly Meeting National Listeners for Young Friends and Adults



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

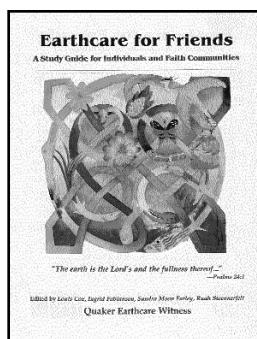
If you need a listener, the first step is to approach a trusted Friend within your Monthly Meeting (MM), or to go to your MM Ministry and Counsel. If this path is not comfortable, you may contact a *National Listener*. Listeners seek to be present from a place of spirit-centred openness—to hold the caller and the situation in the Light, and to listen with tenderness. Knowing the healing that comes from simply being heard, we offer you a safe and confidential space in which to speak. One call might be all you need. If not, we have the task of discerning with you what a next step could be: whether a committee of care, of clearness, or of oversight might be appropriate; or how to find other possible resources. The *National Listeners* for adult Friends are:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Ed Belzer: | Telephone: (902) 384-2730 | E-mail: belzer@ns.sympatico.ca |
| • Dorothy Janes: | Telephone: (416) 929-8812 | E-mail: dorothyj@idirect.com |
| • Rose Marie Cipryk: | Telephone: (905) 684-9924 | E-mail: rmcipryk@cogeco.ca |
| • Jay Cowsill: | Telephone: (306) 652-2407 | E-mail: jmc590@mail.usask.ca |

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

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Julie Paradis: | Telephone: (403) 284-5946 | E-mail: turtlekate@telus.net |
| • Peter Stevenson: | Telephone: (765) 983-2054 | E-mail: stevepe@earlham.edu |
| • Nat Egan-Pimblett: | Telephone: (604) 826-8859 | E-mail: data_dyne@hotmail.com |

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



Reviews...Book Reviews...Book Reviews

Earthcare for Friends: A study guide for Individuals and Faith

Communities

Edited by Louis Cox, Ingrid Fabianson, Sandra Moon Farley, and Ruah Swennerfelt (250 pages) Quaker Earthcare Witness, 2004 (Available at Ottawa Quaker Book Service, \$28.80, plus shipping) Reviewed by Donald Alexander

This study guide sets itself the task of "supporting individuals and faith communities across North America in a faith based response to current ecological concerns." It is also for those "seeking ways to integrate their concern for the environment with Friends' long-standing testimonies for peace, simplicity and equality."

You may already be familiar with some of the articles and themes. Pamphlets and other publications of Quaker Earthcare Witness (and the earlier Friends Committee on Unity with Nature) were the source of much of the content. But here it is all fleshed out with added queries, other readings, and recent essays.

The editors suggest a variety of uses for this study guide, including its use in retreats or study groups.

As a study guide, how friendly to Friends is the layout and design? It works.

There is an introductory chapter on how to use the book and 18 study units are clearly defined.

The organisation of material is

used—more or less—in the same way in each unit.

Each study unit begins with a statement of purpose and intent. Next there are suggested inspirational readings and sacred texts. The unit has four featured articles and ends with some suggested illustrative activities and questions for reflection.

There is a macro-organisation too. The first few chapters deal broadly with those matters of tying faith to our environmental concerns. The central body of units deals with specific topics such as water, air, soil, peace, simplicity, and climate change. The final four units are more future-oriented with expressions of interconnectedness and unity, with the concluding unit containing details and background of the Earth Charter.

At a time when CYM is seasoning concerns about the Earth Charter, it is worthwhile to read and consider this study unit. The editors have gone to the Earth Charter web site to detail the history and process that was used in its development. In an essay "How the Earth Charter Relates to Friends' Beliefs and Testimonies," Ruah Swennerfelt lists Earth Charter principles as they relate to each of the testimonies of simplicity, peace, equality, integrity and truthfulness. She then poses questions for reflection that could help us further consider the role of the Earth Charter in our personal and meeting lives.

The book is brightened by two reprinted poems of Jack Ross, of

Argenta Monthly Meeting.

While I was reading the necessarily fact-laden book, it was a noticeable pleasure and relief to feel a smile develop. Reading both of the poems, "Apples" and "Born of Water" was a reminder to "lighten up." Environmental concern is a serious subject and is hard slogging without these lighter touches:

During the first week

*God dealt with big issues, like water
firmament and darkness/light.*

*Then later in the week, maybe 5th
day,*

God made apples.

Then she had an inspiration:

*Why not create seeds and be done with
it?*

*All things considered she was having a
good week.*

Thank you God for apple seeds.

The two Jack Ross poems are not indexed but appear randomly. I would give them the strength of being noted in the index and standing as a "teaching" in their own right.

I was most impressed with Unit 17, "The Great Story," which sets as a purpose "to show that people are creative beings within a creative universe. This is the basis of hope that we can create a sustainable future in this unique time."

Keith Helmuth has significant articles in several of the study units, including Unit 15, "Economics and Earth Process." His germinal 1997 article, "Earth Process and the Wish for Human Exemption," is repub-

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

lished in the study unit on Earthcare and the Bible.

In this wide-ranging book each reader will embrace one or two chapters that stand out. For me, the later chapters, especially "The Great Story," provide hope and creative ideas about the wonder of it all. 🐸

Donald Alexander is an attender of Pelham Executive Meeting and a member of the Quaker Ecology Action Network.

Be Ye Perfect: the Quaker Call to Wholeness

By Lisa Lofland Gould

Annual Walton Lecture, published Southeastern Yearly Meeting 2002 (Available at Ottawa Quaker Book Service, \$6.40, plus shipping)

Reviewed by Arnold Ranneris

This small publication (35 pages) is a treasure. The author, Lisa Lofland Gould, is a published writer of many books, including *Caring for Creation: Reflections on the Biblical Basis of Earthcare* (Friends Committee on Unity With Nature, 1999). The enlarged pamphlet being reviewed here includes two lectures: "Returning to Right Relationships: Where on Earth Are We?" and "Be Ye Perfect: the Quaker Call to Wholeness." They are complemen-

tary and thought-provoking.

Lisa Lofland Gould holds out hope, building on Loren Eisely's thought, "I believe we can use that gift of reaching out, to help us envision how we might begin to live on this planet in harmony" (page 13). The human faculty of creative imagination may indeed save us. In the first talk she builds on the fact that "right relationships" are at the core of Quaker testimonies and beliefs. "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise" (*A Sand County Almanac*).

The second lecture, "Be Ye Perfect: the Quaker Call to Wholeness" builds on Jesus's statement, "to be perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

Lisa Gould notes that the call to "be perfect" can also be translated "be you whole." She says that perfection is total integrity. Applying this to ecology, she says that we are called to be integrated with Creation wholly and faithfully, using the gifts we are given by our creator.

These lectures are richly supported by excerpts and quotations from Quaker and other writers: Howard Brinton, John Yungblut, Wendell Berry, Laurens van der Post, and

Aldo Leopold.

John Yungblut (whom I think coined the phrase "Walk gently on the Earth") is quoted in this publication: "If we truly believe that there is that of God in every living creature, we must accept the corollary that God will never appear again in that particular form. Willful participation in the extinction of any creature must make one guilty of deicide. And the living community of this planet will be altered forever insofar as one of its members has been permanently removed. It is as if one member of the divine family has passed into oblivion. Ever so great are the implications of the crime against the universe and its Author" (page 11).

Lisa Lofland Gould concludes with the Native American poem:

You see, I am alive.

You see, I stand in good relation to the earth.

You see, I stand in good relation to the gods.

You see, I stand in good relation to all that is beautiful.

You see, I stand in good relation to you.

You see, I am alive, I am alive. 🐸

Arnold Ranneris is a member of Victoria Monthly Meeting and a member of the Quaker Ecology Action Network.

We must realise that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more.

— *Earth Charter*

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

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

A Community of Friends by Betty Ward (Hagios, 2004). A portrait of life and human relationships among the Quakers who settled a Saskatchewan farming community and formed the Halcyonia Meeting. (125 pp, \$14.95)

Henry Cadbury: Scholar, Activist, Disciple by Margaret Hope Bacon (Pendle Hill Pamphlet #376, Pendle Hill Publications, 2005). Henry Cadbury (1883-1974) was renowned for his biblical scholarship. He was also a committed pacifist, social justice advocate and influential Quaker leader. (38

pp, \$6.40)

The Practice of the Love of God by Kenneth Boulding (Pendle Hill Pamphlet #374, Pendle Hill Publications, 2004). In a message which resonates for us today, though it was first spoken more than 50 years ago, the author dares us to see the divine likeness in every person, practicing the love of God in daily life. (32 pp, \$6.40)

Quaker Treasure by Martha Paxson Grundy (Beacon Hill Friends House, 2002). The heritage bequeathed by early Quakers was a way of living that joined theology and behaviour in a coherent whole. Can Friends offer as rich a treasure to today's seekers? (31 pp, \$4.80)

A Rainbow of Opportunity: Friends and the Ecumenical Spirit by Keith R Maddock (Argenta, 2005). Calling on his experiences as a prison visitor, the author shows that participation in ecumenical or

interfaith projects requires grounding in one's own faith as well as respect for the faith of others. Canadian Quaker Pamphlet #61. (34 pp, \$4.00)

Selections from the Writings of James Nayler 2nd edition by Brian Drayton, (New England YM, 2001). Many of these selections were written while Nayler was in prison after his 1656 trial, and they reveal his deepening spiritual understanding. The introductions provide useful historical context. (79 pp, \$5.60)

Transcending Trauma by Ruth Morris with Ruth Bradley-St-Cyr (Winding Trail, 2004). Every person will face traumatic experiences such as job loss, illness, family deaths. Before her death, Canadian Quaker Ruth Morris wrote about what she had learned from coping with trials that shook her own life. (189 pp, \$29.95) ☞

Letters to the Editor

Considering QEAN communication during the past year, and our attention together at CYM, may I offer these comments:

All Friends are united in awareness and concern for the biosphere and all life. We have varying levels of knowledge and a spectrum of contexts/abilities for action. We respect and trust one another as we encounter our own, each other's and the society's challenges, dilemmas, limits and capacities. We see the need to defend, nurture, heal, restore. While we are cognisant of the many anti-ecological forces we face, we believe we have some personal and collective responsibility to make a difference; i.e., ecological protection and improvement.

Many of us regard the Earth Charter as both a valuable articulation and a viable means of worldwide ecological cooperation. Some are unclear or uncertain about this. We agreed to voice Canadian Quaker concerns and momentum to the Earth Charter review which was held in November in Amsterdam.

Canadian Friends are moving toward firmer ecological commitments. Organisationally, we see QEAN (perhaps by another name) perhaps becoming a Standing Committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting. Though we now have five years of formal background, further steps toward this might take a couple of more years. Along the way, our paramount purpose is ecological protection and improvement. ☞

Bill Curry is a member of Prairie Monthly Meeting and co-clerk of Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN).

In response to "The Earth Charter Reconsidered" by Bert Horwood in the recent issue of *The Canadian Friend* (Sept. Oct.): Seldom have I read an article where

I both passionately agreed and disagreed.

I think that care for creation, for others, and for the future is important enough to need all sincere approaches, and all approaches should be respected.

I have been amazed over and over again at the different ways learning enters the mind, heart, soul and 'action centre.' Sometimes the very same approach will miss the mark ten times and then suddenly sink in the eleventh time. Sometimes one teacher or one approach will be effective with one student while another teacher or approach will be effective with another. Sometimes non-human teachers work best and role modelling is effective.

Bert mentions the lack of 'affect of the Earth Charter leading to a lack of effect'. I for one, and others I know of, had powerfully affective responses to the Earth Charter: "Wow! All the things we need to consider and change in one place. Wow! It's so concisely and inarguably (I thought) put. Wow! So many people and groups all over the world are aware of, concerned, and agreeing on these international issues. Wow! The realisation made clear that all these issues are totally interrelated."

The Earth Charter is a shot of hope for me and others who sometimes get discouraged at the magnitude of the problem. I'm aware it's not *the answer* but, like good queries, it poses the right kind of questions in a hopeful way.

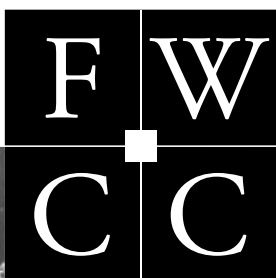
I think the question is not about which approaches we will use but whether, by supporting each other's deeply felt voices, we will be able to effect enough change fast enough to avert a total collapse of the earth's support systems. This is where the Divine comes in to give hope, direction and aid. Our ability to connect to the Divine is crucial. ☞

Kitty Dunn is a member of Calgary Monthly Meeting

Our environmental, economic, social and spiritual challenges are interconnected, and together we can forge inclusive solutions.

— *Earth Charter*

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Simple Living at Pendle Hill

By Erika Koenig-Sheridan

It was a typical gathering at Pendle Hill, the Quaker study centre near Philadelphia: eleven people from all walks of life, seated in a circle in a sunny, book-lined room. We had come to take Frank Levering's week-long course on *Simple Living*. I was a bit apprehensive on that first day. Having no experience with environmental activism, I wondered if I'd made the right choice.

Frank's opening words, "there is no 'one size fits all' path to living simply," put me at ease. Frank believes that we need a radical new relationship with the earth and creation, but he did not prescribe a course of action for us. Instead, he used the good old practice of posing queries for reflection. And then he listened with such whole-hearted attention to our answers that we all felt affirmed and safe.

It was encouraging to hear that every action, no matter how small, can make a difference. This was the message of the video we watched one evening, "Simple Living with Wanda Urbanska." Shown on PBS television some years ago, it was entertaining and engaging. Wanda interviews folks striving to lead more balanced lives and sharing tips

on how to do less damage to the environment by reducing waste and making ethical consumer choices. One segment showed Catherine Whitmire seated in the Cambridge meetinghouse and speaking about the Quaker tradition of plain living. Both aspects of simple living, the activist and the contemplative, were covered.

In one of our sessions on building community, we learned that the number one quality-of-life issue in the U.S. is noise pollution! (The word *noise* is derived from *nausea*.) People are concerned about the effects of noise on our health and on the human spirit. Are there ways in which we Quakers can take our practice of silence into the community and help heal the blows of sound?

Pendle Hill is a paradox, a place that exudes both privilege and plainness. In such a setting it was perhaps not surprising that our talk in the circle often seemed to come from a deep place within ourselves. There are many nooks at Pendle Hill where one may simply sit and gaze inwardly. One day, in the quiet of the library, I was led to ask myself, "Am I spending my time with those

things that are consistent with what I say is important to me?"

My record is pretty good. I live in a modest house in a rural hamlet, shop locally, buy recycled goods, hang my laundry on a line, drive my car infrequently. I fall short in other ways—impulse buying, consuming too much food, wasting time on the internet, not to mention that persistent little problem with procrastination ... These temptations reveal a disconnect between what I say I believe, and what I do. I determined that when I got home I would stop dragging my feet and begin my witness to plain living by cleaning out the dusty corners of my spiritual closet.

That may not speak to everyone. There are many paths to simple living. Experience can only be individual; answers must be found through one's own seeking. What are your core beliefs? What has power for you? When you have discerned the answers, move toward making it happen. ☞

Erika Koenig-Sheridan, a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting, is grateful to CYM and HMAC, who provided the scholarship which made experiencing "Simple Living" at Pendle Hill possible.

Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life.

— *Earth Charter*

Around the Family

Kitchener Area Monthly Meeting

We send prayers and blessings to Gianne Broughton (long-time sojourner in Ottawa Monthly Meeting), who has gone to Bujumbura, Burundi, to help rebuild the American Friends Service Committee's peace programme in the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa.

Toronto Monthly Meeting

As we were going to press, we have learned of the death of Ryan, beloved son-in-law of Fred and Susan Holtz. Ryan died in a bicycle accident in Toronto. HMAC members offer our thoughts and prayers to his family and friends.

Victoria Monthly Meeting

Joe Awmack and Doreen Stein were married under the care of Nottingham Meeting, England, on 24 September 2005. We think of them and send our blessing and upholding thoughts.

Wooler Monthly Meeting

Kate Johnson (Wooler) and Cam Miller were married on 22 October 2005 in Kingston under the care of Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting. Some 90 worshippers attended the joyful Meeting for Worship and festivities afterwards.

Canadian Yearly Meeting: Religious Education Committee

You can borrow Quaker books, postage free, from the Canadian Friends' Travelling Library. On the internet, visit: http://www.quaker.ca/Religious_Education/index.html for access to excellent resources. E-mail: AdultLibrary@quaker.ca or ChildrenLibrary@quaker.ca. Telephone: 519-775-2670 or write: CYM Travelling Library c/o Yarmouth Monthly Meeting, Box 105, Sparta, ON N0L 2H0.

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Quaker International Affairs Programme

Quaker International Affairs Programme is pleased to announce the appointment of a new programme assistant, Sandra Wiens. We wish her all blessings.

A Message of Gratitude

Thank you, dear Friends, for your love and support following Chris's death (November 2004). It has helped to know that we are not alone in our grief. Your cards and notes have been read and re-read, beacons of light and love during this hard time. In Friendship,
– Celia, David, and Elen Cheatley

New Ontario Interfaith Newsletter

For Friends interested in interfaith activities, news and resources in southern Ontario, there is a free on-line newsletter with links to longer articles and reports. To register for free subscription, send a message to: info@interfaithunity.ca. Anyone can send information on resources, book reviews, reports on events attended, and upcoming events.

New Pendle Hill Interim Director

The Pendle Hill Trustees are pleased to announce the appointment of Kenneth Jacobsen as Interim Executive Director, effective 1 January 2006. Known to many Friends for his service as Head of Olney Friends School, Ken Jacobsen has worked closely with his wife, Katharine Jacobsen, in financial management, retreat leadership and teaching in several Quaker organisations.

Corrections

In the Robert Cosbey article of the October issue, the Koran passage should have been 29:46 and not 19:46; and Robert Cosbey is an attender of Regina Allowed Meeting, not the Saskatoon Allowed Meeting.

Around the Family

Conference of Quaker Historians and Archivists (CQHA)

The CQHA will hold its 16th biennial conference at Guilford College in North Carolina on 23-25 June 2006. The conference invites proposals for papers on any aspect of Quaker history. The deadline for proposals is 15 January 2006. Send a one-page abstract and curriculum vita (both electronically and in paper if possible) to: Christopher Densmore; e-mail: Cdensmo1@swarthmore.edu or telephone: 610-328-8499.

Clarence Pickett Endowment Grants

The Pickett Endowment board of trustees seeks from all Quaker traditions the nomination of individual Quakers who show promise and potential as a Quaker leader. Upon receiving a nomination, the nominee is then invited by the trustees to submit an application for a grant. A limited number of grants (averaging from \$2500 to \$3000) are available each year.

The focus of the Pickett Endowment grant is for "hands on" service and research projects directly related to the quality and betterment of life for all humankind. Priority is given to younger applicants, and to projects which serve the applicant's community. Nominations are due 15 January, and grants are awarded in May. Information is available from: <http://pickettendowment.quaker.org>; and from Allen Bowman, telephone: 641-673-4190.

Elizabeth Ann Bogert Memorial Fund

Overseers of the Friends World Committee for Consultation's Elizabeth Ann Bogert Memorial Fund make grants of up to \$1000 to individuals, groups or institutions involved in the study and practice of Christian mysticism.

Proposals should include a description of the project, the specific amount requested, how it will be used, other sources of funding, and plans for communicating the results to others. The deadline for proposals and references is March 1, annually. Decisions are made in

May; grants are sent in June. For information, contact: Vinton and Michelina Deming, 4818 Warrington Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143.

Susan Bax Fund

This memorial fund supports women travelling in the ministry. Monies from the fund are for paying the actual costs of travel only, and are available for women who are members of the Religious Society of Friends within the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) Section of the Americas.

Applications for funding are considered twice each year, in January and in July. Applications should reach the FWCC, Section of the Americas Office in December or June (the months preceding the date of consideration). Under extraordinary circumstances, the selection committee may waive its usual process in considering an application. The amount of the grant will be determined by the selection committee in light of other funds available and the ministry being undertaken. In general, an applicant is expected to find additional sources of funding, and will be limited to one grant per year. Telephone: 215-241 7250; e-mail: americas@fwccamericas.org

Classified Ads

Monteverde Friends School seeks pre-K-12 teachers and volunteers, beginning in August 2006. MFS is an English-dominant, bilingual school with multi-graded classes in Costa Rica's rural mountains. While salaries are low, the experience is rich. Simple housing included for teachers. Application deadline February 15, 2006 or until position filled; volunteers, any month. Contact Tim Curtis, Monteverde Friends School, Monteverde 5655, Puntarenas, Costa Rica. Tel/fax 011 506-645-5302. E-mail: mfsteach@racsa.co.cr. Visit www.mfschool.org.

Make friends, make music: **FRIENDS MUSIC CAMP** at Olney, four-week summer program for ages 10-18. Musical growth in a caring Quaker community. For brochure and camp video: FMC, PO Box 427, Yellow Springs, OH 45387, USA. 937-767-1311 musicfmc@yahoo.com.

For this issue

Guest EditorsDonald Alexander and Arnold Ranneris for the Quaker Ecology Action Network
Managing Editor, Layout June-Etta Chenard
Editorial Support Donald Alexander, Rose Marie Cipryk, Daphne Davey, Erika Koenig-Sheridan
Graphics Donald Alexander, June-Etta Chenard, Rose Marie Cipryk, Janet Nunn

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

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

Themes, deadlines and queries for upcoming issues

- Due date: 15 March 2006 (for May issue)
Theme: Personal experience of faith: our own faith and that of other people; as well as personal response to the expression of faith/beliefs different from our own
- Due date: 15 May 2006 (for July 2006 issue)
Theme: How we deal with illness, aging and death
Quaker Faith and Practice 21.73: "As we open ourselves to become the channel of God's healing grace we shall find that healing is given to those who pray as well as to those for whom we are praying."
– Jack Dobbs, 1984

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