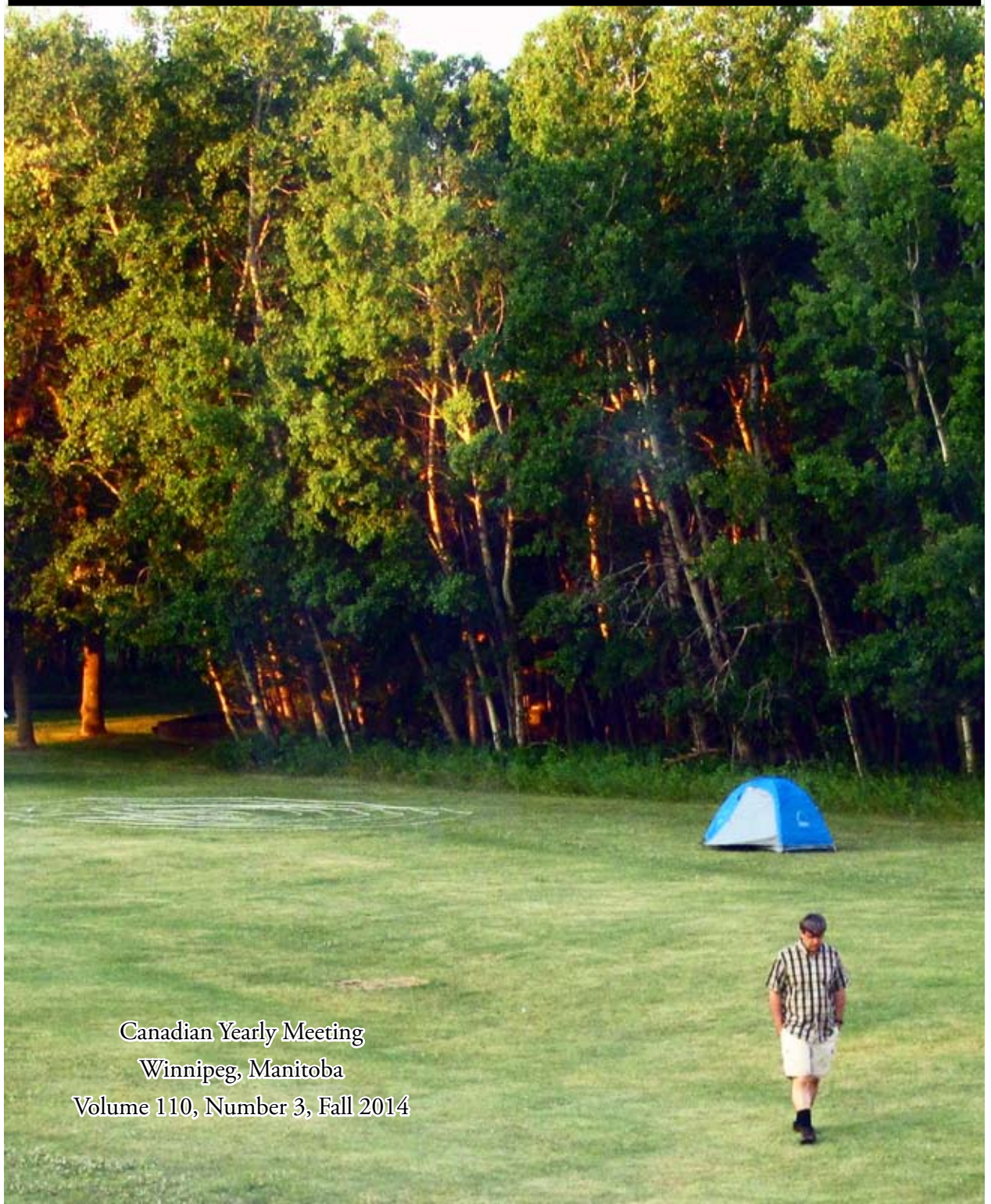


# The Canadian Friend



Canadian Yearly Meeting  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
Volume 110, Number 3, Fall 2014

# The **Editorial:** Canadian Friend

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Dear Friends,

Mark Burch asked: "What difference do you think the decision to live simply makes in terms of environmental sustainability, peace, the priority you give to spiritual development, the quality of your family life, and your own well-being?"

We were given much to ponder during our week in Winnipeg at Canadian Yearly Meeting.

I know that many of you followed CYM proceedings on the internet, making this journal "old news", however, the messages that Dale Dewar, Bill Curry and Mark Burch brought us are messages that bear repeating until we integrate necessary changes into our daily lives. I know too that there are Friends who still find it helpful to hold the journal in hand, and get nourishment from reflections, and there are those Friends who were unable to attend, who still rely on the journal for gathering the essence of CYM into their hearts and minds.

Mark hopes we'll consider: "What might be the value of living in a visibly simpler way than mainstream society?" Just as all life forms are interconnected, I learned more of how our personal choices are interconnected with all life. I see that we cannot decree the end of war and violence, or turn around climate change, without recognizing that individual overindulgence in material stuff leads to imbalance and inequity between the peoples of the world, and adversely impacts upon nature. It is out of our disconnected self-centred state that we bring war and pestilence upon ourselves. If we fail to live lives that are free of the seeds of violence toward people and the earth, it is because we are not silently listening and heeding God's guidance.

We need to fall in love with Creation, as Thomas Berry says in *The Sacred Universe*, reviewed by Peggy Hope-Simpson (pg.19). Peggy, who worked tirelessly for peace and justice, came to realize, just as Dale and Bill taught us, that the environmental crisis and warring between peoples are intertwined.

While one writer wonders if the silence that Quakers place before Meetings is an empty ritual, I believe it is not the practice we need question, but rather whether we are consciously inviting Spirit to be with us in the silence; consciously inviting guidance so that the decisions we make in Meeting and in our lives are in line with the Will of God. If Meeting fails, it is because we failed to be silent and listen to Spirit leadings. Settling into silence is a holy choice; an offering to the Sacred; a good practice that will prepare us for right action and nudge us. As Edward Burrough said: "...and our hearts will be made glad".

Blessings, Sherryll-Jeanne Harris





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**Photo above of our CYM clerks:**

**Carol Leigh Wehking, Carol Dixon, Virginia Dawson, Janet Ross and Marilyn Manzer.**

**Photo collage (page 20) courtesy of Bruce Dienes, David Cheately, and Tim Bartoo.**





Dear Sherryll,

I am thankful to those who produce *The Canadian Friend*: the editor, and the editorial support group. I look forward to its arrival and am drawn into reading it from cover to cover. I have appreciated the themes, Friends reflections and responses to the different topics, the editorials, the wider expressions and reflections from the historic Friends' writings, and the contemporary thought. [This] continues the thread of who are we as Friends, and whose we are, and what it is that holds us together as the Religious Society of Friends.

Articles that gave me food for thought were the Clerks Corner, the letter from Coldstream Monthly Meeting about the pamphlet *A Plea to the People of Canada from the Society of Friends at Coldstream, Ontario* from 1916, the book review *Who was James Naylor?* and the article from *An Apology for Perfection*. During my reflection on that last article, I picked up The Canadian Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice and read from the sections under Testimonies on integrity and peace – especially the Peace Testimony from Murray Thompson's SPG 2006 lecture, page 118, and the letter to Jean Chrétien, from Canadian Friends Service Committee co-clerks, September 11, 2001.

I was also inspired by the book review by Harvey Gillman of *Universe as Revelation: An Eco-Mystical Theology for Friends*, and by the article *Grounding Friends for Ecumenical/Interfaith Dialogue* – particularly *The Tides (In the Spirit of Quaker William Leddra before his Execution March 1661)*; *A Person's Worth* by Lloyd Jones; Stephanie Deakin's material on the Visitation Program; the article *Quakers United in Publishing* by Sherryll-Jeanne Harris, which contains some very good ideas and suggestions for action "by reading holy texts in new ways, and taking up inner and outer practices that nourish the Spirit within and strengthen our capacity to act in the world".

In Friendship, Gini Smith  
Yonge Street Monthly Meeting

Dear Sherryll,

I appreciate you for very fine editing of the Canadian Friend which has developed so well under your care, your willingness to adapt as your committee made changes to the production of the magazine, and your helpfulness in facilitating those [changes] in your home town. Thank you too for being a friend and kind host when the Publications and Communications Committee met in Victoria.

Wishing you many blessings

Love, Carol Bradley  
Annapolis Valley Monthly Meeting  
[Outgoing clerk of Publications and Communications]

Thank YOU Carol Bradley!

We, the members of the Publication and Communication Committee are grateful for the support you gave us all while guiding the committee through much change.



Nat put it succinctly: "Though committee work has a fearsome reputation, Carol managed to guide PubCom through intricate business, while making space for everyone's input and staying mindful of the impact on members' time and capacity." You will be missed!

Wishing you all good things.

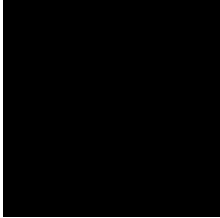
Sincerely in Friendship,

Adam Newlands, Mark Stanley, Chris Hitchcock, Michael Kaufman-Lacusta, Sherryll-Jeanne Harris, Nat Egan-Pimblett, Bruce Dienes, Mary Conchelos, Jim Coughran..

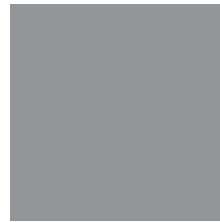
Query: The Spirit, working through evolution, has entrusted human beings with consciousness – an emergent property of life itself, and present in human beings to a special degree. How am I orienting my consciousness? With what do I nourish it, develop and train it? Do I apply its special abilities to the service of life? Have I understood "life" broadly to include the welfare of all beings, or only the profit of human beings? Mark Burch.



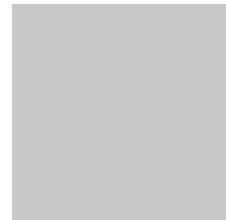
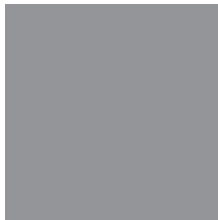
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## Excerpts from the Sunderland P. Gardner Lecture



Dale Dewar, Bill Curry and daughter Shauna

### Making the Diagnosis Naming the disease: Militarism

“...we are convinced that all peace, justice and sustainability issues are entwined in the single issue of violent conflict.”

[Bill] Given all signs and symptoms, war is a disease of the human species. War is pathological. War impacts and harms virtually every ecological system, niche and level [of society].

Can systemic and specific pathology be arrested, cured and healed? Can war be transformed? Can nuclear swords be made into ploughshares, truly and fully? We believe, yes - the answer is yes - unless we keep doing what has brought us to the terminal prognosis we are facing.

Quakers believe war can and must be halted, prevented and abolished. We are called to speak with both quiet and public voices. The remedy for the disease called war will not be some ‘magic bullet’ pharmaceutical fix, or any variations of the ‘business-as-usual’ endgame. Beyond addressing symptoms, we must look for root causes.

Our prognosis is terminal unless somehow we are able to transform from illness to health, from pathological greed and gluttony to mutual aid, from exploitation to genuine sharing, from rapacious violence to deep and lasting service, from “power over” to “power with”. We are inviting you to share in changing the prognosis.

[Dale] The task of change is so great that people may give up either in confusion, denial or resignation, or focus on a piece of the puzzle that is easy to understand – like poverty, indigenous rights, or pesticide use. We don’t deny that these are all important, but we are convinced that peace, justice and sustainability issues are entwined in the single issue of violent conflict. We are convinced that the issue of war so affects climate that solving the first will give us the tools to solve the other. In fact, without resolving the issue of violent conflict, the human race stands no chance of surviving the climate tumult ahead of us.

### Defining disease

Conducting a differential diagnosis is something people do when analyzing an accident, an illness or a flat tire. We consider and rule out alternate explanations. The flat tire may be the result of a nail puncture, rotten inner tube, worn tire, or even a stone in the valve. Performing the differential before jumping to conclusions should prevent doctors and others from preventable errors.

The aforementioned two reasons for war can be seen as two diagnoses, one social and the other genetic, in the differential diagnosis of war. Since the human race likely cooperated its early way into existence and since its DNA is not configured into a violent gene, [the two reasons] have lost their rationale.

Over my career as a family physician I have seen the relief that patients feel when they have a name to put to their suffering and pain, and when – however bad the diagnostic outcome – they can share the name with their loved ones, their friends, and seek options for treatment. Not knowing what is wrong is worse. This is why it is time to stop agonizing over what ails the human race and name it. War is a disease.

By putting a name to this behaviour, by calling it a disease, it is less and less likely that it will be celebrated or that indulgence in the behaviour will be considered appropriate. We can look for causes and cures; we can apply public health measures for prevention.

### Changing the Prognosis

Fruit of the Spirit – Basis of Faith

What was the faith basis of Friends’ concerns and actions opposing slavery? The source for Friends

who sailed into nuclear test zones? What are the faith Leadings today from which Quakers can speak to our precarious condition?

[Bill] Murray Thomson asked Friends during his 2006 Gardner Lecture: *Toward a Culture of Peace* “Can we afford to pay the price?” What is the price of facing up to a systemic threat to the planet, to our communities, to ourselves?

Where is our source of faith today, for strength and vision; our basis for intelligent action and for spirit-led understanding and witness? Matthew 7:16 states that claims and promises are to be known by their fruits. Plenty of evidence shows that, at its very best, war makes almost everything worse.

By contrast, “the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Galatians 5.22)

That could be “easy gospel” if we dwell in the wonderful promise but rebel against what God requires (see Galatians 5). Jesus says in Matthew 7.15: “Beware of false prophets who come in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.”

To transform victim-offender cycles, what is our responsibility for holding perpetrators of great harms accountable? Like the Truth and Reconciliation process, restorative justice principles and practices seek and provide social and individual healing opportunities.

In patient waiting-worship, way may open for leadings of Spirit to empower us, and bear fruit, as Quaker witness for nuclear abolition, for [armaments] transformed to ploughshares, for just-peace, for ecological health, and for good relationships.

One way or another, and step by step, each one of us is part of [the process of] changing the prognosis from terminal to sustainable!

*Dale Dewar and Bill Curry, Prairie Monthly Meeting*

[The complete lecture is available online and coming out later as a Quaker pamphlet.]

## John Woolman’s Response

Oh! that we who declare against wars, and acknowledge our trust to be in God only, may walk in the light, and therein examine our foundation and motives in holding great estates! 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.

(A Plea for the Poor) John Woolman

## Special Interest Group: Militarism and Peace

The centenary of WWI is being used widely as a vehicle to promote militarism and a view that war was a gateway to Canada’s nationhood. As a species, we are encountering our own mortality. Quakers, with our mystical tradition, can offer a positive response to this encounter. In our own lives, and the life of our Meetings, we need to be patterns and examples. We can go beyond hope and despair to live in the Spirit and in the present. The people alongside whom we work in peace coalitions can benefit from this perspective.

Many Quaker Meetings have responded to Remembrance Day with an alternative ceremony – one which shows the horror of war without glorifying it, while prompting all to work for peace. We can draw on that experience in crafting our response to this 2014 celebration of war.

We urge Friends to see this as an opportune time for active support of the Peace Testimony by learning more of the role played by opponents of war, making this side of history more widely known, holding vigils, speaking out against militarism, writing to the papers, using social media, and cooperating with the peace initiatives of other groups.

**Post Script:** We believe that genuine change comes through attraction to viable options. But who pioneers and demonstrates good examples, and how are these communicated? At CYM some permaculture lessons were shared by creating a spiral herb garden – a contribution to the small farm on Mennonite University land. Some Friends participated in this hands-on SIG. A brief glimpse of the team at work was a gift to me; an epiphany beyond the veil of questions about transforming militarism toward an ecologically just peace. Sharing good work builds relationship; growing good food is a vital promise for a healthy outcome. There is a veil across our dire prognosis, uncertain but not unanswerable. Can we change? Are we able to do what we must? *Bill Curry,*

Come All Ye Who are Heavily Cumbered:  
Simplicity as the Radical Path to Peace, Justice, Community and Care of the Earth

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Excerpts from Quaker Study:  
The Simplicity Testimony

CYM 2014 – Mark Burch

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Simplicity, I'm sure you already know, is one of the traditional testimonies of Friends. I really like the concept of testimony, partly because it means something similar to praxis. Testimony has a component of belief, but it is not just a belief or intellectual opinion.

In fact, the formation of one's belief emerges from the lived experience of the testimony which demonstrates the belief. Testimonies are the ways Friends can live that [which] we have discovered manifests the Light, or the Divine presence and action in life. It follows, of course, that we form intellectual opinions about these matters, following or concurrent with, living their truth in our daily round. As such, they resonate with the biblical injunction in the Letter of James (1:18-19) that says: "You say you have faith and I have good deeds; I will prove to you that I have faith by showing you my good deeds—now you show me that you have faith without any good deeds to show... You see now that it is by doing something good, and not only by believing that a man is justified. ... A body dies when it is separated from the spirit, and in the same way faith is dead if it is separated from good deeds" (James 2:18-19; 24; 26)

\* \* \* \* \*

Human beings must consume to live, so there will always be some cumber to deal with. My studies of simple living have taught me, however, that we have both material and non-material needs. The material things necessary for a good life are relatively easily provisioned, [and] since they are inherently scarce, special attention is required in using them to assure justice and ecological sustainability.

The non-material things needed for a good life are inherently abundant and actually multiply through being shared. So if I share my candy bar – a material good – I have less left for myself, but if I share respect,

or humour, or esteem, or love with someone else, it grows in the process, without limit.

I get into difficulty when I listen to the siren song of consumer culture that conflates satisfying non-material needs with material goods. If I try to fulfill my need for love by eating, or my need for equanimity by drinking, or my need for novelty by continually traveling to other parts of the world, all these have generally destructive consequences for me, for others, and for the Earth.

A way of life that is more in contact with reality would include learning how to distinguish what is sufficient from what is extraneous, and also [understanding] which needs can be met through material consumption and how much is necessary to do so, and which needs can only truly be met from non-material sources. To help with this, I am well advised to submit all decisions about acquiring things to the inner Light – a kind of personal clearness exercise – and especially to remind myself that whatever I acquire can never really belong to me. It's on loan, a trust I've borrowed from others to use for a time and then return to them. An old friend of mine once taught me, it's always best to return the tools you borrowed cleaner and sharper than when you borrowed them.

**[Cumber] has consequences for me insofar as cumber can be a distraction from more important values such as how I stand in relation to God...**

The material pattern we give to our lives also creates the context within which an expansion of sacred consciousness, such as we cultivate during worship, is either focused or scattered. This in turn has effects on our spiritual and personal well-being. Speaking of the role played by outer simplicity in spiritual work, Rabbi David Cooper observes:

"Keep [your spiritual practice] as simple as possible, clean, light, uncomplicated, spacious, empty, and use this pristine external form as a vehicle for, and reflection of, what we want for our inner being."

...I think attending to the interior dimension of simplicity is vitally important, both because it is the source of our outward actions in the world, and because it has intrinsic value all its own. An inner change of some sort is very often proposed as the source or prerequisite of our very capacity to take up and sustain the practice of simple living.



For William Penn, evil begins from within, not without, and a life of excess is evidence of a life not yet transformed by Christ....The inner evolution of the person under the power of grace manifests outwardly, among other things, in simplicity. So the Testimony to Simplicity in this view, is a consequence or outer sign that testifies to an inner transformation of perspective and of values...

[For] Richard Foster (1981) simplicity is also a discipline that involves doing things that help dispose us to receive this gift as well as desisting from doing things that would undermine it. The Testimony to Simplicity also involves struggle, as we try to shape the outer circumstances of our lives according to the inward vision that is slowly being revealed to us. The gift of simplicity affirms both the goodness of material things and also recognizes their limitations. We do not live by bread alone. Most important is the fact that simplicity includes the ability to be “single-hearted” without becoming a simpleton. That is to say, our hearts are centred in Christ but also sensitive to the tough, complex issues of life. We experience focus without dogmatism, obedience without oversimplification, profundity without self-consciousness; we are aware of many issues while having that of holy obedience at our core.

Another perspective of the inner meaning of simplicity comes from Elaine Prevallet (1982), a Benedictine nun, who wrote *Reflections on Simplicity*, one of the Pendle Hill pamphlet series.

Prevallet agrees with Foster that simplicity is primarily an inner gift, but how we conduct the outer affairs of our lives can help dispose us to receiving this gift, and also manifest evidence of its presence in us. Simplicity quickly transmutes itself into other virtues like poverty of spirit, humility, dependency, abandonment, single-mindedness, integrity, [and] purity of heart.

[As] we seek [to become God-centred] during worship and as we develop a more worshipful approach to our daily living, the cumber of our inner lives gets sorted out; it becomes clarified and integrated [when] we focus attention inwardly, while at the same time surrendering control of this process to God’s deep working. We don’t simplify and integrate our fragmented inner world; God does this gradually, organically, and mostly unconsciously. It is a Divine work that inwardly integrates the personality. This process occurs gradually over time and almost completely under Divine guidance and requires from

us our consent and cooperation. Little by little we experience the process of drawing our “centre” away from the ego and its concerns, into the Divine presence and action within us. Simplicity is thus something that is inner and processional; God grows us simple....until way opens.

So for Prevallet, alignment of the inner and outer voices – the voice of the ego and of God, and not clinging to our own desires and agendas [but] trusting in the Light, are all features of simplicity.

\* \* \* \* \*

The process of becoming simple is letting go of the desire for the power to control our own life. The means of becoming single-minded is a continuing process of confronting our own duplicity. The objects we seek to control, interior and exterior, are the masters we serve. Simplicity is the healing or resolution of our duplicity...

Consumerism and all its temptations to accumulate cumber is a profoundly violent and deluded way of life, which now threatens to extinguish humanity and many other species besides. Consumerism makes us crazy. It causes us to lose touch with reality....

Consumer culture is violent because everything we make or use is purchased in some way with the suffering and death of other beings, many of which are sentient. The more we indulge in luxury or discretionary consumption, the more death and suffering we inflict, As another Friend, Catherine Whitmire, has noted:

“I have come to understand plain living as a matter of spiritual intent, or an aim of the heart. It consists of aligning our lives with what we hear when we listen to our Guide. It is learning to live our lives in “constant communication with that Centre which is the source of life itself.”

It is both a gift and a discipline. Early Quakers called this “staying close to the root”.

\* \* \* \* \*

I propose that we consider what meaning we will give to the Testimony of Simplicity within our practice of worship. [I suggest] we focus on a transformational vision of simple living which enfolds both inner and outer aspects, and which manifests as both inner and outer changes in ourselves and our way of life. There is no opposition involved, no conflict, no dialectic, no need to choose one path over the other. There is just a unitary process of evolution and unfolding into the Light, arising from mysterious sources, and oriented not to commandments or judgments but toward a transformation of our intentions. What we need to do

is simply stand in the Light, consent to the intentions arising within us as a result of standing in the Light, then give expression to those intentions through our actions. Both outer and inner simplicity arise together and gradually as the Light reshapes our consciousness, our motivations, and our perspective of what is a Godly life. We change as whole people, or not at all.

*Mark Burch*

*Winnipeg Monthly Meeting*

[Note: Mark is available to Meetings through the CYM Visitation Program. Contact Stephanie Deakin.]

## Response

*Stephanie Deakin*

Each day Mark presented us with a query and reflection questions. I found this very helpful in processing and pondering the message he brought.

Mark emphasized that although simplicity is one of our testimonies on its own, it is also an integral aspect of our other testimonies. How can we exercise integrity, justice, equality, if we don't strive to live simply? He spoke about consumerism as a violent culture, delusional because it hides its true costs from us. What are the costs of consumerism, and how are they hidden? Our possessions become our masters, dictating how we live our lives – how much space we need, how much money, how much time we give to obtaining money for stuff. Our 'stuff' gets in our way, and insulates us from a more authentic life, and the costs of this lifestyle are tucked away in slaughterhouses, in factory farms, in sweatshops in developing nations, and aggressively hidden from sight by the powers who are deeply invested in sustaining a consumer culture. We were reminded of John Woolman's teachings, that wealth and commerce are addictive and the addiction becomes stronger the more it is indulged, and that rich living comes at the cost of excessive labour, risk, hardship, and sometimes injustice.

Mark also talked about how we identify our needs, how we might be using consumerism to meet those needs, and how we can look for other ways to meet our needs. For example, some might feel a need for novelty and address that need with travel, or with buying new stuff. Others might use consumption of food and drink to meet a need for comfort. We don't need possessions or complicated lives to get our needs met. As Mark said, "Our deepest need is to matter, and our stuff not only doesn't contribute to that, it impedes it."

What does "simplicity" mean for us today? According to Mark, it means "letting go of the things, activities, and beliefs that are in your way and make your life more difficult". I love this definition! It makes the concept much easier to embrace. Simplicity is not about sacrifice or deprivation, it's about making life better for myself and for others.

*Stephanie Deakin*

*Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting*

## Thoughts on CYM Matthew Legge

I was very fortunate to attend my second Canadian Yearly Meeting. This time I knew many Friends from Western Half Yearly Meeting, and Western Friends were well represented at CYM. It was a busy but enriching week, and Canadian Friends Service Committee was right in the thick of things. We were directly affected by a minute on synthetic biology and an addendum to CYM's 2009 minute on Israel/Palestine (both are posted along with background information on our website [www.quakerservice.ca](http://www.quakerservice.ca)). There were many highlights throughout the week – from our well-attended and surprisingly lively Special Interest Group on charity law (who says T3010s aren't fun?) to the LGBTQ night and discussions around the Genderbread Person.

I found much rich material for reflection in this year's Quaker Study. Mark Burch highlighted that simplicity is not dumbing life down, shutting things out, or failing to appreciate beauty. Simplicity is not self-punishment or deprivation, but rather a positive process of moving from the fragmentation (both physical and spiritual) of a cluttered life and an over-extended self, to greater wholeness and authenticity. He pointed out that we are not called to do everything, and that we get the most joy from relationships and experiences, which we must make time and mental energy for, by living simply.

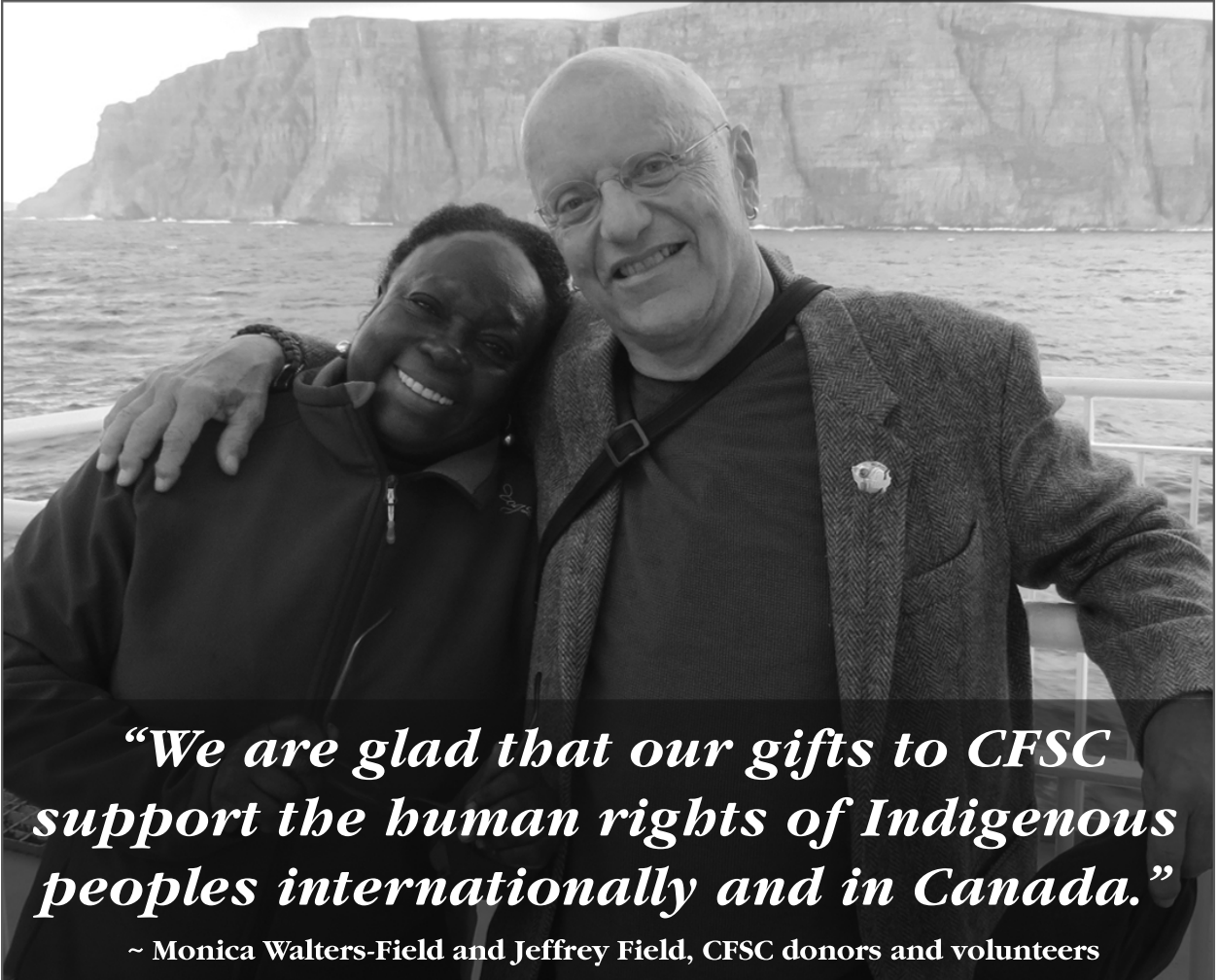
Deep connections were drawn throughout the week between the Testimony of Simplicity and other Testimonies. For example, simplicity is critical for peace. Simple living allows us to reduce harmful and unsustainable patterns of production and consumption which are responsible for great violence and suffering. What a powerful and important way to live!

*Matthew Legge*

*Canadian Friends Service Committee*

*(Coordinator of the Quaker Peace and Sustainable Communities program committee)*

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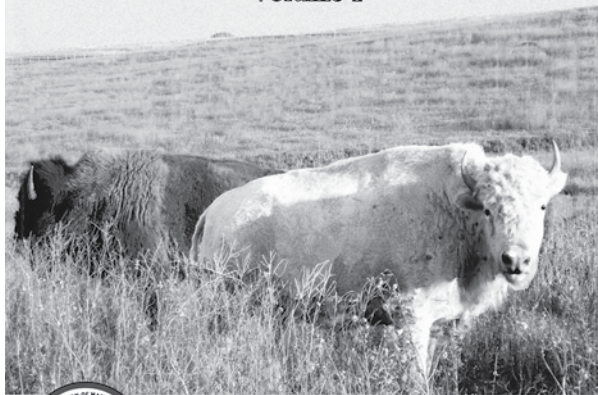
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Who We Are

Treaty Elders' Teachings  
Volume 1



Doris Pratt, Harry Bone, and the Treaty &  
Dakota Elders of Manitoba with contributions  
by the AMC Council of Elders

CYM has developed the practice of recognizing the Indigenous land on which we meet. This is one small way in which we acknowledge the colonial history of Canada.

Elder Harry Bone, representing the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TRCM), visited Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) on Saturday evening to welcome Friends to Treaty One territory. Using the motto 'We Are All Treaty People', the TRCM works in Manitoba to promote understanding between the original peoples of Manitoba: Anishinabai, Cree, Dakota, Métis, and Dene, and the Settler peoples.

A number of Friends expressed an interest in learning more about the TRCM and having further contact with Harry Bone. Harry Bone also is one of the Elders whose teachings have just been published by the TRCM. *Untuwe Pi Kin – He Who We Are: Treaty Elders' Teachings*, Volume 1, shares teachings on Creation, Creator's Laws, and the Sacred Teachings: The Pipe, Prayer, Medicines and more.

The TRCM may be reached at their web site: [www.trcm.ca/](http://www.trcm.ca/) or write to them at 117 Hargrave Street, Winnipeg, MB R3C 3R8.

*Elaine Bishop, Winnipeg Monthly Meeting*

Gini's Reflection:

From Darkness Into the Light of Hope

Dale and Bill described war as a disease that poisons and shatters human life and the whole of creation. If we see war as a disease, it too can be eradicated as many other plagues and pandemics have been.

What is the prescription for this pandemic? Prevention and hope. The hope of celebrating the gift of life, not only for ourselves, but for sharing every day with those with whom we come into contact, acknowledging each person's presence here and now, seeing the hope in the sunrise and clouds, birds and animals, giving a greeting as the day goes by, taking the opportunity to listen to those who come our way, and working together.

I am encouraged to read a copy of the joint statement: *Facing the Challenges of Climate Change*, from more than nine Quaker organizations that are working on climate change. It will be read at the UN Climate Summit in New York. (See more on CFSC's website).

One way of showing hope would be to accept the invitation to join the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace focusing on a Just Peace sponsored by the World Council of Churches. This is a walk with all peoples, all interfaith communities, and all of those of good will.

I offer my thanks to Bill and Dale for their ongoing work for peace and justice and for Dale's book: *From Hiroshima to Fukushima to You*, a primer on radiation and health.

Both have given us much food for thought and ways for moving ahead with hope for the ongoing gift of life. To paraphrase George Fox, we must bring the ocean of light that will overcome the ocean of darkness.

Their perspective was one of the many gifts that I carried home from CYM. Thank you for the 'yeast.'

*Gini Smith, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting*

Query: Have I made reasonable efforts to distinguish real needs from learned desires? Do I strive to respond to the Light in my life making judicious and elegant use of the minimum means? Do I strive for equity and nonviolence in relationship with other beings? Will the "mark" I leave in the world be that of love alone?

Quaker Study



## A Lesson in Quaker Business Process

Sheila Havard



My first Yearly Meeting in 2009 in Kemptville is indelibly imprinted on my mind – not just for the blisters my tent mate and I acquired on our sandaled feet, hiking up the camping field in wet grass several times a day!

It was in Kemptville that I discovered a community of Friends beyond the confines of my own beloved Meeting. I was fascinated by the breadth of viewpoints and values, and greatly appreciated some of the insights I garnered from weighty and less weighty Friends. I marvelled at the skill with which the clerks steered us through CYM's business. They respectfully and gently listened to all views and worked with the recording clerk to incorporate our mixed messages into a coherent minute. Above all, I was deeply impressed by the minor miracle that CYM rallied round a statement on the Israel/Palestine conflict. I still re-read that minute even today, with admiration.

But it took work! After the item first came onto the agenda without unity being reached, it was referred to a working group. Attendees at that group packed one of the Kemptville classrooms and the text was torn apart. Feelings were raw and I felt that not everyone got a fair hearing. On leaving the group, it seemed to me that we were as far from unity as ever.

A draft of this same minute had been worked on by Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) while I was a member and I was aware of some of the techniques for reaching agreement: aiming for balance, avoiding bias and inflammatory language, mentioning all parties to the conflict and all those striving to resolve it. At CFSC we agreed on a draft statement relatively easily, but CYM was a different matter!

The working group's draft was submitted to the business Meeting and again referred back for further discernment. That was where the miracle occurred. Perhaps the atmosphere helped: we met in the open air, gathered round a picnic table over lunch. Lyn Adamson skillfully facilitated the gathering. She drew out the feelings and beliefs of both the most reticent and the most virulent among us. A new draft minute was assembled, bit by bit. It was submitted to the

business Meeting and the Meeting was united in agreement.

Canadian Yearly Meeting's "Policy Statement on Israel and Palestine" can be found on page 196 of the 2009 minutes and late reports booklet.

Many complain of the laborious and tedious nature of Quaker business procedures. Yet, the results it can produce can stand firm and resist time due to the thorough seasoning that undergirds them. Presiding clerk Beverly Shephard once announced to a weary floor of Friends, "Not reaching unity is not a failure", implying that discernment of the leading of the Spirit was yet to come. Granted, but it sure is a good feeling when we do reach unity!

Sheila Havard  
*Coldstream Monthly Meeting*

While there is business to be done during CYM, and Friends should share the joy and responsibility of group discernment where we can, I am grateful that we provide room for Friends and Seekers on the sidelines of our gatherings as well as at the centre. In fact, I encourage those who may have stayed away because Quaker process doesn't fit with them (for whatever reason) to look at all the wonderful things happening in the margins. It might be a leisurely browse through the Quaker Book Service display, spending time with the children, helping with food preparation, getting to know someone over a shared puzzle, or finding expression through art and music. It takes many different roles to make a community – and some of them are best performed on the margins!

Catherine Novak, Victoria Meeting

**Query: Awake to the fact that Divine Being is continually speaking its holy word into my life, have I been careful to listen, receive and cherish each of them, letting none fall to the ground? Do I discern new revelation in the daily round of my experiences, contemplating them in my heart, and allowing myself to become transparent to Divine Being speaking through me to others? Quaker Study**

# THE SPIRIT OF CANADIAN YEARLY MEETING

MONDAY MORNING, AUGUST 11, 2014

Clerk Carol Dixon read from *Responsibility in the Meeting for Business* by Patricia Loring as follows:

The necessary discernment of leading can only be done after the manner of Friends from the deep centering that can arise in an atmosphere of worship. That is why we begin our Meetings with a time of recollection of ourselves and for worship. That is why it is important to pause between speakers to recollect and re-center ourselves to listen and to speak in the Light rather than in passion or [from] the intellect: to remember that we are engaged together in a search for the will of God rather than in discussion, argument or persuasion. Information and reason are to serve that higher purpose rather than be the ends in themselves. The process also requires of the members tremendous openness, sensitivity, and tenderness with one another.

**Excerpt of report on CYM Finances:** Anne Marie Zilliacus, CYM treasurer, presented information about CYM finances. 2013 had a deficit of \$23,000. At the present rate of accelerating deficit budgeting, we will deplete our general Fund within four years. We need to match our spending to our income, or our income to our spending. CYM needs to reduce our expenses by \$40,000 per year in the short term.

TUESDAY MORNING, AUGUST 12, 2014  
THRESHING SESSION

The Clerk Marilyn Manzer, read from *Quaker Process for Friends on the Benches* by Mathilda Navias.

In *Some Thoughts on Quaker Process* Paul Lacey lists four principles of the Quaker business procedure:

Integrity of community is more important than quick, or efficient, or right decisions.

There is no rush to decide things, since the process is in God's hands.

Coming into a business Meeting with one's mind made up, even if one is right, is unfaithful to the process.

The primary aim of the business Meeting is to deepen the spiritual life of the community, rather than get things done. These are provocative:

- What practices and values should we uphold as we seek to live within our means?
- Where in the budget do we reduce expenses?
- What additional information would you and your Monthly Meeting or Half Yearly Meeting need to feel clear in these financial decisions?
- Do you have creative ideas for reducing our expenses that should be further explored and costed by Friends carrying forward this work?

WEDNESDAY MORNING, AUGUST 13, 2014

Clerk: Janet Ross read the following from Britain Yearly Meeting's Quaker Faith and Practice, Section 3.05:

The right conduct of our Meetings for church affairs depends upon all coming to them in an active, seeking spirit, not with minds already made up on a particular course of action, determined to push this through at all costs. But open minds are not empty minds, nor uncritically receptive: the service of the Meeting calls for knowledge of facts, often painstakingly acquired, and the ability to estimate their relevance and importance. This demands that we shall be ready to listen to others carefully, without antagonism if they express opinions which are displeasing to us, but trying always to discern the truth in what they have to offer. It calls, above all, for spiritual sensitivity.

## Consider This: *Margaret Slavin*

If we are moving into a time when wealthy Friends are dying off, and the economy in general is contracting, there is a gift in that. We are a simple society with few needs, and I feel confident that we can meet them if we understand them and are engaged.

People give money when they are engaged with what is going on, and also when there is a culture of expecting people to donate money as part of their participation. At the moment we are failing to engage people with what is going on.

Almost never can I recall a time when Monthly Meetings have been asked to decide the kinds of issues that come up at Canadian Yearly Meeting in the committees around finances. Last year when in my home Meeting I mentioned the need to support the two part-time positions, several noted that it sounded worth supporting but that they had not heard about this before. They heard about it just as CYM decided to let both positions go.

So I support the process of sending decisions and concerns to Monthly Meetings for seasoning. If only one or two, or none, can take the energy to address the matter, that is a sign that Spirit is not leading us in that direction, and to be faithful, we must wait.

*Margaret Slavin  
Peterborough Monthly Meeting*

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## Reporting and Clearness

We thank Anne Mitchell for her activities as a representative to the World Council of Churches (WCC). Anne was nominated to the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches by the Canadian churches who are members of the WCC. She has accepted this position. Anne reported on the meeting she attended in Geneva in July. Friends are invited to attend the Interfaith Summit on Climate Change in New York City, 21-22 September 2014. See [www.interfaithclimate.org](http://www.interfaithclimate.org). The World Council of Churches has also extended an invitation to the Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, a world-wide pilgrimage which will be celebrated regionally. Anne invites Canadian Yearly Meeting to help shape this pilgrimage in North America. It was noted that Quaker presence has influence in greater proportion than our numbers.

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## First Timer's Reflections:

*Othmar F. Arnold*

I flew in to Winnipeg from Switzerland for the last three days of Canadian Yearly Meeting – an epic event. I arrived at midnight and spent the remaining night hours on a bench waiting for the first transit bus to Canadian Mennonite University campus.

When I arrived at CYM it was difficult to navigate the facilities. From the outside there was no indication for CYM in session. On the lawn I found a cluster of tents and friendly people who welcomed me and confirmed that this was indeed CYM. [However] as I did not belong to the food coop crowd and needed nourishment, I had to find the cafeteria.

Eventually I got my bearing about the various venues and events. I attended Meeting for Worship for Business and all of a sudden I experienced a different world. The “what-ers” and “OMG’s” of post modern casual conversation were replaced by “I was led to” and “speaks my mind” – terms common to Eighteenth Century Quakers.

The one issue that stood out from business Meetings was the growing gap between ongoing structural commitments and expected revenue, from a society that has a stagnant and aging membership. I got a clear sense that the members would like to continue the traditions they are accustomed to, and that represent the Quaker way. Somehow, the money to maintain these organizational structures and commitments will be found in time. Maybe we just have to use the neo-liberal mantra: we all need to “try a little harder” and write another cheque.

The Quaker Study series by Mark Burch seemed to be titled appropriately: “Come all ye who are heavily cumbered”. The testimony of simplicity was illuminated from various angles. During the study sessions I gleaned several approaches to the queries arising from the business Meetings. How do we experience living in duplicity when our vision is to discern the divine will and aim to live faith in action?

I left CYM nourished and touched by the Spirit, glad to know more people from the Canadian Quaker family. I carry with me queries for the future of our Society, as well as the hope that we can renew the Society to be open and inclusive. It only takes a little Light to attract seekers in the dark.

*Othmar F. Arnold lives in Switzerland  
Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting*

# THE SPIRIT OF CANADIAN YEARLY MEETING

THURSDAY MORNING, AUGUST 14, 2014

Clerk Carol Dixon read from Canadian Quaker Pamphlet Series No. 52, *Why Quakers are Worth the Upkeep* by Gordon McClure as follows:

Our Meeting for Business illustrates two of our basic beliefs, that the test of our religion is how it applies to all aspects of life, and that we must test our individual leadings to action against the understanding of a gathered Meeting. The common commitment to finding what the Spirit wants us to do is the basis of our Meetings for Business.

FRIDAY MORNING, AUGUST 15, 2014

Clerk Janet Ross read from the pamphlet, *Through the Prism of Light, Come Changing Patterns* by Linda Lyman, as follows:

It is because our Quaker process of decision-making involves reaching a “sense of the Meeting” that the question at hand needs to be as clear and elemental as possible. Sometimes it takes a great deal of time to get to the basic question. Friends struggle with separating out whether what they think is good for the Meeting comes from within them, [is] a seeking of Divine guidance, or merely the pressing of a personal preference. Friends also frequently labor under time constraints, and don’t always take the time which is needed for deliberate and prayerful consideration. Quaker decision-making only works when everyone who participates in the process wants to reach a decision and is open to new understanding and new truths. Each time I have been present when a Meeting gathers and expresses a clear sense of the Meeting in a Minute after weeks or months of discernment, I am emotionally moved.

SATURDAY MORNING, AUGUST 16, 2014

Clerk Carol Dixon read from *Faith and Practice of Canadian Yearly Meeting* section 4.30 by Wolf Mendel:

What matters is living our lives in the power of love and not worrying too much about the results. In doing this, the means become part of the end. Hence we lose the sense of helplessness and futility in the face of the world’s crushing problems. We also lose the craving for success, always focusing on the goal to the exclusion of the way of getting there. **We must literally not take too much thought for the morrow but throw ourselves wholeheartedly into the present.** That is the beauty of the way of love; it cannot be planned and its end cannot be foretold.

## GLEANINGS GLEANINGS GLEANINGS GLEANINGS

- CFSC will have a special evening presentation with cake. This is a four-cake Yearly Meeting. If financial considerations are causing us to question whether we can afford bread, then let us eat cake!
- We are the Religious Society of Friends - that sort of implies that we have a spiritual ‘Thingy’ about us.
- After the Special Interest Group on synthetic biology: “God is in the overview, and the devil is in the details.”



## Reflections *Bertha Small*

Attendance at CYM after an absence of several years, reminded me how much I miss and value contact with Friends in general, and CYM in particular. Arriving late, it was the Food Co-op that I first encountered, and where I quickly re-established my connection. Over the years it has served as my ally with my Quaker-sceptic husband and children, who rolled their eyes at the suggestion of silent worship but gleefully chopped vegetables and fetched water with the best. Now with some paid assistance, it no longer runs out of food for the polite or laggard, and [this year] Elizabeth and Jodie presided with calm competence from early to late.

I met long-known F/friends, delighted that they remembered me, and made new ones with whom I am eager to keep contact. I attended Meeting for Worship for Business with interest but incomplete diligence, and was sufficiently struck with Mark Burch's Quaker study on simplicity – expounded with literate and humorous skill – that I visited the Quaker Book Service in order to add one of his books to my cumber. Friends in Quaker Book Service allowed me to chat about my very dear friends Dana and Vernon Mullen, missing this year at CYM.

I chose the worship sampler, ably led by Marilyn Thomas, but then deserted on a couple of occasions because I was completely entranced with the chanting led by Bev Shephard. I am eager to introduce some local and interested United Church folk to her chants. (When I feel that I have lost my way, Bev will tell me which chant has become a daily companion and help.)

For a faith [community] that at some times and in some places has shunned music, we had a goodly variety. I doubt that Young Friends will soon forget the serendipitous conjunction of Arcade Fire's Winnipeg gig with CYM, and Caroline Parry exerting her maternal influence to get them passes to attend the concert. Then, Family Night revealed musical as well as humorous talents. Fund-raising with a coin-operated microphone is a stroke of genius!

I was drawn to Quakers in the first place because of their close involvement with community service, so it was a great treat on Wednesday afternoon to go to the North Point Douglas women's centre. We heard their story – told by Elaine Bishop who has been long involved with them – and provided the minor service of helping to collect litter left on the nearby

streets by a neighbourhood festival. We admired the [colourful] murals, the magnificent public oven, and the [flourishing] garden. I only hope that the proceeds of our 'simple' meal that night, plus our various contributions, allows for some of the repairs the centre needs.

I returned home to Montreal exhausted and exhilarated, bubbling with thoughts evoked by discussion of very weighty matters: 'boycott, divestment and sanctions' addressed to the occupied Palestinian territories, and the menace of synthetic biology. But I was equally buoyed up by personal interaction with so many dear Friends. Deborah Fisch, who came from Iowa and FGC, [despite] dealing with a lengthy physical rehabilitation process, exemplified for me the remarkable gift that many of us achieve only rarely, and briefly – that of touching everyone around her in a direct, personal, loving way. No wonder I heard a number of Friends expressing a desire to attend her SIGs regardless of the subject.

I resolve to work at maintaining my Quaker contacts, to seek ways of interacting with Friends more often, and to get to Prince Edward Island in 2015.

*Bertha Small, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue  
Ottawa Monthly Meeting*



# Quaker Book Service



The following titles have been added. For a complete listing of QBS books, see our 2014-2015 Book Service Catalogue available on the CYM website, [www.quaker.ca/qbs](http://www.quaker.ca/qbs). Enquiries to: [quakerbookservice@gmail.com](mailto:quakerbookservice@gmail.com).

*Celebrating the Quaker Way* by Ben Pink Dandelion. Quaker Books, London. Second ed. 2010.

This essay was written for Quakers rather than about them. The author describes how being a Quaker affects his life; it celebrates the nature of silent worship, vocal ministry, discernment and prompting to action in community. (31 pp. \$6.25).

*God and decision-making: a Quaker approach* by Jane Mace. Quaker Books, London. 2012.

This research-based study explains the processes and disciplines used by Quakers in their group decision-making, which is based on a commitment to divine guidance. Helpful examples are offered from clerking and minute-writing witnessed by the author. (146 pp. \$20.00).

*Journey into Life: Inheriting the Story of Early Friends* by Gerald Hewitson. Quaker Books, London. 2013.

The Swarthmore Lecturer shows that the stories and writings of early Friends can inspire Friends today to experience “the searching that leads to a reorientation of our way of being based on a sense of loving purpose in our lives”. (61 pp. \$16.00).

*Living the Quaker Way* by Ben Pink Dandelion. Quaker Books, London. 2012.

This companion book to the earlier *Celebrating the Quaker Way* is an exploration of why and how Quakers live their faith, showing that the inward nature of Quaker spirituality informs the way Quakers worship, conduct business and act in this troubled world. (31 pp. \$7.50).

*A Quaker Approach to Research: Collaborative Practice and Communal Discernment* by Gray Cox et al. Quaker Institute for the Future Pamphlet 7. 2014. This pamphlet describes experiences of applying Quaker practices of group decision-making and action to research in contexts such as public policy and academic study. (83 pp. \$10.00).

*Spiritual reviews: Reviewing the Spiritual Life of the Meeting and its Expression in Caring*. Vol.3 of the Eldership and Oversight handbook series. Quaker Books, London. 2012. This new text is a resource and practical guide for Friends intending to “take stock” of their own Meeting. (33 pp. \$10.00).

*Visioning New Fire: Working for Quaker Renewal*. The Kindlers, Booklet 9. 2013.

Near the end of their plan of work for renewal of Quaker worship and witness in Britain, the Kindlers organized a large, evaluative gathering. This booklet reviews that Meeting’s thought-provoking talks, workshops and threshing sessions. Includes a CD of original songs reflecting the lifeblood of Quaker worship. (72 pp. \$7.50).

**Please Note:** Since the Quaker Book Service catalogue is now on-line a printed copy will no longer be included in an issue of *The Canadian Friend*. If you would like to have a printed catalogue, please send your request by e-mail to [quakerbookservice@gmail.com](mailto:quakerbookservice@gmail.com) or by post to Quaker Book Service, Box 4652 Station E, Ottawa ON K1S 5H8. A number of copies of the catalogue will be sent as usual to Meetings and Worship groups for general use.

## Ordering Instructions:

Mail orders, enclosing payment by cheque or money order, should be sent to Quaker Book Service, Box 4652, Station E, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5H8. **QBS does not have a telephone.**

Please add the following mailing costs:	
Value of an order	Postage Add-on
Up to \$9.95	\$2.50
\$10 - \$19.95	\$7.50
\$20 - \$34.95	\$10.00
\$35.00 - \$59.95	\$11.50
Over \$60	\$13.00

# Sacred Universe

Peggy Hope-Simpson

As a young woman, I lived in the Nurse's Residence at the old Montreal General Hospital in the east end of Montreal. There was no time for church. It was years later in 1978 when I lived in Halifax that I found the Quakers. I had met Muriel Duckworth in 1960 through our mutual work of founding the Voice of Women. The peace movement consumed my life, and that remained so for the next thirty years. It was the Peace Testimony that drew me into Quakers. I needed to find the strength to face the terrors and fears of that awful time in our lives.

My life, as I continue into my ninety-third year, is in so many ways rich and meaningful. I can still think and mostly remember. When old, because one spends a lot of time being solitary, one's mind often fills with the most dire problems and takes them to bed. This is not good for sleep, and must be resisted. All my life I have been wrestling with dire problems, most of them insoluble in the short frame of a lifetime. First, it was the Peace Movement and the problem of war. Now the environmental crisis has crowded out peace in my thoughts, though I know they are twin concerns.

It was in the pages of *The Catholic Worker* where I first read about Thomas Berry's *The Sacred Universe*. Father Berry, a Jesuit and profound scholar, introduced to me the thrilling story of cosmology, and cleared my mind of confused and contradictory ideas of theology, spirituality, and religion.

Berry passionately presents the "real story of Creation" as grounded in evolution. His vivid description of the geological and astronomical origins of the universe, and Earth's special place in the universe, are quite thrilling. Berry, the Jesuit, has no qualms about putting Christian theology, or at least the Bible on the shelf (for at least twenty years) saying that we have now entered the period of religious belief grounded in cosmology.

He writes that no traditional belief system is adequate in addressing the perils and dangers we face today, saying: "We are not simply engaged in academic enquiry. We are involved in the future of the planet in its geological and biological survival and functioning, as well as the future of our human and spiritual well-being". According to Father Berry, due to the evolution of our human consciousness we have the sense of actually participating in the creation process. Every page in this inspiring book bears quoting. Suffice it to say that everyone should read *The Sacred Universe*.

A very practical lesson I took from this book is a profound respect for science, and also for the

environmental movement. I have long been saying that this movement is our best hope, and have long felt that many environmentalists have a strong spiritual basis for the actions they take, though they are very reluctant to express such thoughts or feelings. Recently however, young members of the Halifax Ecology Action Centre showed much appreciation for my statement that environmentalists today have a strong spiritual connection to the Earth, even though it is largely unexpressed. Could that be because some think that stating a connection to Spirit would be unscientific and thus lack credibility?

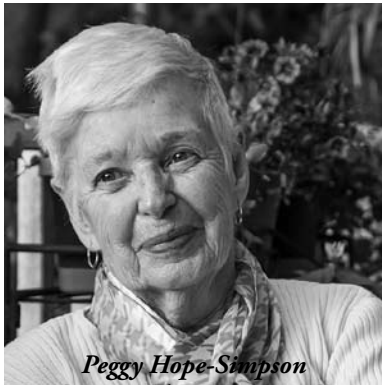
Yet, in the last issue of their quarterly there was a full page titled *Letters to Mother Earth* from quite young writers with these messages: "Dear Mother Earth, I want to tell you how much I love you. Dear Mother Earth, you are so beautiful and I want to help you stay beautiful. Dear Mother Earth, sorry for that flush, and for those styrofoam cups I bought today. I love you." I was so happy with these expressions of love for the Earth. Unless we passionately love the Earth, and are able to express that love, however will we muster the strength and stamina to carry out the enormous task before us?

Thomas Berry urges us to develop our Human/Earth relationship, because our very survival depends on that relationship. He notes that our Human/Human relationships have greatly improved with the recognition of the universal standards of Human Rights, but that our Human/Earth bonds are woefully lacking. Except for modern science that has much to say about the Earth and its wondrous manifestations, it is sadly true that other institutions such as education, law, and traditional religions, make few connections to our relationship and dependence on Earth, our Mother.

Without Mother Earth how can we humans continue to be? There is much to ponder, before closing eyes for sleep. Before sleeping, or during the night I love to look out the window at a bright moon and fast moving clouds, and stars. Is it any wonder that we still think of Heaven with some longing? We are after all, stardust. I remember a story of a Newfoundland fisherman being carried out for the last time on a stretcher from his home, who looked up at the star studded sky and said, "I's on my way back to those stars up there". Such profound words.

Peggy Hope-Simpson, Annapolis Valley M. Meeting

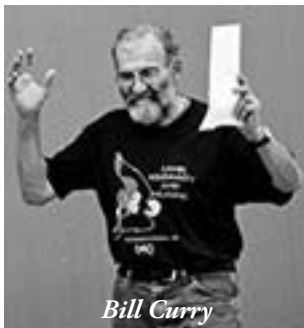
[Photo on page 20]



*Peggy Hope-Simpson*  
[See article on page 19]



*Mark Stanley*



*Bill Curry*



*June Etta Chenard*

## *Friends expressing*



*Peter Steveson  
David  
Summerhays*



*Caroline B. Parry*

## *Joy*



*Jo Vellacott*



## *Together*



*Bruce Dienes, Ruth Walmsley,  
Tim Bartoo*

*Below: Stephanie Deakin, Chris  
Hitchcock, Brent Bill*



*Shaun Bartoo*



# Opinion on Rituals *David Summerhays*

"I'm getting sick of starting every Meeting with silence", someone said, half-kidding but half-serious, during Canadian Yearly Meeting. To a certain degree starting every Meeting with a few minutes of silence had become an "empty ritual" to this Friend – and to me too. This raised what might seem like a nit-picky question, but I actually think is a very important question: "what is the role of tradition in Quaker life?"

First, let's say that no tradition or gesture is entirely full or empty. Ritual will always be some mixture of empty and meaningful. If a ritual were completely full, it would be Divine in-and-of itself. The element of emptiness allows it to point beyond itself. No ritual could become completely empty because everything is part of ongoing creation. But, some rituals in the history of religion lost enough meaning that they fell into disuse or could only be maintained through oppression, such as compulsory church attendance. This rarely happens overnight. Often, there is a warning stage – a time when, if we look in our hearts, we see that this ritual doesn't speak to us as it once did. I believe that is precisely the warning – perhaps a very early warning – this Friend was sounding. In any case, that's how I felt.

Quakers began as a protest against the empty rituals of the Church of England. When George Fox walked lightly on the earth, these empty rituals were based on Biblical authority and enforced through punishment. The Quakers rejected this in the name of a radical inwardness, in principle always subjecting tradition to the test of leadings. Instead of empty ritual, symbol, and authority, Quaker practice in principle calls us to discern how Spirit leads us to live. This principle gives no positive valuation to tradition. Instead, we are called to listen to the call of Spirit. Spirit might call us to put a silence before our Meetings a thousand times in a row. But if the Spirit does not lead us this way the 1001st time, the Quaker principle calls on us to start the business Meeting without a silence. The Quaker principle defends against empty rituals.

I talk about "principle" because any rudimentary analysis of Quaker life shows that, in practice, Quakers instituted *de facto* rituals and traditions — such as putting a silence before Meetings, or having Meetings that always last one hour. These traditions and rituals aren't tested by Spirit every time nor discerned in unity, nor would that be wise. Most of the time we like

our rituals, minimal though they may be. Successful traditions allow us to focus our time and energy elsewhere. Of course, throughout history, traditional Quaker rituals have become empty for some, leading to criticism, reinvigoration, or splits, but part of the greatness and importance of Quakers is our flexibility – a unique and remarkable flexibility that allows our rituals and symbols, "simple" though they may be, to evolve with us. Inspired by Jesus' teaching, we try to follow not tradition, but the law of love.

Ritual becomes tradition in every religion, no matter how anti-traditional. Again and again, a tradition – of ritual or symbol – becomes empty to us. We go through the motions perhaps to avoid conflict within our community or out of inattention. Yet as Quakers we are called to speak out, though this doesn't necessarily mean abolishing the ritual.

The real danger with Quaker practise isn't empty rituals: it's lack of content. We have minimalistic symbols, ritual, and art; our theology is implied but rarely explicit. We are constantly in danger of becoming abstract and meaningless. We risk abandoning ourselves and each other to the same inner contradictions that first called us to become seekers. Saying "listen to Spirit" isn't substance, it's a question. Most new members discovered Quakers after a long journey; when they look inside they find something. Quaker practice is meaningful because it brings its own content, but do we intend to abandon people, including our children, for whom sitting in silence is pain? We have little theology and even less art to structure that time. What if this is a reason Quaker children don't become Quakers?

Maybe that's what the empty ritual is telling us: listening for Spirit isn't enough. Maybe this Friend needed help, maybe I need help, maybe we all need help – genuine content.

Do we have the courage to express the genuine implications of our Quaker faith, even if this could cause division? Can we find creative ways to breathe art into our worship without destroying it? What if this Quaker way is slowly dying? The good news is that our Quaker traditions imply content (symbols, art, theology), and we can express it.

*David Summerhays*  
*Montreal Monthly Meeting*



### location

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

### real world skills

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

### campers : staff

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

### camp experience

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

Thanks for a wonderful summer and we look forward to seeing you in 2015.



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

# The Lesson of 'Secret Friend' *Theresa Dunn*

I was graced with attending my first community camp at NeeKauNis this summer. I took two of my grandchildren and we thoroughly enjoyed the people, the environment, the lovely model of community we experienced, and the low-tech activities that brought us together in many different ways. One of our tasks as campers was to choose a Secret Friend and show that person we were thinking of them throughout the week.

It was my first time to be at camp and to be involved in a Secret Friend process. I was quite moved by how it led me down a new path of relating, and helped me become awake to some of my habits with friends of all kinds. I think it worth writing about and sharing this good news with you.

My Secret Friends – there was one to watch over me and one I attended to – were previously unknown to me. Let me start with the person I was to care for. I looked at her and saw her physical image, her age, her dress. She was a lovely young woman who engaged my visual senses. I had an opportunity to see her interacting with others and her movement was gentle and her smile generous. She made me feel calm. I shared a meal with her and learned more about her life and her hopes. I began to think of her in my plans for the day, writing her a letter, creating a small painting with her hopes immersed in the images, and finally making a necklace that could be built upon to capture the many memories she would form in life.

As I meditated during the week I became awake to the lovely connection I was forming with this person. I was aware of how uncomplicated it was. It was absent of my normal checklist of whether this was an acceptable person to me or not. Usually those who would be my companions have to meet many expectations: age, occupation, intelligence, communication, shared values and responses that make me feel like a better person. The list is still emerging. I don't blame myself for my checklist and there have been many times I have moved beyond the role of judge and jury to just 'Love', but it is not as often as I would like. To be truthful it is hardest to release these expectations of those who would be closest to me.

The other reason this was such a lovely, loving experience, is because I was compelled to respond to her based upon who I was. Whatever I expressed came from within me with no expectation of how she might respond. There was an initial struggle over

what I could do for her that would be meaningful, but I could not use external standards. It had to be my expression of her inspiration. How freeing and personal an experience. It helped me understand why it is so deeply painful when we venture [to make] connection with another and they do/seem to judge and/or reject us. I am beginning to understand the tenderness and compassion that people deserve when they venture to make connections.

I also thoroughly enjoyed being someone's Secret Friend. This was another dynamic, another personality venturing a connection, bringing his/her self into my life to be received. This person brought out the playful -adventuring, curious me, distracting me from the manager, helper, warrior-for-change, that I tend to fall back on. I appreciated this person's creative caring during the demanding responsibilities at camp.

One thing I would add to the Secret Friend process is to tell ones truth about what makes us feel good and also what is challenging us in our connection with the Secret Friend. It is all gift. I am learning through many skilled teachers how to express every truth in a way that is not judging of another. I think the Secret Friend is a perfect process to practice this.

It's always interesting what effect stepping out of our normal routine can provide. I have recently named a challenge for myself: to be released of years of divisive dogma that defines who is worthy of love and acceptance. This experience of *Secret Friend* was a tool to help me meet this goal. It will stay with me, I hope forever, helping me to look at others differently. How can I lovingly express what they awake in me, rather than live in the negative illusion and belief that something is missing and needs fixing in them?

*Theresa Dunn*  
*Ottawa Monthly Meeting*

[Theresa is the former National Co-chair of the Canadian Peace Initiative and now Chapter Chair of the Arnprior and Area Canadian Peace Initiative Chapter.]

Query: In what is life, love or justice now calling me to act, and in what is wisdom now calling me to remain still?

## Around the Family Around the Family Around the Family



**Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC)** executive committee members and staff held a two day meeting to adapt CFSC governance and program structure. An eighteen-month-long review of trends and new opportunities led to the desire to have a smaller and more focussed programme and governance body. The meeting was held at Friends House in Toronto, June, 20 and 21, 2014. Over the next four months the new structure will be considered by the whole twenty-two member CFSC board. Front Row: Tasmin Rajotte (Quakers Fostering Justice program staff), Lesley Robertson (clerk), Lana Robinson (incoming clerk), Rob Hughes; Sarah Chandler, Don Alexander. Middle Row: Barbara Horvath (facilitator), Jane Orion Smith (general secretary), Pete Cross, and Jennifer Preston (Quaker Indigenous Rights Committee program staff), and Maggie Knight. Back Row: Trevor Chandler and Matthew Legge (Quakers Peace and Sustainable Communities committee staff).

**Pelham Executive Meeting:** A Memorial Meeting was held on November 24, 2012 (date correct, Ed.) for our beloved member Barbara (Barb) Smith (June 23, 1938 – November 18, 2012). Barb's deep roots in Quaker faith, going back generations, made her of inestimable value to members and attenders. Many people turned to her for counsel in times of trouble, knowing that she could be relied on for wisdom, common sense, and an unconditional acceptance of them just as they were. When she was diagnosed with cancer she accepted her illness as a fact to live with. She refused to subscribe to the common notion that cancer was something to "battle" and thus her obituary, which she wrote in part, speaks of her as having "lived gracefully with cancer".

## Education & Outreach

**E&O** is planning a conference for April 2015: *Youth and Militarization*. The planning committee's hope is to publish an issue of the *Sporadic* as a lead-up to, and promotion of the conference. If you wish to apply for funding to attend CYM or other Quaker gatherings, or workshops, please contact Kerry Mac Adam, CYM Office Administrator, at [cym-office@quaker.ca](mailto:cym-office@quaker.ca). Need travel funds? Contact your Monthly Meeting. Additional travel support available from Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting and the Education and Outreach Committee (clerk: Marilyn Manzer, [manzer@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:manzer@ns.sympatico.ca)).

The Education & Outreach Committee (E&O) offers grants and loans, or supports referrals to other funds, for members and attenders of Canadian Yearly Meeting who wish to pursue educational opportunities. Examples include attendance at the Friends General Conference Gathering, Pendle Hill, and various Quaker-related conferences. In some cases the Pendle Hill scholarship has provided the space and supportive nurture for writing or artistic projects. Details on the CYM web page, or phone or write the E&O Grants & Loans Officer, Brent Bowyer, RR2, Wingham, Ontario, N0G 2W0. (Phone 519-357-1883).



## Around the Family Around the Family Around the Family

**Kitchener Area Monthly Meeting:** Over the spring and summer we experienced growth in attendance. Many of the newcomers are young adults. We have two new members. Peter Kevan became a Quaker in June, and in July, Asher Segel-Brown's membership was transferred from Ottawa Monthly Meeting. Sheldon Rahn, who was clerk in the early 70s, died in March at the age of 95. Sheldon made major contributions in the field of social work in the United States and at Wilfred Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario. A Memorial service was held on Saturday April 15, 2014 in New Hamburg, Ontario.

**The Sporadical:** Shaun Bartoo and Thea Walmsley have been named the new editors.

**Yarmouth Monthly Meeting:** The annual 100 Mile Dinner at the Meeting House serves over 200 people. This year's dinner was on Wednesday, Sept. 17. This is a fundraiser for Mary Edgar's work in Uganda each winter. She arranges workshops for the Alternatives to Violence Project, and supports organic gardening and crafts for women who support their families. We continue to grow herbs for *Quaker Calm Tea* to fund the purchase of medicines for Ugandan needs. On Sept. 21, the provincial heritage program *Doors Open*, brought many visitors. One of Sparta's history panels, noting that Quakers founded the community, was put by the road. This Fall we continue with the Quaker Education sessions.

**Coldstream Monthly Meeting:** Early this year, Friends extended their interest in Ugandan work by donating to African Great Lakes Initiative trauma-healing workshops. One member of our Meeting attended. We welcomed visitors from Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) and Christian Peacemaker Teams, who informed us about the situation on the West Bank and the anti-fracking movement in New Brunswick, respectively. We hosted the raspberry-Full Moon ceremony on behalf of Dan and Mary Lou Smoke on the grounds of our historic Meeting House. They are also supported by CFSC. In May, the *After Four* jazz group treated a large audience to a rousing concert in our Meeting House, which proved a very successful fundraiser for the Meeting's project in Bududa, Uganda.

**Yonge Street and Pelham Half Yearly Meetings** were together on the weekend of June 7-8, 2014 at the Quaker Camp NeeKauNis on Georgian Bay. The two regional Meeting groups have met concurrently at the camp for the past three years. The Meeting brings together Quaker Monthly Meetings and worship groups from south-central and south-western Ontario.



## Guest Writer: *Brent Bill*

One of the joys of my position with Friends General Conference is getting to travel and meet Friends from across North America. One of the highlights of that travel was the time I spent at Canadian Yearly Meeting in Winnipeg this summer. From the time I arrived on Saturday afternoon until I departed the next Saturday morning, I took great pleasure in the opportunity to be with Canadian Quakers.

### **“My heart was made glad by my sojourn among Canadian Friends.”**

The first thing that struck me was the kind welcome I received. Everyone was friendly to me (which means a lot to an introvert) and made certain that I was introduced to Friends. I especially enjoyed visiting with folks over meals and in between various sessions. I feel blessed to have made new friends and deepened my friendships with others I had known awhile.

The second thing that I noticed was how much, compared to some other Quaker Yearly Meetings and events I've attended over my long-legged Quaker life, this felt like a family gathering. There seemed to me to be a great deal of care taken with each other and genuine affection between people. I observed this in everything from how people spoke in Meeting for Worship with a concern for business to hallway conversations and jigsaw puzzle building, to walks across campus, and more.

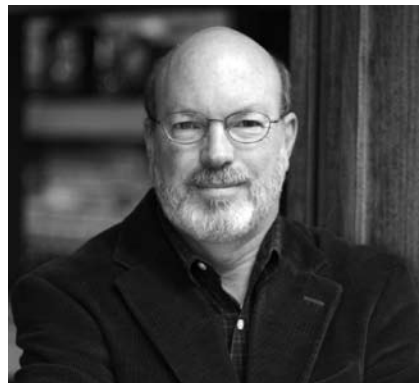
I was impressed, as well, with the wide number of Special Interest Groups and Special Action Groups, and other learning opportunities. The range of topics addressed and the quality of the presentations was remarkable. I'm taking a number of topic ideas back to my home Yearly Meeting for consideration. Mark Burch's Quaker Study presentations on simplicity and cumber were winsome, inspiring, well-grounded, and challenging. I found them really helpful as I considered what it means for me to live simply in this acquisition age.

While the word “enjoy” may not come to many people's minds as regarding Meeting for Worship for business, it is the word that best describes my experience in those sessions. It was a joy to see how care-full the clerks were. It was a joy to see how Friends spoke from deep places of the soul – even when they did not agree with one another on particulars. It was a joy to see important issues taken up as spiritual endeavors and not just as business that had to be taken care of.

I had fun, too. I did help with a few pieces on a jigsaw. I heard some great jokes. Family Night was just delightful – so much talent among Canadian Quakers – from the sublime to the not-so-sublime. I hadn't laughed that much with Friends in a long time.

I don't want to leave the impression that my entire experiences was marvelous. To fly out of the heat and humidity of Indiana to a place that was even hotter and more humid was not one of the highlights of my summer. And, I had never quite seen mosquitoes that big. The first time they buzzed me I thought I

had wandered onto a runway at James Armstrong Richardson International Airport.



Still, as I winged my way back to Indiana, I thought of the words of early Friend Edward Burrough:

“While waiting upon the Lord in silence, as often we did for many hours together, with our minds and hearts toward him...we received often the pouring down of the spirit upon us, and our hearts were made glad.”

My heart was made glad by my sojourn among Canadian Friends. It remains glad as I remember my time with you.

*Brent Bill*

*West Newton Friends Meeting (Western YM)  
Friends General Conference, New Meetings Project*

Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting (Fern Street), hosted ten members of Friends General Conference' Development Committee, weekend of September 18 - 21. We enjoyed their presence with us and benefited from their leadership in discussions on Discernment and the Gathered Meeting.

## Last Words:

We believe that genuine change comes through attraction to viable options. But, who pioneers and demonstrates good examples, and how are these communicated? At CYM, some permaculture lessons were shared by creating a spiral herb garden, a contribution to the small farm on Mennonite University land. Some Friends participated in this hands-on SIG. A brief glimpse of the team at work was a gift to me; an epiphany beyond the veil of questions about transforming militarism toward an ecologically just peace.

**Sharing good work builds relationships. Growing good food is a vital promise for a healthy outcome.**

Our dire prognosis is uncertain but not unanswerable. Can we change? Are we able to do what we must?

*Bill Curry, Prairie Monthly Meeting*

## Epiphany near Assiniboine Park

Coming from garden hands in the dirt  
through words of holocaust past  
present emergent, crossing Grant  
by the police station - in one moment

Experiencing the spiral herb garden  
angel hands in the ground  
holy light veil parting vision  
viable voice attracting by doing

Being true garden soil site  
(soul sight) viewing  
renewing (being  
True).  
Prognosing

Like the guy who offers  
to help with the dishes  
just as you're shelving  
the last cup and cutlery  
I'm coming late with  
my offer of service.

Skimming the surface  
stillness of light  
reflecting music  
garden veil opening

Like hovercraft wings  
inward sight bright  
epiphany seeing  
whole beyond hoping

We are at work  
becoming, you, being  
me being we  
the way opening

*Bill Curry, Prairie Monthly Meeting*

## The Labyrinth

I enter the labyrinth unafraid, wondering only how long it will take to walk between the white-string paths. I fear becoming dizzy so I take it slowly, looking sometimes at the grass, sometimes at the high blue sky and the cotton-wool clouds. The Manitoba sun is warm, the air fresh. I look down at the sun-baked ground to keep within the [narrow] path I must go.

I could turn back now, or tread over the string, but feel compelled to go forward. The path winds back on itself and I am beginning to feel a little afraid. This is also like life, with problems that twist back even while going forward – past and future begin to lose their usual significance as being on a continuum. Only my steps, each present step, moves inexorably forward. I have to go on, that is the only way out now. But how long will the way be?

I have lost control – the paths of the maze determine how I will go and may lead me seemingly forward, then unexpectedly [force me to double back]. So it is with our labyrinth [of] worries and fears.

Now, at last, a few steps lead to the centre! Yet the centre is not as I had hoped, the end, it is only a resting place. There is no solution, no peace here; no sense of having solved things. The path goes on, winding its convoluted way, and I question, "Is this the way out or merely a continuation of the journey? Was there a way in and a way out, or is it one quest, one 'road' all along?"

I begin to feel hope. Soon it will be over and I can leave the constraining paths. The last steps and I am free! But what does this freedom mean? The end is, after all, the beginning, and I have had that turmoil and fear, that hope and [then] hope dashed; that joy at the end, only to find myself at the beginning again.

*Liz Earley*

*Halifax Monthly Meeting*

# *The Canadian Friend*

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Editorial Support: Gerald Harris, Erika Koenig-Sheridan, Catherine Novak, Claire Weintraub

## Themes & Deadlines for Submissions

Winter 2014

Looking Back

Spring 2015

Gratitude



January 1

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