

September 1996

FRIENDS JOURNAL

Quaker
Thought
and
Life
Today



Report from Boligee

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Among Friends

Reflections

The view in my car mirror made me smile. It was quite a sight. We were safely through U.S. customs at Niagara Falls, heading south toward home after the Friends General Conference Gathering at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. I looked again, shook my head, and said to Gulen, my front seat passenger, "It's going to be a quiet trip. From the looks, I don't think either one got any sleep last night. They were having too good a time!" Gulen turned to look back, then nodded and smiled. Our back seat passengers, my two teenage sons, were twisted like pretzels around pillows and baggage. We weren't likely to see any life until we made the first stop for food.

I caught glimpses of them throughout the week-long Gathering. Occasionally I spotted one or the other in one of the dining halls, a tray loaded with food or seated with a group of friends. Once, my wife and I found a note on our door: "Hi, Mom and Dad—I came by but didn't find you. I need a permission slip so I can go to the sleep-over tonight. Sim." Or perhaps we spied a blur of motion as Sim and two friends glided past on skateboards, disappearing from view before we could say, "Hey, Sim, wait a minute!"

A couple of times Andrew, part of the high school program for the first time, living away from his parents in a dorm with his peers, sought us out on campus for a check-in. One afternoon, towel and swimsuit rolled under his arm, he spotted me and gave a big wave. We swapped news for a few minutes. He wanted to know how his parents were doing, were we having a good time, did we know that our friends Brian and Florence had arrived, had we seen Sim? And how's his high school program? "Awesome, Dad, I'll tell you all about it later," and after a hug, he was off to his afternoon support group before dinner.

Now, three weeks after the FGC Gathering, I do a quick interview with him. What are his impressions of the week? How does it stack up with the other nine or ten Gatherings he's attended over his 15 years? What makes him want to go back?

"FGC is so fun. It's really hard to explain," he said. "I try to tell people back home about it, but it's hard to explain." He says he'd love to have some of his friends who are not Quakers, who have never met another Quaker besides himself, come to a Gathering. "They'd love it too."

Now I'm curious. What makes it different than the fun he has back home—like going to the batting cages or something. "The difference is that at the batting cages if you mess up, your friends will laugh at you and make you feel stupid. At FGC your friends laugh with you. There are no put-downs. At support groups every day we talk together about our 'roses' and 'thorns'—it's a great chance to give each other support." Some of his friends, he said, felt free to talk about things that hurt, like separation and divorce or the death of a parent. People would listen and help out.

Something else Andrew liked a lot was that the high school kids were given choices of what they wanted to do. "They considered us to be responsible, and we really were," he said. "People didn't take advantage of the freedom. That's really different back home. You know," he reflected, "I like being a Quaker—the quiet, the nonviolence, letting people know that I'm different." And he said it again: "Yes, I had a lot of fun this year."

Andrew's father did too. Look for a full report on the FGC Gathering in our October issue. And for those who missed the FRIENDS JOURNAL Cadbury Event, look for the text of Jan Arriens's moving presentation on the death penalty in our December issue.

Vinton Deming

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The Underground Railroad Game
Amazing Grace
By Love Serve One Another

FRIENDS JOURNAL

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**Cover: Volunteers
organized by
Washington Quaker
Workcamps in Boligee,
Alabama, June 1996**

**Right: Volunteers
share fellowship and
music with church
members.**



Photos © 1996 by Martha Tabor

An appeal

In early June, our small meeting in Athens, Ohio, experienced its first death. Although we have had several frank and searching discussions in our meeting to prepare us for the eventuality, this particular death presented us with unanticipated problems.

Ebby Luvaga, a lifelong Friend from Kenya, has been attending our meeting. She announced this spring with great joy that her parents were arriving to be present at her graduation. After eight long years she was receiving her Ph.D. on June 7. Her parents, Esther and Isaac Luvaga, would visit briefly in our area, then go on to attend Lake Erie Yearly Meeting and meetings in Richmond and Indianapolis, Ind.

We were all looking forward to meeting the Luvagas. On Tuesday night, June 4, Isaac suffered a massive heart attack and died despite efforts of the doctors and staff in our local hospital emergency room to revive him. With a great deal of help from our members and attenders, Ebby's African and U.S. friends, and university staff, we were able to provide Ebby and her mother with support over the next few days. That week a memorial service was held at the funeral home under the care of the meeting with more than 200 in attendance. It was a powerful, covered meeting, and especially appreciated were hymns sung in English, KiSwahili, and Maragoli. It reminded me of the experiences we had in worship with Friends at the world gathering in Chavakali, Kenya, in 1991.

What we need help with now are the expenses involved in Isaac Luvaga's death and removal back to Kenya. Currently Ebby has about \$6,500 in expenses directly related to medical, funeral, and transport of body expenses—plus an equal amount in airfare and other travel-related costs. We would like to appeal to the wider Religious Society of Friends for help. Friends who feel led to contribute may send checks made out to "Athens Friends Meeting" (designated for the Isaac Luvaga Fund), and mailed to Meg Hummon, Treas., Athens Friends Meeting, 60 Fairview, Athens, OH 45701.

Marjorie E. Nelson
Athens, Ohio

A seamless web

Julie Zimmerman's "Voices from Death Row" (*FJ* June) was a very powerful pleading. The line "... is my life worth so little, they cannot see my tears. ..." wrenches every Quaker heart—and many hearts that are not Quaker. Were it presented by those who see life as a seamless web, a precious gift from God, it might even wrench our minds.

But most Friends, particularly FRIENDS JOURNAL Friends, do not respect life as a seamless web. Many Friends feel quite compassionate about assisting the death of unborn lives at any stage or condition to spare them the horrors of a life in (possibly) pain, poverty, and rejection. Many Friends feel quite compassionate promoting the "assisted" death of the elderly to spare them pain, poverty, and rejection. One might expect such compassionate Friends to encourage and assist the death of those who will otherwise experience the pain, poverty, abuse, and hopelessness of a life of unending incarceration.

No, I am not arguing for the death penalty, just that the "final solution" should not be the preferred solution for any of our problems.

Dorothy T. Samuel
St. Cloud, Minn.

The June issue is good. I'm glad to hear us talking about the death penalty. I hope it will energize us all to write, demonstrate, and pray.

Marjorie F. Scott
Cockeysville, Md.

Following conscience

FJ readers might be interested in the following, which I found in Samuel Eliot Morison's *The Oxford History of the American People*: Somewhere around 1650, when Peter Stuyvesant took over the administration of New Netherlands, 30 English inhabitants of Flushing protested against his decree that "anyone who took in a Quaker for the night would be fined 50 florins." The English settlers claimed they were "commanded by the Bible to do good to all men and they wished not to offend any of Christ's children. They would, therefore, continue to shelter Quakers 'as God shall persuade our consciences.'"

Patricia Vorenberg
Lexington, Mass.

The letter killeth

I got a lot out of Georgia Fuller's article on "Friends and the Bible" (*FJ* May). Though I can't count myself a real Bible student, I continue to be astonished and educated by the wisdom found in its pages.

Yet I'm bothered by Fuller's last line and its implications: "How do I know? The Bible tells me so." I carry forward this line from a Sunday school (not First-day school) song, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." Not good enough for an adult!

Without doubting that the Bible has been a guidebook for civilizations and

generations—maybe its main support—I doubt if Friends are much helped by the concept of the Bible as an answer book for all that happens around us. I came to a fuller realization of this at a weekend workshop on the Gospel of Thomas (apocryphal) I attended recently at Pendle Hill.

It gave me a sense of how the canon was formed, which I never had before. Conjecture, compromise, political and ecclesiastical maneuvering, and even outright invention have surrounded the formation and writing of the Gospels ever since the crucifixion.

Thus what it says and what we say may not always be in direct line. Yes, study the Bible and exhaust its treasures if you can. Use it as a yardstick for spiritual life. But always be careful of falling into the trap of literalism. The letter indeed killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

James S. Best
Tucson, Ariz.

God's direct presence

In recent years there has been an increase in Friends talking and writing about experiences of the direct presence of God. This has been reflected in the pages of FRIENDS JOURNAL (Jean Roberts, "Risking All for Love," April 1995; Carol Roth, "Giving Witness to the Light," Sept. 1995; Marcelle Martin, "The Inward Teacher Among Us Today," April 1996, among others).

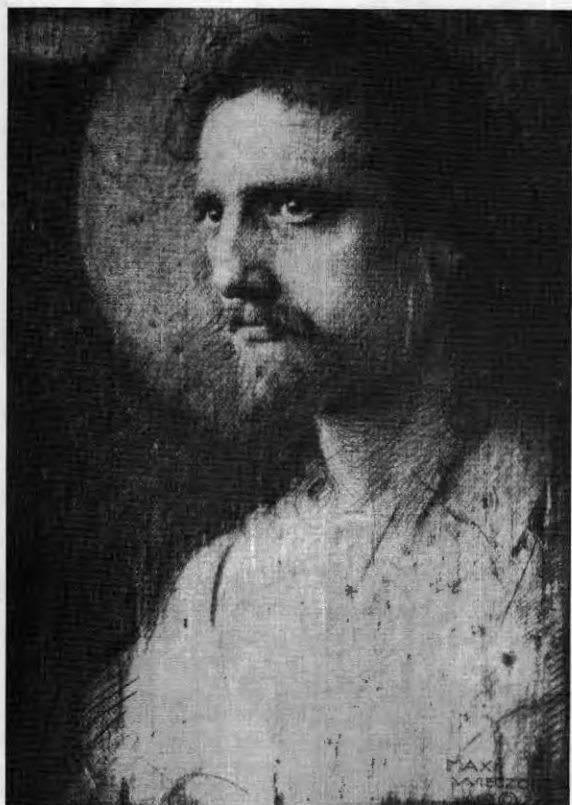
In response to this growing interest among Friends in mystical experience, there will be two opportunities this fall for those writers and others to gather and reflect on their experiences. Pendle Hill will sponsor a gathering of "Mystics Among Friends Today" October 25–27, and Quaker Center in Ben Lomond, Calif., will have a weekend on "Mysticism Among Friends" November 15–17.

These weekends, which are planned in harmony with one another, will be opportunities for Friends to ground and deepen our experience. For information, Friends can contact Pendle Hill at (610) 566-4507 or (800) 742-3150, and Quaker Center at (408) 336-8333.

Patricia McBee
Philadelphia, Pa.

Live the message

John Pitts Corry's loneliness at not being able to share his experience of Jesus ("Jesus Among Friends," *FJ* May) may be assuaged by knowing that many, many others have had such pivotal experiences, some simultaneously by more than one person. The increasing number of these that are now being talked and written about (e.g.,



Max Wiczorek/Free Library of Philadelphia

Sparrow, *I Am With You Always: True Stories of Encounters with Jesus*, Bantam, 1995) suggests the tantalizing possibility that people have been sustained by such events for perhaps as long as there have been people. Certainly there are accounts in Friends literature of such happenings. The comparative silence about such matters may be, as Corry says, because they are too sacred to share indiscriminately. For one who may not have had the experience, nothing can prove them. This is true whether it is an experience of a divine being, a temporary taste of what is often termed the afterlife, the experience of Light as much more than just a metaphor, a spontaneous healing, or a "miracle" that appears to transcend known laws. However, for those who have had the experience it is self-validating. Nothing can shake the consequent wonder, peace, and joy. This is peculiarly appropriate for such a group as Quakers, who expectantly seek the inner, personal experience of the Light.

It is wonderful to share with someone who has had a similar experience. However, if one talks about it to one who has not, the experience is neither reproduced for the other nor is the listener's mind changed. Listeners seem to have one of several responses—silence, change the subject, express outright doubt, argue their own opposing view, or wistfully wish they could have the same experience. The last is next to impossible, since the revealings do not seem to occur as a direct result of one's own willing, but at some divine conjunction. Perhaps there are as yet unknown rules

about such things. Until these are discovered, one may be sustained by the measure of faith each has each day (cf. Edgerton, *FJ* March, and Forum, "Thinking about life," *FJ* June). As Jesus is reported to have told Thomas, there is a special blessing for those who have not seen and yet have believed.

It seems that the point is not to talk about the experience but to *live* its message in one's daily life. Perhaps this is why they are given. So, for Corry, my own experience suggests not to talk about any of these events (unless there is a leading) but rather to know the inner joy of the experience and *be* the message it has for you. Each of us is unique, and there is a cosmic law each seeker will find in his or her—and God's—own way.

James Baker
Lombard, Ill.

Splendid audacity

Patrick Nugent, in his article "On Speaking in Meeting for Worship" (*FJ* May), lays down this dictum as the first requirement for ministry: "Be open to divine action and divine communication within yourself. If you don't believe this is possible, then either you'll say nothing or what you do say will be outside the spirit and the Spirit of meeting. To my mind, this is the one Quaker indispensable."

It is apparent that Friend Nugent's *sine qua non* for valid ministry would have the effect of silencing most of the universalists among us. One wonders about the soundness of a dictum that might stifle rich ministry. And can there be any doubt that there have been occasions when some of us were self-deluded when we spoke out of the conviction that we were moved by the Spirit?

One of the strengths of Quakerism is its avoidance of creedal formulas. Those of us whose theologies were molded by more conventional religious experiences may find that we still yearn for the comfort of prescriptions. But isn't there a splendid audacity in our untrammelled quest for the Light?

Hal Hogstom
Holland, Pa.

Patrick J. Nugent's article is fine. It assumes, however, that attenders and Friends who "minister" are accountable for their own behavior. What is to be done about the emotionally disturbed, the extremely egotistical, or the out-of-control

angry ones who yell weird words, read aloud their crazy "poetry," or threaten the end of the world on individuals in the meeting? Out of compassion, some ministry committees are reluctant to speak to such friends, and meetings have one loud outburst after another, Sunday after Sunday after Sunday.

Mary Lou Coppock
Phoenix, Ariz.

An inappropriate song

Anti-Semitism seems far from our meetinghouses. However, it can take many forms. It need not appear as pogroms or the desecration of synagogues. It has quietly achieved a very firm and comfortable presence among us. Now this presence is about to become "official": to receive an imprimatur, so to speak.

The proposed Quaker hymnal/songbook contains the anti-Semitic song "The Lord of the Dance." The third verse of the song states that the dancer (obviously Jesus) was slain by the holy people (Jews) for violation of the Sabbath. Despite hints to the contrary in the Gospels (e.g., John 5:16), Jesus was not slain by the Jews for violation of the Sabbath. Neither was he slain by the Jews for any other reason. Jesus was crucified by the Romans because he and his little band of followers were seen as disturbers of the peace and a threat to Roman sovereignty.

Elaine Pagels, in *The Origin of Satan*, describes how Christian antipathy toward the Jews led the Gospel writers to demonize them (John 8:44) and then shift responsibility for the death of Jesus from the Romans to the Jews. The origin of the idea that the Jews were responsible for the death of Jesus was an act of Christian enmity and hatred.

Quakers would do well not to further the ancient lie that the Jews killed Jesus. "Christ killer, Christ killer!" was the rallying cry that echoed through the *shtetlach* of eastern Europe when Christians went on rampages of rape, murder, and pillage. Now, thanks to the new hymnal, we are invited to sing "Christ killer" in our meetinghouses.

It is a sacrilege that "The Lord of the Dance" has been included in *Songs of the Spirit* and other Quaker song books. It will be a continuing disgrace and a sin for the Religious Society of Friends to continue to disseminate this song.

Joseph W. Letson
Yellow Springs, Ohio

The verse in question says "I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame; but the holy people said it was a shame. They whipped and they stripped me and they hung me on high, and they left me there on a cross to die." *The Friends General*

Conference Hymnal Oversight Committee engaged in discussions with Sydney Carter about his song. While he did not want to change the words, a footnote states, "They refers to the authorities responsible for the crucifixion, mainly the Romans." A historical note further clarifies "the ambiguous 'they'" and notes the different parties involved: the Pharisees, the Romans, the Sanhedrin, and the Sadducees. —Eds.

A marvelous document

Since I became reconnected with Friends here on the North Shore of Lake Superior, Britain Yearly Meeting's new *Faith and Practice* has been a constant companion. Our small worship group has studied the *Advices and Queries*, which are available separately, and I have been enriched by the breadth and depth of the writing in this marvelous document. I trust Friends and attenders in North America and throughout the world will avail themselves of this book.

Serge Tittley
Thunder Bay, Ont.

Shedding new light

Sometimes a modest change in wording can help to shed light on an old idea. During worship I was reflecting on what it meant to attend meeting, when I suddenly thought of the French for that term, which is *assister a la reunion* ("to assist at the reunion"). It was immediately clear to me that meeting is a reunion, a renewed meeting with, and recognition of, the Divine Presence. I believe we are never separate from God, but that we introduce into our everyday lives the idea of that separation for the convenience of the laws of common sense. Then we convince ourselves of the reality of our own invention! Meeting is actually a reunion, a joyful recognition. In what way do we assist at that reunion? We do so in the worship process itself, by becoming open to spiritual experience, by waiting for that experience to occur, and by recognizing it joyfully when it does. In *The Double Search*, Rufus Jones noted that our seeking of God is paralleled by God seeking us. Our part of the search is absolutely essential for the meeting to occur. Our free will allows us to prevent spiritual experience, but also allows us to facilitate it.

There is, however, more to this reunion than the mere joy of the encounter. We seek the experience also because in it we gain access to divine guidance, divine intervention, and divine assistance. That

divine assistance provides the infusion of spiritual energy that permits, even compels, us to follow that guidance as we return to our everyday focus of the world of common sense. In responding to divine guidance, we are assisting in the actualization of the divine will. Thus, meeting is the basis for a kind of mutual assistance pact that includes not only the community of worshipers, but also the one we worship. To the extent that we are true to this model, we have a real Friends body, whether it be a small worship group or the entire Corporation of the American Friends Service Committee. We can be true to it, for the joy of the reunion impels us to be faithful to our Friend with whom we have been reunited.

Donald S. Gann
Lutherville, Md.

A request

I am collecting logos, symbols, illustrations, drawings, and photographs that could be printed up as a resource and used for bulletins, newsletters, advertising, and general identification for Quakers. I would be pleased to have sent to me, for reissue to all, any old ones, new ones just created, or those currently in use by meetings and gatherings. I have found so very little material. "A picture is worth a thousand words."

Valeri Ruge
7 Pine Pt. Rd.
Roxbury, MA 02332



Rita Varley

A good idea. Before artwork is passed around, it's important to ask permission of both the artist and the editor of the piece from which you wish to clip it. Often there are copyright restrictions, and in any case it is a Friendly courtesy. Here's one, free of restrictions, to start your collection. —Eds.

I will trust God

My thanks for William Edgerton's fine article, "What If There Is No Immortality?" (*FJ* March). I will be asking our librarian to get me a copy of John Yungblut's *On Making a Good End*, for I want to read the entire pamphlet.

I have long reflected on what survives after death for a sense of personal identity. I raised this question with a brilliant Old Testament professor when I visited in New

Zealand. His answer was that of Yungblut's, a quotation from Job!

I do not believe in "reincarnation," but I cannot accept Yungblut's dismissing near-death experiences or after-death existence. This became very personal with events in the life of one of my friends at Louisville Seminary with a near-death experience, and now with an event in our family since my wife Elizabeth's death.

Elizabeth was in intensive care for 41 days. Beginning with the second day she was always awake and alert, smiling and talking with her eyes and lips, but no voice since she had a tracheotomy, feeding tubes, heart monitors, etc.

It was at 10 a.m. July 10 that the doctors told us the end was near, unless we wished to continue support systems for probably several weeks, which we did not wish. I stayed with her until the monitors went blank at 4:55 p.m., and then I stayed another hour and a half.

Our granddaughter, Beth Anne, had made Elizabeth and us promise to await her return in late July before making any final decisions. She was in Brazil with her boyfriend, visiting his family. Elizabeth's death was after 11 p.m. in Brazil. During Beth Anne's sleep that night, Elizabeth visited her and had a conversation with her, so real that she called home to find out "what has happened to GranGran!" Beth Anne's description of Elizabeth was fitting of her appearance after death (no tubes, etc.), and the conversation was real.

While I have not had any after-death experiences, knowing Beth Anne's pragmatic mind and spirit, her reasoning and sense of reality, I am deeply moved by this incident. So for the present I am with Job's "though God consign me to oblivion at death, yet will I trust God."

Andrew E. Newcomer Jr.
Walnut Creek, Calif.

FRIENDS JOURNAL welcomes Forum contributions. Please try to be brief so we may include as many as possible. Limit letters to 300 words, Viewpoint to 1,000 words. Addresses are omitted to maintain the authors' privacy; those wishing to correspond directly with authors may send letters to FRIENDS JOURNAL to be forwarded. Authors' names are not to be used for personal or organizational solicitation. —Eds.

Rebuilding Churches in Rural Alabama



by Kim Roberts
photos by Martha Tabor

Most of the time when I hear of an injustice I feel helpless. That was my initial reaction when I heard about the racially-motivated pattern of church arson that has been occurring in the U.S., mostly in the South. I was really angry, but I didn't think there was much I could do about it. But this time I was lucky. I heard about Washington Quaker Workcamps from a close friend, and I was able to use my anger for (literally) constructive purposes. I was given the opportunity to spend four days in Boligee, Alabama, where volunteers are rebuilding Baptist churches.

Washington Quaker Workcamps is working on two church sites: Mt. Zion and Little Zion. (Ironically, Mt. Zion is on flat land, and Little Zion, which is on a hilltop, is the larger church. Go figure.)

Kim Roberts is a Jewish freelance writer from Washington, D.C. She is the author of The Wishbone Galaxy, a book of poetry. Martha Tabor is a member of Friends Meeting of Washington (D.C.). Photos © 1996 Martha Tabor.

One Volunteer's Experience

Volunteers work alongside members of the congregations and local contractors. The efforts are led at Mt. Zion by Bobby Woolrich, who runs a contracting business, and at Little Zion by Willie Carter, who ministers to that congregation in addition to being in the building trade. Harold Confer, the Executive Director of Washington Quaker Workcamps, takes pride in pointing out that the volunteers come from varied religious backgrounds, what he called "God's people responding to God's people."

Washington Quaker Workcamps volunteers were housed in nearby Epes, Alabama, at the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, which Harold describes as "the old Black farmer's union." The Federation has been very supportive of Quaker efforts, and so have many local residents, but the Workcamps are insistent on the

rule that no one leave the center without permission or alone. When I arrived, Harold was quick to reemphasize his worry about hostility from local whites, the racists (and presumably xenophobes) he ominously referred to as "the enemy without."

Volunteers' lives are dominated by a bell, which rings at 6:30 a.m. to awaken everyone and again at 7 to summon everyone for breakfast. Volunteers then disperse for chores—we were divided into four groups whose assignments rotated between emergency (essentially a day off), dishes, food preparation, and housekeeping—until the bell rings again to gather the group for daily meeting for worship. Participants moved to do so were encouraged to speak out of the silence, but while I was there, only Harold and two other older Quaker men spoke. After meeting,

Harold would make announcements, and then the group would gather their tool belts and hard hats and head for the bus to take them to the work site. In the evening, a bell rings again for dinner and, when we had one, for an evening gathering.

Our group was very much dominated by ten high schoolers who arrived in one gregarious batch and stayed for two full weeks. Their energy and idealism were pitched very high. They are at the age where they are both children and adults. They gave our group the air of a summer camp, but they were serious too: they were, by and large, very hard workers, determined, possessing a stamina that far surpassed what I could muster.

The area where the churches are located is more rural than anyplace I've ever been. The few scattered buildings are mostly trailer homes and modest, single-floor frame houses. I was told by another volunteer that it is one of the poorest counties in the country. The landscape is low-lying flood plains, trisected by a railroad line and the Tenn-Tom Waterway (of which the Tombigbee River is a part). Downtown Epes looks all but abandoned, except for the BP gas station. The most notable building is a one-room wooden structure painted bright pink and covered by a faded red tin roof: the Nu-Image Style Shop, Clarence Bell, Proprietor. There's a clean, modern, one-room post office building, which appears to be the going-est proposition in town, and an auto repair shop that was closed. While I was investigating downtown, a train loaded with timber went past. The tracks run through the middle of town, with no gates or flashing lights separating the tracks from the road.

In between the scattered shacks and houses, flowering mimosas grow, mixed in with conifers. Long stretches of flat, open landscape extend in all directions, and buildings are few. Most residents of Epes and Boligee are African Americans. I was told upon arriving that of the ten churches in the county,

seven are white congregations and three are Black—and all three Black churches have burned, one last December and the other two in January. Locals tend to blame the arsonists on outsiders.

The few days I was there, the Little Zion Church crew was kept busy hanging roof shingles, pulling electrical wire, and putting up wall insulation (those fiberglass splinters get everywhere, and they are *itchy*!) It was extremely hot, in the high 90s, and humid as well.

The volunteers worked alongside a local crew, and I had some opportunity to talk with a number of area residents. Many of the people I spoke with had lived in the area all their lives. At midday, women from the Little Zion congregation showed up (some with children in tow) to bring lunch. We stood to bless the meal, starting with a gospel song ("Give Praise to Jesus"), followed by a long prayer of thanks from the pastor, Willie Carter.

The pastor's twin brother is a deacon of the church, and he was present at the building site too, as well as Deacon Smith and Deacon Bell, their wives, and other

women from the congregation. The food was simple and generous: fried chicken, hot dogs, potato chips, salad, and watermelon and angel food cake for dessert. There were two big coolers with soda pop.

I asked Willie Carter about the history of the congregation. Pastor Carter has skin the color of fudge and a big round belly. He has a warm smile and he looks you right in the eye as he talks. "It's about 250 years old, I'd guess." He told me the original congregation was given the land by a white landowner and they initially met under a brush arbor. After a number of years, that was replaced by a more permanent structure, a log cabin. Then, on that same spot, they built a wooden frame building. "I remember when they built that first frame church," he told me. "That was in my lifetime." The church building that burned was built in 1971, so they would have marked their 25th anniversary in that building this year, had it not been for the tragedy. True to tradition, the new church was being built in the same location as the first brush arbor.

The church sits atop a small hill, the road leading right up to the front doors. To one side of the church, a graveyard stretches along the hillside. Most graves are flush to the ground, topped by concrete slabs. Small headstones mark the family names: Johnson, Carter, Chiles, Hamilton, Croxton, Henry, Cook. A couple of headstones note military service (such as John Coley, 1892–1956, who served as a private in WW I). Many are marked with the phrase incised under their dates, "Gone But Not Forgotten."

Shade trees surround the building (blessed shade), and tables and water jugs were laid out under the trees for the workers. I drank a lot of water. After coming down off the roof after about an hour of shingling, I headed straight to the cooler where I downed several glasses in quick succession. One of my fellow workers, a former policeman from New Jersey named Kevin, noted the relish with which I was drinking water. He said, "Ah—the champagne of roofers."





Photos, pages 7-9: Volunteers, church members, and contractors work and relax together at the Little Zion Church site near Boligee, Alabama.

Kevin and Steve (a property manager from Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.) and Mark (a computer programmer from McLean, Va.) were really gung ho, working with hardly a break. I could not possibly keep up with their pace—but I contributed what I could.

On one break, I asked Willie Carter about the size of his congregation. “We’d have about 100 if everyone came,” he told me. “We have 65 active members.” Of the three churches that burned, this is the largest.

The old baptismal pool is by the shade trees on the side of the church opposite the graves. It is the only thing remaining from the original building, since it was separate from the church itself. “We used to do our baptisms at night,” Willie Carter told me.

“That must have been beautiful,” I responded.

He grinned. “Yes indeed. Beautiful.”

The new baptismal pool will be inside the church, behind the sanctuary. The tank, a prefab fiberglass structure, will be large enough to accommodate two staircases, one for entry and a second for exit, with room between for the traditional full-body immersion in waist-high water.

On either side of the baptistry, side rooms open out (the floor plan is shaped like a cross) with a men’s side and a women’s side for separate bathrooms, water fountains, and changing rooms for the choir. The men’s side also squeezes in

a small pastor’s study. Behind the baptistry will be the community room, and behind that, the kitchen.

Everyone was very open and friendly, especially considering the volunteers were changing on a weekly basis. One woman

told me the church burned “the Thursday behind the first Sunday in January.” But I got the strong sense that she wanted to talk about the future of their church rather than the tragedy of the past. Another woman, wanting to emphasize the positive, pointed out that no one would know about their churches at all if it hadn’t been for these fires. No concrete evidence of arson has been found, nor, at this point, is likely to be found.

The second church, Mt. Zion, was originally located on a site with no running water, and they have had to rebuild on a new site, approximately three miles from their original location, almost in the center of the town of Boligee, in order to get insurance coverage for the new building. It was evidently a big decision for the congregation, since grave sites would be left behind. The older site was in a swampy area not far from railroad tracks. The church has decided to maintain two sites, continuing to bury their dead in the old graveyard. When I visited the burn site of Mt. Zion, two men were mowing the grass around the graves.

This graveyard, like the one I visited at Little Zion, has concrete slabs topping each grave and masses of plastic flowers. In the woods just beyond the clearing, I could see the discards: a haphazard pile of faded and damaged plastic baskets and plastic flowers. Newer versions of the same were placed on the grave slabs them-



selves, with a couple spelling out "MOM" or "DAD" in flowers. Inscriptions named the dead as they were called in life: "Mamma Bessie" or "Joe" rather than the more formal versions of their names. I noted the inscription on the tomb of Rev. Isaac Judge Sr.: "I Have Fought a Good Fight."

The old church stood in the middle of these graves, and the outline of the foundation can still be clearly seen, showing it was a very small, one-room building. Two piles of bricks lean against a tree, most blackened on one side. An old, rusted oil tank is the most prominent remainder.

At the new Mt. Zion, they're building the church sanctuary about the same size as the old, but the entire building will be bigger—about double in size—because it will have bathrooms and a choir room, too. (I assume they used outhouses at the old site, although I didn't see any. The real mystery is how they performed baptisms with no running water. Did they bring the congregation to the Tombigbee River? The new site doesn't have an indoor pool like Little Zion Church will—so I couldn't figure out what their future plans are for this basic tenet of their faith.) Because the sanctuary is so tiny, the double-tiered altar is right in the middle of the new building, resting atop a smooth poured concrete floor.

The volunteers were hard at work when I arrived, hammering and pounding. Two volunteers with prior construction experience, Earl and Dwayne, were helping to instruct the less experienced volunteers. (Most people, like myself, had not done this kind of work before they came to Alabama.) I asked Molly, one of the high school students from Silver Spring, Md., what was the most memorable part of her experience. She said it wasn't the process of building but the people, particularly the other volunteers. "I've learned a lot about myself," she told me. "I've learned what I want to be like."

Three churches have been burned in the area around Boligee. Friends are working on two of these; the third, Mt. Zoar, is being rebuilt by the Mennonite Disaster Service. All three are expected to be completed in mid-to-late August.

Harold Confer told me that they had been swamped with media crews since the construction started on June 2, sometimes having as many as 30 or 40 people from the media show up in a single day. Because of all the media attention, they've had so many volunteers come forward that they are filled for the rest of the summer. They have actually had to turn

people away. Carol and Bob, two Quaker volunteers from New Mexico, talked to me at length about the intrusiveness of the media, particularly during Sunday church services. But I can't help but think that such attention is good—it helps educate us all. Many of the media are foreign: Japanese and British crews were filming while I was there.

Sunday was the highlight of my trip. I attended church services with two different congregations. I started with Bible study with Mt. Zion, which has set up temporary quarters in the small recreation center room of the Arrowood Public Housing complex in Boligee. Mt. Zion offers a full church service only on alternate Sundays, in between which Bible study meets.

The room was dressed up slightly to give it more of a church feel, with handwritten signs on the walls such as the Lord's Prayer and Psalm 28:7, "The Lord is my strength and my shield: my heart trusted in him and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him." A temporary pulpit constructed from plywood and covered in white paper leaned in one corner.

The Sunday lesson centered on "Faith and Wisdom." We read three biblical passages in unison, then Deacon Means or Deaconess Black led us through each a second time, explicating the meaning further. Interpretations were direct and simple, for the maximum comforting effect. (I didn't get the sense this was a group where one could express doubts—most of the explanations centered on giving yourself over wholly to the mystery and glory of God.)

One part of the lesson bothered me; at one point Deacon Means spoke about the loss of their church building. "Churches are still being burned, and we are still in danger," he said. He went on to extol the need for prayer, for being true to the teachings of Jesus, for giving up jealousy and gossip and bad habits. All this sounded fine to me, but he took it a step too far for my comfort when he suggested that the arson might have resulted from the personal failings of members of the congregation.

Two collections were taken, one for the congregation as a whole and one for the missions. We sang a few gospel songs as a group, the powerful voice of Deaconess Black sweeping up, booming out her soul. Hearing her lead us in "Work for Jesus" was truly a spiritual experience.

At a small church just down the road, I caught up with the congregation of Mt.

Zoar for my second church experience of the day, entering the service late. (Their service lasts approximately three hours, so I didn't feel as though I'd missed out by coming a little late.) This congregation is quite small also, and most congregants are either deacons or in the choir, leaving very few regular church members to face them from the pews. Those that were there sat mostly on the left side of the aisle; the right side consisted largely of the five visiting television crews: one each from Japan; New York; Charlotte, N.C.; CNN; and Washington, D.C. I'd heard a lot about the intrusiveness of the cameras on the previous Sunday from Quaker volunteers. Many were quite upset about the media interrupting what they thought was a solemn moment, but I'm not so sure. For one thing, I can't help but hope all this attention can provide a measure of protection to these small congregations—after all, the arsonists are still at large. I also think we "outsiders" perceive media attention very differently than the locals. What seems obtrusive to a white Quaker may be welcomed by an African American Baptist. I get this idea from two interactions I had with church members. When I asked Mrs. Henley what she thought of all the video cameras, she told me she really liked being photographed in church, because she knew she looked her best there. What had upset her was being photographed bringing lunch to the volunteers at the worksite. The first two times she came, she told me with embarrassment, she wasn't even wearing a dress. My other interaction that backs Mrs. Henley up came from Deaconess Black herself, who told me the media attention was a "blessing" because without it, "you and I wouldn't even know one another exists."

Much of the Mt. Zoar service consisted of a call-and-response plainsong in which deacons took turns leading a spontaneous chant about the joys of coming to Jesus while the congregation kept a constant, wordless singing underneath, a deep-throated wave of solid sound. There was no written text or music; it just seemed to bubble up from the core of each participant. The speakers extemporized in a natural, unprompted way, and the congregation improvised the music to go along. It was different than anything I'd ever seen or heard before, and I let it sweep over me like a wave.

There were other parts of the service as well: the pastor of Mt. Zion, Levi Pickens, an elderly man with only one leg, read some Scripture. A collection

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plate was passed, and the treasurer promptly counted the offering and reported how much was taken in. The choir stood to sing in tight harmony, swaying and clapping to such songs as "The Old Time Way" and "Oh Lord, Stop By Here." Each song was led by a member of the choir who sang the main melody, answered by choruses by the entire choir. One song, "Jesus Is Alive and Well," was led by the head pastor's eleven-year-old son.

The head pastor is a disabled man who walks with a pronounced limp and has a speech impediment that made it difficult for me to understand him. He led the main part of the service, not reading from the Bible or from a prepared text but improvising on the theme "Get Hooked on Jesus." As his emotion for the subject built, he went from speaking to a sing-song chant, in which he added an extra syllable to the end of each phrase, an extra flourish. ("Because Jesus can help you-ah. He-ah knows the way-ah.") He spoke of the various things men and woman can get involved with as a substitute for religion. He also referred to a conversion experience of his own, telling us that he saw God for the first time in 1967. The longer he went on, the less I could understand his words, and the more the congregation responded, yelling out to him: "Yes! yes!" "That's right!" "Amen!" The sound built and built, mesmerizing, ecstatic, ancient. The words themselves didn't matter—the strength of the underlying emotion could not have been more clear.

We took communion as a group (grape juice and saltine crackers), and when it was over, we all came forward and passed down a receiving line, shaking hands with each deacon and pastor in turn. The chief pastor's wife gave me a big embrace.

Later that afternoon, members of the Mt. Zion congregation and the Mennonite volunteers came over for Sunday supper at the Federation Center. The food crew cooked up a huge turkey and stuffing, and our guests contributed side dishes and desserts—a veritable feast. After dinner, our high schoolers and the Mennonite high schoolers played volleyball (despite the fact that it was still quite hot) while another group of us stayed inside and sang spirituals together. (The Baptist style of singing—at the top of your lungs—differs a bit from the traditional Quaker way. It was a funny contrast between the groups. Quakers are seriously into silence. Baptists are into NOISE: a great wall of joyful sound.)



Members of Little Zion Church and workcamp volunteers share fellowship and music during Sunday Bible study.

Most volunteers left Sunday night, and a new crew started arriving Sunday and Monday. I spent my final morning in the office with Kate Dixon, the administrative coordinator, inputting new computer records and helping her return phone calls to potential donors, people who want to volunteer, and the media. They were getting approximately 100 phone calls a day, and Kate told me the phone calls were the most overwhelming part of her job.

Back at home in Washington, D.C., I started thinking again about the lack of evidence of arson in Boligee. Was evidence overlooked—either intentionally or inadvertently? I spoke to Inspector John Curry, a delightful man who's worked for the D.C. Fire Department for 22 years. I wanted to know what he could tell me about how arson is investigated. In Boligee, I had been told that there was no conclusive evidence and no suspects. He asked me how much of the buildings were left standing. From what I know, the churches had pretty much burned to the ground, what Inspector Curry called a "Black Hole." The fire at Little Zion was not even reported until the building was almost demolished. He told me that made any investigation extremely difficult. "The more we have to look at, the more we can tell," he said. He also said that unlike a city, where an inspector is always on duty, most small counties have a single fire marshall who works alone. A county investigator may not see a burned site for a day or two after the damage is done, which also makes the work more difficult.

In general, I found most people I met

in Boligee reluctant to speculate about what happened. Perhaps this is partly political expediency, but I think it's human nature too: congregants from Mt. Zion and Little Zion were much more interested, now that some time has passed, in talking about the future.

The burning of the churches is a great tragedy of our time. It seems that as soon as the U.S. makes some progress towards equal access, we allow ourselves to get complacent, and then we backslide. Churches are an obvious target because they are a base of community activity, and African American churches have a tradition, dating back to "Jim Crow" segregation, of social gospel ministry—that is, of using Christian tenets to justify political and civil action. During segregation, churches were the only institutions in the African American community that were not controlled by whites; because of this history, the church remains a mainstay of Black consciousness and Black idealism. I wish 30 or so churches didn't have to burn before we, as a country, started to pay attention. I hope the attention will unify those of us who are angry to speak out against complacency. Civil rights do not come easily. Justice does not come easily. It comes only as the result of constant, vigilant words and actions. We cannot allow ourselves to become complacent, to think our work is done. □

Donations to support rebuilding efforts can be mailed to the National Council of Churches, Room 880, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115.

What Quakers Believe

by Gene Hillman

**If our lives do speak, and speak
differently than the lives of those around
us, we will be asked to explain that of
which they speak.**

Some time ago I was elderd in meeting by two Friends for presuming to offer to give a talk on "What Quakers Believe" as part of a series of inquirers' lectures. I was told I couldn't say what Quakers believe. It would seem they were concerned that I would give a prescriptive, rather than a descriptive, answer. I agree that it is where we try to label, to define the divine, that we get into trouble. Isn't it enough that we share the experience of worship and that the Holy Spirit leads us as a people to the testimonies? Sometimes it isn't.

My concern to find words to describe our faith arises out of both theoretical and practical interests. In work with Quaker organizations from the American Friends Service Committee to Friends United Meeting, as a member of a Friends General Conference monthly meeting in a consolidated yearly meeting, and in visiting with Conservative and Evangelical Friends, I have found myself asking what it is we have in common beyond our history. What is it that unites us as Friends? I feel strongly that something does unite us. While this something is primarily ex-

periential, transcending words, sometimes we are asked to put it into words.

As a practical matter, in visiting prisoners over the past several years in worship groups, counseling sessions, and workshops, I've often been asked why I come into the prison. This leads to a discussion of my faith and, as it is so tied up with Quaker faith and practice, of what Quakers believe. I would find myself giving a standard short answer: We believe there is that of God in everyone. I didn't find this very satisfactory, and I don't think the men to whom I was speaking did either. First, it is not unique to Quakers, but second, and of greater importance, it's what early Friends called a

notion, meaning it is of the head and not of the heart (or gut). While it does find the least common denominator among Friends, in doing so, I feel it loses its power (a common problem when we seek consensus rather than unity). The men who ask me this question, Christian, Muslim, nonbeliever, Jewish, and Hindu, don't want intellectual, theological abstractions. They want something that will speak to their conditions.

I suspect this is true for many who come to our meetings. They want something that will speak to their conditions, and we give them an intellectual abstraction. So why are we surprised when our growth in North America, where it exists, is comprised mostly of Euro-American, middle-class professionals and intellectuals? But I digress.

To let our lives speak is the quintessential expression of Quaker faith. If our lives do speak, and speak differently than the lives of those around us, we will be asked to explain that of which they speak. This is our chance to share the Light that we value so much. As individuals we will all have different answers, but as Friends we'll need to explain what Quakers are.

First let us go back to the standard reply that there is that of God in everyone. I recently attended a talk given by a Sikh. He described *namaste* (a

traditional palm-to-palm greeting) as a way of saying the God in me greets the God in you. We say Quakers should respect everyone because of that of God in them. While true, and used as the rationale for the peace testimony by some, this reasoning is used by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita (see particularly 2:11ff) to allow Arjuna to fight and kill his relatives, since this divine essence can't be killed. So where does the understanding of that of God in everyone lead us? Almost anywhere we want it to, it seems.

In the context it was spoken, Fox admonished us to "walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone." He wasn't simply asserting that of God. He was telling us to answer (address) that of God rather than the evil. By answering that of God we will elicit and strengthen it. If we give our attention to the evil, it is the evil we will strengthen (ask any practitioner of aikido, judo, or tai chi about directly opposing a force). The power in the admonition to answer that

of God in others is that it requires a response from us. It is not just a warm fuzzy idea.

I remember a Bolivian Friend in a class at Pendle Hill who, reading the *Journal of George Fox*, asked "where is the power?" Where is the power in our meetings? If we depend on that of God in us then we are the source of that power. If we look no further than ourselves, that is what we'll find. Fox told us "the power of the Lord was over all," the power of God is the basis. If we are drawing on God's power, let's say so.

Now respond to those who ask about Quakerism with a different quote from Fox: "Christ [or the variant he also used, "the Lord"] has come to teach his people Himself." This statement recognizes both the immanence and the transcendence of God. In addition to its implications for church government, it has the advantage of leading to further discussion of elements of Quaker faith and practice:

1. Experience has primacy over theology. The inadequacy of humanly created categories and labels, such as words and creeds, in talking about God is put into perspective.

2. In our form of worship, we wait on the Lord. All Friends share an attitude of

Gene Hillman is a member of Nottingham (Pa.) Meeting. He has worked in various forms of prison ministry and has taught Quakerism in meetings in both Baltimore and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings.

expectant waiting in worship, and almost all eschew ritual and outward sacraments.

3. The purpose of vocal ministry is to bring the listeners to God and leave them there, that they might be instructed by the true Teacher. Some meetings identify and record those who have demonstrated this gift, but we don't ordain, and this is not simply semantics.

4. Revelation is direct (not mediated by Scripture) and continuing, which is not to deny Scripture but to see it as inspired by the same Spirit present in our gathered meetings and directly available to all of us.

5. The inward Teacher guides us to the testimonies, which are our corporate witness to the Truth. "Christ is come to teach his people" implies we are a people and are taught as a people. Quakers have long held discernment of important matters to be a corporate endeavor.

In using historical quotations, some may object to the terms "his" and "himself" and want more inclusive pronouns for the divine. I hesitate to tamper with quotes and leave them as is; even this can provide an opportunity to discuss the issue of inclusive language and our testimony on gender equality.

Some Friends may object to the use of the titles "Christ" or "the Lord," but they are central to the faith of the vast majority of Friends. They connect us to our roots in a truly radical understanding of Christianity and guard us from the dangers of extreme individualism and subjectivity (ranterism). Continuing revelation also implies continuity of revelation. This was early expressed in the 1661 letter to Charles II. "The spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil and again to move unto it."

We have an opportunity to share our Light. Fox brought seekers to become Friends of the Truth. That Christ has come to teach his people was the message he proclaimed in the steeple houses, the Quaker gospel. This message has power because God's presence gives us power. We are seekers in that we continue to seek the message God has for us today, but we are finders as well in that we have found God to be present in our meetings. If that which we have found is important, we must share it. So when asked what Quakers believe, I answer with the radical assertion that speaks best to the conditions of many seekers, "Christ has come to teach his people himself." □

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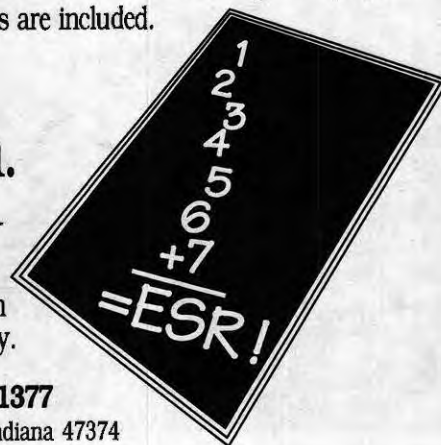
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On Quaker Contemplative Life

by Heidi Blocher

My basic ministry, as I have always felt it, is being. "You are the light of the world," Jesus said. Not: You must bring the light to the world, like something outside of yourself (as Bonhoeffer has pointed out in *The Cost of Discipleship*). But I also feel at this time a calling toward a ministry of *doing*, in and beyond my local meeting, toward actively helping to move ourselves continually back into the *Heidi Blocher is an attender of Sandwich (Mass.) Meeting.*

way of the Spirit from which we are continually straying.

I struggle to reconcile my basic ministry with this call to activity. I find that more often than not, my active ministry comes to deflect me from my contemplative focus and to upset my primary work.

Recently, I was given some clearness in this conflict:

The more we are called to active ministry (the more intensely or frequently or deeply), the more watchful we have to be in each instance of being called, to discern ever more carefully whether the

will for me to do at present.

The prophets in the Old Testament never did, as far as I can see, "strategic planning." They never undertook crusades or even set ultimate goals for themselves. They watched and waited for the word of God to come to them, and the word of God was always specific to the next task: "Go there—do this—say that." When that task was carried out, there they sat again—under the old broom tree, on some desolate hill, in a cave—waiting, crying to the Lord.

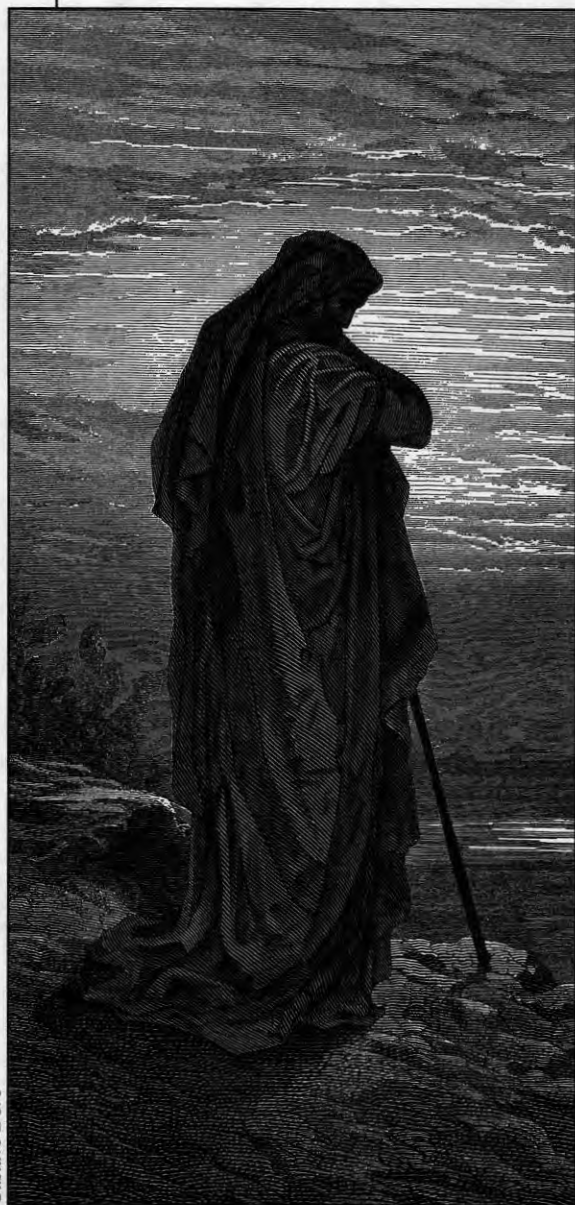
Among Quakers, Woolman may be the clearest example of this. His "cause" both against slavery and against the general deviation of Friends from Truth certainly was "a burning fire shut up in my bones," as Jeremiah, and Woolman himself, described it. Yet by the discipline of the Spirit in him he was kept from mounting his own horse and riding off into battle carrying his own flag. Instead, he was led to labor within himself, often to excruciating degrees, until the Spirit had wrestled him under the Divine Will: a state Woolman called "resignation." This state enabled him to hear, with further efforts of discernment, the voice of the Spirit telling him just what to do next.

In my perception, Woolman was a contemplative. Friends do not have a category for purely contemplative callings, such as Catholics have among their monastic orders. There is something about Quaker spirituality and attendance in Quaker meeting that moves us toward action. What strikes me is that it was precisely Woolman's struggle to subject himself purely to the Will of God and do just what was asked of him—no more, no less—that kept his contemplative calling intact: the same struggling and laboring among Friends that continually robbed him of his peace. It was his scrupulous faithfulness to each new call to action whenever it occurred that allowed him to remain focused in contemplation, faithful to his basic ministry, being: being the light of the world, the light that keeps on shining for us today in his writings. □

The prophets in the Old Testament model the necessity of careful watchfulness when we feel called to active ministry.

prompting we feel really comes from the Spirit. This continual watchfulness and discernment, which should not lessen but intensify as we grow deeper into our ministry, is particularly Quaker. In this, Quakerism may differ from other religious movements where a cause may be embraced and then a crusade carried out without further discernment, mowing down everything in its path.

When we find ourselves engaged in a crusade, it means we have made God's purpose as we perceive it our own. We must avoid this at all cost. I can never know God's full plan or Will, I can only discern, individually and corporately with God's help, what God



Gustave Doré

Rediscovering Our Social Testimony

by Jonathan Dale

The 1895 Manchester Conference heralded a major shift among British Friends away from evangelicalism towards liberalism. This speech was given to a conference held November 17-19, 1995, to mark the centenary and is reprinted with permission from The Friends' Quarterly.

Glimpses from a day in the life of . . .

After I get up in the morning and make myself a cup of tea, I go out to clean stretches of road and a corner of the park near my house. It's my round. I enjoy it. It's a tiny bit of exercise. It "keeps me low" (or not), protecting me from any temptation to think I'm too important for "that sort of work"; it feels like a sort of prayer in action. In the tiniest way it's a concern: in my eyes, accumulations of litter everywhere not only degrade what loveliness there is but speak of an attitude of mind locked into self-centeredness; and so, in tending "my patch," I can protest against the individualism of the times. Although I do it in a nonjudgemental spirit, nonetheless it is an expressive action that hopes to speak silently to others, especially those who create the litter. Whether it does or not I'm not sure! If all it does is keep parts of the estate cleaner on a daily basis, so be it.

Some days, correspondence brings something to chew on: one day a letter telling me I gained over £2,700 by magic, because Lloyds Bank had absorbed my Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society account. £2,700 for nothing! What to do? I'm well enough off to be able to afford anything I might reasonably want as well as many things I might want unreasonably. Nonetheless I'm tempted to keep it. It could be useful if I fall ill or need nursing care in my old age, or to give to my children who show no signs of

Jonathan Dale, a member of Manchester (UK) Meeting, has been active in concerns about sexism, poverty, and housing for many years. He recently completed three years of service as clerk of Britain Yearly Meeting's Quaker Social Responsibility and Education Central Committee.



Photos by Barbara Benton

growing rich. In the end I was glad I wrote to *The Friend* hoping that others in the same boat would see it as money that they had no right to and should give away. It meant I couldn't forget to actually do it as opposed to merely intending to.

28 October: today I remember that the National Demonstration against Racism is being held in Manchester. Suddenly Emily and I decide we have to go. Assembly at 12 noon . . . and it's already 1:15. We have a bite to eat while mulling

Moment by moment, our faith is being exercised as we choose between the world's priorities and what the Light shows us.

over whether to go by car as to join in before it finishes or to walk. We have almost always walked to town since moving to Ordsall. The traffic can be awful, but the freedom from the car is wonderful.

We compromise and take the car just over halfway and do my office supplies shopping for work on the way back. It's not a good decision: the march was late, and we could have joined it on foot. We have polluted the air people have to breathe and contributed to the incessant din on the dual carriageway. Was it perhaps the devil of ease that persuaded me?

Such are the small-scale daily decisions of most of us. Decisions or just automatic reflexes? If decisions, does taking them feel like a meeting for worship moment by moment? Do we sense all these—and every other area—of our lives to be places where our spiritual discernment is exercised? I've not used much special spiritual language in writing about them, yet we need to be centered down in those decisions as in meeting for worship.

Then they won't be decisions to feel anxious about, still less to push away out of guilt. Of course sometimes we fail to do things that could rightly be expected of us; all the time I fall short, but the effort and the failings are alike offered to God in the hope that I will be guided to be more faithful in due course. And that is my experience.

I'm not suggesting that our social re-

sponsibility can be reduced to such minute particulars. It is just that they face us with ever-renewed invitations to turn our words into deeds. Whether such a practice can change the world we cannot be sure; it will certainly change us—if only because, moment by moment, our faith is being exercised as we choose between the world's priorities and what the Light shows us.

How can we practice a true faith in a world in thrall to false values?

The dominant values of the marketplace

In the past the marketplace was somewhere to be visited occasionally. But in modern, "Western" conditions the marketplace is omnipresent. Its messages are so all-enveloping that they are woven into the very texture of our lives.

To change the metaphor, it's like background radiation. We are irradiated with information and temptation morning, noon, and night, much of it from the "world of getting and spending." We are the first society to be defined more by its modes of consumption than of production, the first society where shopping has become not a search for the necessities of life but a leisure activity.

The capitalist market economy reaches into more and more parts of human life to give them monetary values. Money, therefore, is the one surviving value. It commands everything, including sometimes sexual relations, votes, life itself. Everything—it is said—has its price.

The capitalist system depends on making people want "something else": it has to create wants in order to meet them. In doing so, it relies on an elite to lead the process of consumption so the rest of us can aspire to follow—you can visit the luxury dream world of yesterday's wealth on safari in Africa or sipping Bacardi on that Caribbean beach! The creation of wants is much more dynamic than in pre-market economies and drenches us in consumerist aspiration as never before.

The National Lottery reflects this modern consumer capitalism. Its manufactured dream of paradise is the jackpot of the isolated consumer. Such dreaming is a far remove from either secular utopia or the Kingdom of God. Both of these are based not on individualism but on community. The capitalist dream is individual and materialist, whether it is so-called "earned" or won by luck.

Have we come to grips with the impact of these changes on spiritual prac-

tice? Out there thousands of people are devoting their intelligence to persuading us to buy what they sell—and to leave our spiritual values behind in the meeting-house. Their mission is to change us. Getting us to buy this and that is simpler if we can be persuaded to buy their value system as a whole. And the value system of these modern missionaries of the market



is unashamedly materialistic.

The values of faith are diametrically opposed to the values of the market. Love, truth, peace, community, equality, point to an other-centeredness wholly at odds with the market's relentless appeal to the self. Our faith values, therefore, necessarily stand in judgement on the values of the market, whatever the latter's success in "delivering the goods." It is not just that the values of faith and the market differ. The values that are central to our faith are under sustained attack by the economic system as such. I use the metaphor advisedly. We too often forget that the world is always an arena in which different value systems are locked in struggle.

What can we do to defend our faith? I suggest that our resistance needs two complementary approaches: on the one hand, the strategic campaign with its implications for corporate stance and action; on the other the tactical, the slow

development of alternative practice in our daily lives. Each suggests in its different modality the requirement to consciously oppose "the world" by our lives.

The strategic dimension

The nature of currents is that it is easier to swim with them than against them. The currents of market society are very strong. Even if we are swimming against them we may be swept along downstream. But how many of us float on the current much of the time, implicitly accepting its direction, even enjoying the ride?

Only a polarized understanding of the market's demonic assault on our spiritual values has any chance of matching the scale of the onslaught. Yet contemporary easy-osey Quakerism assumes a blurred world in which divergent values and opinions gently jostle for position—quite unlike the sharply delineated world of *Pilgrim's Progress* or Fox's *Epistles*, where Truth and error contend. There, world and faith are at opposite poles. If the sharp deterioration in social conditions in our generation doesn't jolt us into rediscovering this, nothing will.

So far, alas, it has hardly done so. We have responded to that deterioration fitfully rather than strategically. Why?

- Because the system is so powerful that it seems impossible to stand against it. To do so can seem blasphemous;
- Because the system is so persuasive that, even when we want to resist it, there is a part of us that whispers: "it can't be so bad; it brings a lot of good things with it";
- Because we are too often isolated in the face of it rather than struggling in solidarity with the body of Friends;
- And because we are far too proud of our beloved Society as it is to want any fundamental disturbance.

So we remain at home in a world of alternative voices, not a world of opposing forces.

No doubt social tides are much more complex even than physical tides. Mixed in with the bad there will be a great deal of good. I fully accept that. But our spiritual job is to discern the signs of the times. This is a strategic process that cannot be done if we get lost in the nuances. The question is: are the dominant values and the prevalent direction of social change today ones that in our hearts we see as leading to the Kingdom? Or not? To answer "not" is to say that the system in its essence—its inequality and its consumerist materialism—runs counter to our core values, and that we must counter it.

Daily tactics

The second approach is to engage in the daily skirmishing around partial and limited objectives. This is about finding ways of liberating ourselves from subjection to the encroaching and secularizing power of the market, ways in which faith takes over areas of our lives once outside its scope. In my own life, the following have become matters of faith, rather than what they were, secular areas of life:

- Our choice of where to live;
- The use of our car;
- Where my money is invested;
- Where we go on holiday.

So what was my spirituality when it hardly reached all those parts of my life? It was cramped, partial, and unfaithful to the most fundamental Quaker doctrine of them all—that the whole of life is sacramental. (In other respects it still is.) It had been secularized without my being the least bit aware of it. The end result of these zones of exclusion, unless we are very careful, is a sort of private spirituality.

The only defense against this neutralization of so much of our faith is true seeing followed by true action. If the secular world threatens to colonize us with its relentless promotion of the “more” and the “new”; if it dazzles us with materialistic temptation; if it showers us with messages that economic self-interest is the deepest motive force in human beings; if it permeates us with the tacit understanding that the monetary exchange of the marketplace is always morally neutral, so that we do not see that our participation in it always raises spiritual questions, then we need to be led to consciously exercise our faith in the marketplace day by day, winning back lost ground little by little, reclaiming wherever we can a sense of the materiality of our spiritual lives and the spirituality of our material lives.

That is why I started with litterpicking, shopping, and the like. What, for each of us, are the points where our spirituality needs to extend its reach?

The role of testimony

I felt uncertainty for many years about “testimony.” It pointed to peace, on the one hand and, on the other, to an assortment of old-fashioned positions that were peripheral to my developing spirituality: against hat honor, gambling, slavery, capital punishment, and swearing oaths. To be frank with you, apart from peace it was a jumble, a rag-bag of odds and ends in my mind. But for the peace testimony we might well, by now, have lost the

word altogether.

I have since realized that the term had long been slipping into disuse, I presume through the effects of the evangelical-led transformation of the Religious Society of Friends from its early 19th-century status as a peculiar people. In the 1895 Manchester Conference proceedings, Thomas Hodgkin qualifies the term “testimonies” by “as they used to be called,” suggesting its lack of currency. It is not surprising, then, that many Friends today are not at all clear as to what testimony is and how we can use it.

A Quaker testimony is a belief that stems from our fundamental understanding of religious truth. It is a corporately held belief about how we should individually act. In practicing them, we witness to our understanding of the very nature of God’s spirit of love and truth.

It is the word “witness” with which we have most difficulty. John Punshon expresses it thus in his admirable book *Testimony and Tradition*: “The testimonies are essentially assertive. They proclaim how the world ought to be, and thus, by implication, what other people ought to do.”

How can testimony—in this case social testimony—help us?

I began quite deliberately with all those minuscule daily actions. My implicit question was: what have such actions got to do with Quaker testimony?

Let’s take the litter picking. It could

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just be a way of cleaning the streets! But it is more than that: it shows in practical action the need to respect the world, natural and made, which is becoming a contemporary testimony. It has implications for equality in its acceptance of the megal. It has implications for community. Although my daily round is just a personal action, it takes place in a context of community cleanups and is seen as part of that effort; in its implied rejection of



the individualistic self-centeredness of litter dropping, it also represents an appeal to community spirit.

Seeing a particular action as testimony is important to me. It reminds me that I am doing something more: I am testifying to the values of faith that lie so much deeper than self-interest, but which can so easily be obscured by it. In that way

- Firstly, some big decisions:
- What work (paid or unpaid) to do;
 - Where to live;
 - What to do with windfall gains, such as legacies;
 - Whether to use public or private school or health systems.

- And the small decisions:
- Whether to take the car or catch the bus;

with equal respect is not an arbitrary or subjective preference but accords with a divine preference in the very constitution of the created world.

Testimony, then, is incompatible with the contemporary Quaker assumption that seems to believe we all have our individual opinions and that's that—there's nothing to choose between them and nothing more to be said.

This relativistic individualism would have horrified the 1895 conference. Yet it has grown out of the liberal Quakerism that 1895 prepared. Once all authority had been subjected to critical appraisal by the "rational-spiritual" individual, all later generations had to do was cut the cords that linked that individual to an also transcendent God or Jesus. We have to decide now whether we want to go further down that road, past all the barriers where the 1895 generation would have halted, towards the further shores of individualism, relativism, and a God created by and in the image of humankind, or whether, as I suggest, we find that we have gone too far and set to rediscovering together the reality of the values that are in us but also beyond. Social testimony lies in that direction.

I want to be a spoilsport here. There is nothing that amuses Friends today more than our differences. Our in-joke is about there being as many different opinions as there are individual Friends. Such jokes are not very funny when they are seen to be not very true. And I certainly hope they are not true. If there is no truth beyond individual opinion we might as well save time and the polluting petrol in getting to meeting: diverse opinions can be harvested from the television at less cost.

I am deadly serious in this attack on what many take as an innocent joke. If testimony has a corporate dimension, the joke undermines it. It encourages the belief that we have lost touch with a grounding truth and are left with mere incompatible opinions out of which no unity on social and political issues can be expected. In turn that encourages some Friends to believe that the Society should pull out of this area of our faith altogether.

That is a counsel of despair. If we could get away from the joke we might see that, in reality, our approach to social and political issues has real and essential elements of unity, which could only be strengthened by a fuller rediscovery of testimony. The housing concern, the yearly meeting on poverty in 1987, the encouraging unity over the National Lottery, reveal a great reservoir of agree-



everything we do becomes a part of a whole faith and not just a series of separate actions on separate issues. And so faith becomes much more continuously real. We need this sense of the unity of faith and action in the nitty gritty of our everyday lives. Testimony is that unity and so offers us a key both to spiritual growth and to more faithful social action. Testimony is also a crucial defense against the very powerful forces both in society at large and amongst many Friends.

Secularization is the powerful historical process that assumes the absence of God. Even if we hold to God we are subjected to pressure to live a split existence, part secular, part spiritual. Do we go along with that, treating areas of our life as though they were spiritually neutral? Or do we resist it, seeing all our choices as God-given? Testimony could be a focus of resistance. Indeed, as the impact of a secularizing mentality increases, testimony becomes all the more vital.

Are we affected by this process? Let's see by asking ourselves whether we treat the following issues as spiritual questions. In other words, do we approach them from the point of view of our own advantage or the service of God?

- Whether to buy the cheaper pack of tinned tomatoes with extra packaging or two more expensive tins with less;
- Whether to use water from the washing-up bowl rather than pour it away and then fill the watering can from the tap;
- Whether to buy strawberries flown in from Africa in February.

And so on.

Can we answer "yes, they are spiritual issues, and I am wrestling with them" to all of these? If not, whose message is being spoken by our lives?—almost certainly the message of whatever secular social convention is the norm. The role of testimony can be to bring us to an awareness of the connections between all these aspects of our lives and our Quaker faith. It will help us to resist the encroachment of the secular.

A second virtue of the reaffirmation of testimony is that it will help us resist the extreme individualism some Friends have picked up from the spirit of the times. To choose testimony is to commit the Society to oppose such an individualism. This is so because the foundation of testimony is the experience of corporate guidance, the belief that together we can be led into truth. That, for example, to treat people

Does our practice of testimony measure up to the gap between the theory that we are all children of God and the contempt, the neglect, the abuse, the exploitation that is the reality for so many?

ment amongst us. Like the half-full rather than half-empty reservoir we should start celebrating the amazing fact of our Quaker social unity.

Let me take the recent example of the National Lottery. Minutes came in from more than a hundred preparative and monthly meetings. Despite some differences of emphasis, the overwhelming impression is of the Society as a body of people firmly united in their opposition.

The lessons I draw from that exercise are: that unity may be more possible than Friends assume; that such unity is much more readily reached on the foundations of our fundamental beliefs; that unity does not mean 100 percent agreement on every word.

Furthermore: we too easily forget that our unity as a religious group depends quite significantly on our unity as to the social expression of our faith. Just imagine if we could not speak out of a united conviction? If we were unable to assume a common commitment to peace, to truth, to simplicity, to equality broadly understood? If there were as many Friends who were hangers and floggers as penal reformers, what would meeting for worship or yearly meeting feel like then? Would ministry be contradictory or suppressed? Do you see what I mean? No! Quaker social testimony is absolutely central to Quaker unity. Without it the Religious Society of Friends would certainly not hold.

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then, should develop through a more faithful, more accountable practice in our daily lives. It should lead to a stronger public Quaker contribution to the moral, social, and political debate from a renewed sense of unity in our grounding values. It will preserve us from the split between the secular and the spiritual. It will counteract the relativistic individualism that has affected us.

Does it not do that already? Does testimony really need rediscovering? Quaker testimonies are clearly alive. Simplicity, equality, truth, and peace remain reference points for us, community less certainly. Sustainability has perhaps become so. They are not just words. We practice them in different ways and to different degrees. There is a discernible Quaker approach to truth that is visible in our business meetings but also marks our dealings with the wider world. There is a degree of simplicity in our lifestyle compared with the lifestyles of those in a similar financial bracket who live around us.

Yes! Our testimonies are alive: but how *well* are they? If faith is about trundling along in a middling sort of way, then our practice of testimony might do. But does our practice measure up to the gap between the theory that we are all children of God and the contempt, the neglect, the abuse, the exploitation that is the reality for so many? Does it measure up to a world in which global inequality grows ever deeper, with its bitter harvest of malnutrition, disease, and death? A world that is wiping out habitats and species wholesale in its worship of unfettered economic development? A world in which, for all the talk of community here in Britain, the reality is in many parts a terrible disintegration of community. . . .

Does our practice of testimony measure up to the increasing inequality in society? Does it measure up to the homelessness, both hidden and on the street? The long-term unemployment? The growth of insecure, low-paying jobs—the ultimate example of which was the Burger King employee who had to clock on each time a customer came in and wait, unpaid, for the next one?

We talk about these things, and we respond as much as we reasonably can, but is that “reasonable” approach enough? What I have tried to show is that our response fails to match the challenge social change is posing to our faith.

Our weakness is that we are only vaguely conscious of our testimonies and live them out in very selective areas of our lives. They are often seen more as the

expression of personal values than a corporate adventure of the spirit. More is needed of the Religious Society of Friends than a piecemeal approach in which we flit from the growing inequalities in society in 1987 to the iniquities of the National Lottery in 1995. It is not enough to consider each issue on its own. We need the underlying sense of direction that a renewed social testimony would help create.

Is this possible? Can we rediscover or reaffirm our social testimony?

It will not be easy.

We live in an age of individualism that has to be defeated in ourselves for the consistent corporate turning to testimony to be possible and for individual practice to be strengthened by new forms of mutual accountability, not least in relation to money.

We live in a culture of contentment in which those who have a decent standard of living seem unwilling to share what they have. Friends, although discontented for others, may yet be contented by our own social situation. That makes it harder for us to be angry. Political discourse has shifted decisively to reflect that culture of contentment. Few voices are raised for justice and equality. How much are we distressed by that? If all the larger parties are wedded to the market, what role does the Society of Friends have in promoting an alternative vision of the Kingdom of God?

Finally, an historical perspective: Early Friends rejected the dominant values of their society and felt called to live according to a different life and power. By the 19th century, however, Friends were playing a significant role in the capitalist transformation of society and were little given to radical criticism of it. Between the last decade of the 19th century and the 1920s, the Religious Society of Friends went through a rapid transformation in its attitude toward the prevailing social order: they were able to develop a far-reaching criticism of capitalist practice that culminated in the Proclamation of the Eight Foundations of a True Social Order in 1921.

That critique, however, was contained within a broader, optimistic assumption that history was moving towards an ever fuller embodiment of Quaker values. The new, liberal, post-1895 Religious Society of Friends allied itself in many respects

with the mainstream culture of the times, both philosophically and politically. It saw God's nature illustrated in social progress: towards liberty, towards democracy, towards equality, and ultimately towards the Kingdom of God. That tide flowed until the 1960s, sweeping Friends along with it.


It has been ebbing since the mid 1970s at least—and fast since 1979. As for our new flood tide, it flows in the name of the global market towards inequality, individualism, and materialism. We are pretty unhappy with it, distrusting its direction; it flows rapidly away from our Quaker values rather than towards them. It is this sharp reversal of so much that Friends have seen as in right social ordering that makes the time opportune for a renewal of our understanding and practice of social testimony.

Our stance towards society consequently needs to be very different from the post-1895 period. We have to establish again a critical distance from the dominant trends of the age, not in the narrow interests of being peculiar but from the necessity of witnessing to our faith, which has different values. That is what prophesy is.

We will make no distinctive contribution to faith or society if we drift about on the currents of the global market. Half-hearted paddling against that current will not take us very far. It is time to throw ourselves into the struggle for a social order that is compatible with our belief in that of God in everyone; the necessity for profound criticism of the present and vision for the future is even greater than it was in 1895. A rediscovery of the potency of testimony will enable our whole lives to be grounded in faith. It will enable us to celebrate our unity. It will challenge us to develop ways of sharing our experience of the growing power of the spirit to lead us in our daily lives.

Then, having reached this point, we will want to know how to interpret our social testimonies to truth, equality, simplicity, sustainability, and community in contemporary conditions. That will have to be another talk—or perhaps five! Even better, an agenda for Britain Yearly Meeting over the next ten years! □

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A Serious Talk

by Benjamin (as told to Clifford Pfeil)
illustrated by Lorna Kent

Our hero takes a big step.

Laura," I said, "I've been thinking."
It was potluck Sunday again. There were casseroles and cakes, rolls and homemade breads, dishes with meatballs, and pans of lasagna. There were cookies, bread puddings made with goat's milk and with cow's milk, three-bean salads, lettuce and tomato salads, and fruit salads. Laura said the room smelled like a French bakery, an Italian deli, and a Swedish restaurant all at the same time!

"And what would a mouse be thinking about while sitting before a feast like this?" asked Laura.

"Well, I was thinking about how it was before I came out of my hole and met Emily and joined the meeting. I used to get pretty hungry sometimes. And I felt like a stowaway. You know, hiding out, sneaking bits of food, worrying about mouse traps. Compared to now, it was not a very dignified way to live."

I gnawed a slice of carrot.

"I imagine it wasn't easy," said Laura.

"It wasn't. But that's how mice live, usually."

Laura asked me a question: "Do you like being part of the meeting?"

"Oh, yes!" I said. "It's great for me."

I took a bite of bread pudding.

"But the thing is, I've been thinking about all the mice in the world who still are living their lives in hiding, eating crumbs, just squeaking by. What about them?"

I nibbled on a piece of macaroni.

"I mean, I wish they could see me now. No, that's not it. I wish they could . . . I wish they could *join* me now! I wish we could eat bread pudding together!"

Laura smiled grandly. Emily, who had been up for seconds, came over and sat down with us.

"What's up?" she asked.

"I think Benjamin is cooking up an idea," said Laura.

"What if there were other mice at other meetings," I



continued. "What if they're just stuck in their old holes, not knowing they could be out eating salads, cookies, and cakes and participating in the life of the meeting?"

"Someone should tell them," said Emily.

"Someone should go on a journey to the other meetings to tell them," added Laura.

"Yes!" I agreed. "Someone *should* tell them! And that 'someone' is *me*!"

My whiskers twitched with excitement as an adventure took shape in my mind. "I could go from one meeting to another, all over the world! I could tell everyone about mice! They would say: 'Oh yes, we have mice, but we never thought of inviting them to meeting.' And I would say: 'But think what you are

Clifford Pfeil, a member of Pima (Ariz.) Meeting, teaches English as a second language. "Benjamin, the Meetinghouse Mouse" is dedicated to Mark, Robert, Matthew, Emily, and the sweet memory of Laura. Lorna Kent is a member of Central Philadelphia (Pa.) Meeting.

missing! Mice are a tremendous addition to meeting! They are great with children! They provide a nice cosmopolitan atmosphere! And sometimes they even do brave deeds!"

Laura's eyes were twinkling. She put her hand on my paw.

"You know what you need, Benjamin," she said. "You need a traveling minute."

"A traveling . . . what?"

"A traveling minute. It's a letter that you carry with you wherever you go. The meeting writes it. It tells who you are, and it tells what you are doing. It says that you go with the blessing of your own meeting. Benjamin, you must do this. This is something you are supposed to do!"

That night, unable to sleep, I went to my desk and got out the bottle of ink. Writing with care, and with conviction, I put the following letter together:

Dear clerk of the meeting:

I take my tail in hand to write to you. I want to be a member. I have felt at home here ever since I arrived one wintry potluck morning. Please appoint a clearness committee for me. I think I have lots of clearness already. What do I do next?

Your Friend,
Benjamin

I read it over and thought about it for a while. Then, deciding to ask for everything at once, I wrote a postscript:

P.S. Also, please send me a traveling minute. I'm going out into the world.

Concluded next month. . . .

Quaker Inner City School Endowment Fund

A small group of well integrated Quaker schools are doing a terrific job in inner city environments. Help them gain needed endowments to provide long-term financial stability. For information contact Imogene Angell, 150 Kendal Drive, Kennett Square, PA 19348. (610) 388-0935.

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April 18-20, 1997**

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- ❖ look at setting up an ongoing network on service and witness
- ❖ work together to develop advices and queries on how Friends' beliefs connect service and work

By exchanging ideas for training and development, brainstorming on administrative problems, sharing how we work our faith into service and work, and inspiring each other we hope to fan the flame of active caring that has always characterized Friends.

This work rises from a leading of Illinois Yearly Meeting to strengthen and support volunteer service and witness. The planning group seeks corresponding members to serve as links with other Yearly Meetings and Quaker service and witness organizations.

Also, a directory of 1996 Quaker service opportunities is available both in print and on our web-site. For hard copy, send \$4 (sugg.) or \$2 (min.).

Contact Judy Jager (847) 864-8173
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Easter Music School and the Tiger

by Laura Nell Morris

A weeklong meeting for worship with a concern for music? Although this may sound like a music-loving Friend's wildest fantasy, it is in fact an available reality. The Quaker Festival Orchestra and Chorus, one of the Leavers' performing arts projects in Great Britain, recently held a weeklong residential music school in preparation for the premier performance of the oratorio, "Embracing the Tiger." This major work, performed in Birmingham (England) Symphony Hall on Easter Monday, is the third full-length oratorio to be commissioned by the Leavers for symphony orchestra, chorus, and soloists. The first two, "The Gates of Greenham" and "Cry of the Earth," were performed in London's Royal Festival Hall in 1985 and 1990 respectively.

These oratorios have each been composed around a theme of spiritual and humanitarian challenge. "Embracing the Tiger," an intensely dramatic work, speaks of those moments when spontaneous human courage has arrested and transformed the tiger powers of oppression and destruction. It is the story of Amrita Devi, a woman of the Bishnoi people in India, who in 1730 sacrificed her life in an attempt to save the sacred Khejri trees. Following her lead, 363 villagers also embraced the trees and were killed. Two hundred and forty years later, when the forests of the Western Himalayas were threatened, the story of the act sparked the Chipko movement. A large assemblage of women again put their arms around the trees, and the multinational corporations were forced to abandon their plans to cut down the trees for timber.

"Embracing the Tiger" is subtitled "a choral drama of courage, darkness, and transformation," and is based in part on the tai chi exercise "Embrace the tiger—return to mountain." ("Grasp the power and return it to the self.") That its rehearsal was scheduled during the week prior to Easter made participation a particularly impressive experience. Many were moved to tears, including chorists and soloists. The libretto focuses on

Amrita Devi's moment of decision—and on the impact her decision has upon the Rajah of Jodhpur. The Rajah sees the trees only as timber for the building of his new palace, but Amrita and the villagers regard all life as sacred: "The trees are the power of the earth / The land is the mother of the trees. / She breaks open to give her children goodness. / She nurtures us with green and grain." But even as Amrita and the villagers honor the trees—"Your roots are deep in the foundations of the earth, / Your leaves reach up to touch the hollow of the sky"—the Rajah arrives and sings: "Here, here will I build my palace / Let it sit upon the earth, a jewel /

and bodies, bloodied. All who stand firm will be marked by the tiger."

The Rajah faces his own tiger when he sees the massacre: "Hideous sight. What madness made them throw their lives into the path of woodmen's axe? Did I decree that trees be felled at any cost? . . . You are dead, Amrita, by my greed. I never knew you, yet forever I shall mourn you. . . . And henceforward I shall honor / All that lives and breathes within these lands." The final chorus begins: "Amrita, sister, we honor you, / With Rosa Parks and Mautara, / With Rigoberta, Linda Gunn, / With all the hidden names through time; Shore up our strength with your strength / As we go to meet the tigers / In the cities, in the forest, in the war zone, in ourselves."

Early in the week of rehearsal word came that the last of the trees being cleared for the Newbury bypass near London had been felled; an ancient, mist-covered copse had fallen victim to progress. It had been protected by a community of protesters who lived in tree houses connected by a network of rope catwalks. Word passed within the choir as we rehearsed, "Amrita, come! There are men with axes!" The coinciding of this event with our rehearsals gave a poignant, timeless quality to the oratorio.

The deeper—and sometimes darker—psychological aspects of Amrita's actions and the Rajah's transformation began to reveal themselves after the composer joined us on Friday evening. Francis Grier—chorister at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, as a boy and an appointed organist of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, in 1981 at age 25—also studied music, theology, and meditation in India. He currently works as a psychodynamic counselor and a marital psychotherapist. The extremely challenging score reflects his brilliance as a musician, and his training in psychotherapy strongly influenced his collaboration with the librettist, Sue Mayo. To watch his face as he heard for the first time his composition being performed, to receive his gracious but firm corrections and suggestions, to be buoyed by his encouragement ("Increase your confidence; you really do know it!")—all this added to our sense of history-in-the-making.

Community was established quickly. Most of the approximately 180 chorists and 60 instrumentalists were Quakers, as was the renowned Welsh conductor, John Hywel. In



Soaring up to touch the hollow of the sky."

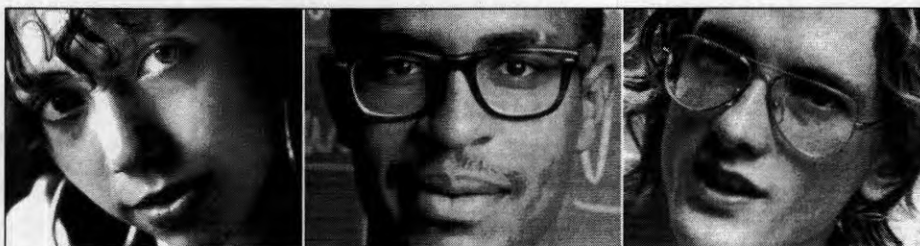
When the woodcutters arrive with their axes, Amrita knows her moment has come. The life of the Khejri trees is as dear to her as her own, but her courage wavers when her husband and child arrive; she invokes the voices of others "in past, in present, and in days to come . . . whom time has chosen to stand firm. . . ." The voices of two are heard: Mautara, a priest of the Ngariki tribe in the Cook Islands, who lay down his spear and approached the enemy carrying only his "fan of peace"; and Rosa Parks, whose refusal to give up her bus seat to a white man sparked the bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama—leading eventually to the desegregation of the buses. Shored up by these voices, Amrita embraces the tree. The woodcutters order her to let go: "Your bloody price is suicide. . . . Don't touch the tree! Back off!" The horror of the moment is realized in a single word: "Strike!" and the chorus whispers, "She is dead. . . . See how the birds fall silent." Other villagers are in turn struck down: "Tree trunks—

Laura Nell Morris lives in Washington, D.C., and is a member of Hopewell (Va.) Meeting. She served as Friend in Residence at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre in Birmingham, England, during the 1996 summer term.

addition to myself, two others came from the United States: soprano Dona Boyce-Manoukian of Langley Hill (Va.) Meeting and flutist Charles Coltrane of New Garden (N.C.) Meeting. Rehearsals were held on the campus of Bromsgrove College south of Birmingham—an institution that had its beginnings in the Middle Ages as a chantry school. The 12-hour-long days were well scheduled around rehearsals, bounteous meals, and free time for walking, viewing issue-related videos, additional music-making, and socializing. In the time-honored British tradition (and greatly appreciated by this American), no rehearsals, intense though they were, were allowed to interfere with morning coffee or afternoon tea.

Each day began and ended with worship; this was established at the close of the first rehearsal, held on Monday evening prior to Easter. We had ended with another program piece, C.H.H. Parry's "Blest Pair of Sirens," based on a poem by John Milton. As the closing line, "To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light," soared to the vaulted ceiling of the old chapel of Bromsgrove College, John Hywel immediately bowed his head—and the presence of the Spirit fell upon us. On performance night, Easter Monday, before entering Symphony Hall we sat together in worship on the floor of one of the rehearsal rooms, opening our hearts so that the creative power of the Spirit might speak through us.

An encouraging note for North American Friends: There is keen interest among British Friends that a new work in progress, based on the life of John Woolman, might incorporate the musical interests and gifts of North American Friends—with the possibility of a premier performance in the United States. This work will assume a form similar to that of "The Fire and the Hammer"—a celebration of the spiritual quest of George Fox that incorporates readings from his journal and songs performed by the Quaker Festival Orchestra and Chorus. There is a possibility, I'm convinced, that the Leavers could be persuaded to bring "The Fire and the Hammer" across the Atlantic for presentation: at the Friends General Conference Gathering? at yearly meeting sessions? Your suggestions and invitations are welcome, as are indications of interest in the Woolman production. What an ideal opportunity for Friends to lift their voices together in song! For additional information, please write to the Leavers Arts Base, 8 Lennox Road, Finsbury Park, London N4 3NW, UK (Fax: 0171 272 8405). □



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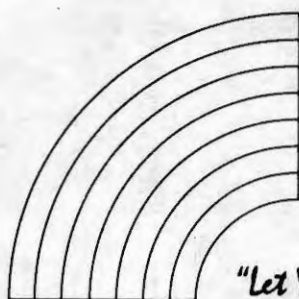
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Reports

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting

Philadelphia Yearly Meeting held its 316th annual sessions at the Arch Street Meeting-house in Philadelphia, Pa., March 20-24. The experience of a residential yearly meeting at Allentown College in the summer of 1995 had been a gratifying one, which the 1996 yearly meeting agreed to repeat in the summer of 1997. Although numbers were fewer in Allentown, continuity and community were seen as assets.

Faith and action, the two inseparable elements of the Religious Society of Friends, were once again in evidence at the 1996 sessions. The recommendations of the Structure and Workings Committee provided a major focus, with one threshing session and two discussion sessions devoted to them. Clerks of monthly and quarterly meetings comprised this committee, which had been at work for 15 months studying the problems of the yearly meeting. Revision of the committee structure, a unified budget, and changes in the method of financing the yearly meeting were the major recommendations, with which the yearly meeting united. An implementation committee is to work out the means of carrying out the recommendations. The Structure and Workings Committee set a simple clearness test for any process, structure, funding, etc. to be considered: Does it nurture and support the collective spiritual journey of Friends?

An appropriate introduction to the consideration of putting our faith into action was provided by the question: How can we raise up our Quaker vision of the possibility of a better world? From helping children develop strategies for dealing with conflict to working on the global level by such means as the United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, the meeting shared its attempts to answer the question. Concerns about education went beyond the perennial problem of financing a Friends school education to the responsibilities of all to help beleaguered public education. An afternoon session focused the meetings' attention on "Friendly service as expressed in our personal experience, our monthly and quarterly meetings, and those yearly meeting activities grounded in grassroots activities." The variety and richness of responses spoke well for the current vitality and concern for others of contemporary Friends.

—Marjorie M. Anderson

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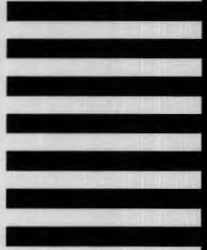
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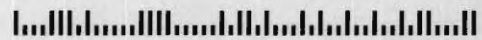
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News of Friends

The American Friends Service Committee is supporting the work of Washington Quaker Workcamps and the National Council of Churches in response to the burnings of African American churches. The AFSC released the following statement on June 21:

Daily we hear of new and spreading incidents of attacks on houses of worship throughout our country. The majority of these attacks have been on African American congregations, which serve as the heart of the African American community and have been powerful centers of social transformation for generations. This calls us once again to be mindful and responsive to our nation's history and current struggle with bigotry and racial violence.

We believe that the separate acts spring from a climate supportive of scapegoating and hostility, particularly of people of color. Many organizations . . . that preach racial hatred bear responsibility for this climate.

The burnings must stop. We call upon law enforcement authorities at the federal, state, and local levels to intensify their search for the arsonists, to provide protection for all churches, and to pursue a full and impartial search for the truth, including the possibility that this is a coordinated campaign to intimidate communities. . . .

We ask our public leaders to challenge the climate in which these acts are allowed to be perpetrated. The tendency to deny the racist character of these events and to target suspicion on church members must stop. Race hatred in all of its manifestations should be recognized and rejected.

The AFSC has worked for racial justice throughout our history. . . . These events make painfully evident that the struggle must go on.

We commend the initiatives taken by the Washington Quaker Workcamps and the National Council of Churches to recruit volunteers and raise funds to help rebuild these churches. [See story, p. 7] Earmarked contributions to support church-rebuilding work may be sent to AFSC, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102, telephone (215) 241-7086.

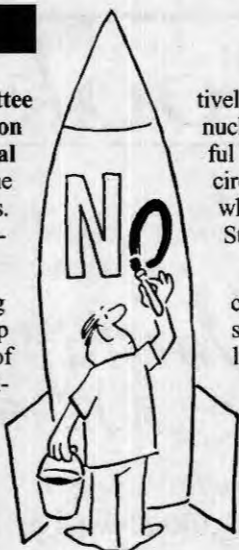
The International Court of Justice, responding to a request from the United Nations General Assembly, recently presented its opinion on the legality of the use of nuclear weapons in war. In the July 8 ruling, the Court concluded in a split decision that:

. . . the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law;

However, in view of the current state of international law, and of the element of fact at its disposal, the Court cannot conclude defini-

tively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defense, in which the very survival of a State would be at stake.

The World Court did conclude, in a unanimous decision, that "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control." (*From The Friend*, July 12)



Following discussions at Norristown (Pa.) Meeting on Friends and their reticence regarding outreach, one young Friend suggested the following classified advertisement: "FOUND! 300-YEAR-OLD RELIGION. GOOD AS NEW." (*From Norristown (Pa.) Meeting's June newsletter*)

The Vietnam War is over—by Executive Order. "June 30, 1996, as of midnight thereof, is hereby designated as the date of termination of combat activities in the zone comprised of the area described in Executive Order 11216 of April 24, 1965.—William J. Clinton, The White House" (*From the June Friends Committee on National Legislation Washington Newsletter*)

The FRIENDS JOURNAL Campaign

\$100,000 Pledge Received

The FRIENDS JOURNAL Campaign relies on a broad base of support from the many people who care about the JOURNAL and the role it serves in shaping the future of the Religious Society of Friends. The board and staff entered the campaign confident of the support we would receive from the broad base of our readership, but with little idea as to where (or if!) the large gifts so essential to an \$800,000 campaign would come from.

As word of the Campaign has spread, Friends have come forth with gifts of all sizes. We are particularly pleased to report that several conversations early in the Campaign led to a \$100,000 foundation gift in support of the JOURNAL and its work.

While the financial benefits of such a gift are readily apparent, the personal benefits are also worth noting. In the words of our editor, "This certainly makes it easier to sleep at night!" (Cheers could also be heard from various parts of the country when the good news was shared with members of the Campaign Steering Committee!)

Additional Support Received from the Shoemaker and Tyson Funds

In May the trustees of the Thomas H. and Mary Williams Shoemaker Fund visited the FRIENDS JOURNAL office and met with representatives of the JOURNAL board about the needs of the JOURNAL and the

importance of the Campaign. A very generous gift of \$25,000 followed.

We are also deeply appreciative to the trustees of the Tyson Memorial Fund for their gift of \$15,000 in support of the Campaign. The Tyson Fund, established by members of the Tyson family, all birthright members of Abington (Pa.) Meeting, has long been known for its support of organizations and educational programs of benefit to the Religious Society of Friends.

Fall Appeal to Monthly Meetings

As an independent publication that relies on financial support from throughout our Religious Society, a key part of the Campaign this fall will be outreach to meetings and individuals throughout the United States and Canada. Vint Deming will be spending a lot of time "on the road," contacting our readership around the country.

An important part of the fall Campaign will be an appeal to the 510 Friends meetings from New England to California who rely on the JOURNAL as a source of nourishment and information. As stated by Lee Neff, clerk of the Campaign Steering Committee and a member of University Meeting in Seattle, Washington: "The JOURNAL reaches across our geographical boundaries and serves as a voice that connects Friends to Friends around the world. It is important that all meetings—regardless of their size or the amount of financial commitment they can make—support this Campaign."

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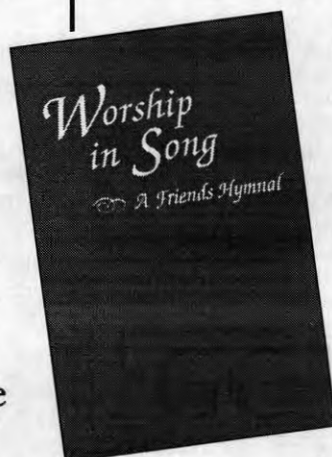
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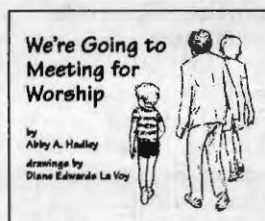
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Bulletin Board

•Issues of concern to Friends are being addressed over the airwaves. In January, Friends Committee on National Legislation announced a new, collaborative, grassroots initiative to support and coordinate advocates who are monitoring and participating in local talk radio, nationwide. FCNL is encouraging its constituents to create local "Roots on the Radio!" efforts in their neighborhoods, organizations, and places of worship. The program aims to get people talking about issues like federal budget priorities, military spending, and the arms trade. "Roots teams" adopt a local radio talk show and plan calls to the station during its "open microphone" time, when listeners are invited to call in and speak on any topic. Radio remains an accessible and relatively informal medium—ideally suited to open civic dialogue. Each "Roots team" commits to three actions: monitor local radio stations in order to find programs that encourage listeners to call in; coordinate call-in strategies and messages with other team members; report on each attempt to get on the radio, successful or not, to the FCNL office. FCNL will supply tips on using talk radio and information on current issues. For more information on "Roots on the Radio!", contact FCNL, 245 Second St., NE, Washington, DC 20002-5795. (From the June issue of FCNL Washington Newsletter)

•The 1996 International Day of Peace will take place on Sept. 17. The day opens at the United Nations in New York City with a 10 a.m. ringing of the Peace Bell and a message from the UN Secretary-General. At 3 p.m., during the opening ceremony of the UN General Assembly, delegates from every Member State will stand together in a moment of silence. For years James Bresky, a teacher from Wilkes Barre, Pa., has been encouraging local communities to commemorate the day with their own bell ringings, a moment of silence, and other creative observances. He is requesting that individuals let him know how their communities observe the day. Write to James J. Bresky, 28 Academy St. #3, Wilkes Barre, PA 18702-3802. (From *Wilmington College's Peace Resource Center Summer Newsletter*)

•"Nuclear Abolition 2000" is a conference cosponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, Sept. 27–28, at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colo., to initiate work for an Abolition 2000 Campaign in Colorado. The Abolition 2000 Campaign calls on the nuclear powers to enter into negotiations now, and conclude them by the year 2000, for a nuclear weapons abolition convention that requires the phased elimination of all nuclear weapons within a timebound framework. For more information, contact Tom Rauch at the AFSC Colorado Office, 1664 Lafayette St., Denver, CO 80218, telephone (303) 832-4789, fax (303) 832-4823.

•"Examining the New South Africa" is the title of a travel seminar, Oct. 26–Nov. 9, sponsored by the Center for Global Education. The two-week trip offers the opportunity to witness firsthand the potential for, and barriers to, development and reconstruction in a country ravaged by decades of apartheid rule. The itinerary includes meetings with grassroots community organizers, members of political parties, government representatives, church advocates, women's groups, and people involved in post-election development work. For an application or more information about this travel seminar, telephone (800) 299-8889. For information on future seminars to other locations, contact the Center for Global Education, Augsburg College, 2211 Riverside Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55454, telephone (612) 330-1159, e-mail globaled@augsburg.edu; website <http://www.augsburg.edu/global/>. (From the July issue of *Seeds... Sprouts Edition*)

•The third annual "Citizens' Conference to Stop Gun Violence" will take place Sept. 27–28 in Washington, D.C. The conference provides an opportunity for grassroots activists to meet, learn how to organize their communities effectively, and strategize. The objectives of the Citizens' Conference are to improve communication and coordination and to learn practical techniques and strategies to reduce gun violence. Seminars will be offered for activists at all levels of organizing experience. For more information, contact Desmond Riley at (202) 544-7227 or by e-mail at edfund@aol.com.

Calendar

SEPTEMBER

6–8—"Sustainable Leadership: Strengthening ourselves for the long run," a workshop led by George Lakey in Washington, D.C. Cost is on a sliding scale from \$125 to \$285. Contact Training Center Workshops, 4719 Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143, telephone (215) 729-7458, fax 729-1910, e-mail peacelearn@igc.apc.org.

20–22—Gordon Browne will guide members and attenders in "Quaker Explorations" to consider what is central in the faith of Quakers and how that shapes spirituality, life experience, witness, and meeting faith and practice. Cost for the weekend is \$90. Contact Woolman Hill, 107 Keets Rd., Deerfield, MA 01342, telephone (413) 774-3431.

27–29—"Ploughing into the Peace Testimony," a gathering for study and reflection at Carlisle (Pa.) Meetinghouse, sponsored by Friends World Committee for Consultation, Section of the Americas, Southeast Region. Program will include Friends Peace Teams, Alternatives to Violence Project, personal relationships to the peace testimony, visits to local attractions, a coffeehouse, and a stone soup banquet. Childcare and a program for young Friends will be available. Contact C.J. Swet, Southeast Region Clerk, 7040 Woodville Rd., Mt. Airy, MD 21771, telephone (301) 831-7446.

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Books

This We Can Say: Talking Honestly About Sex

By David Blamires, Loraine Brown, June Ellis, Colin Hunter, Christine Knott, Neil Pickering, Elisabeth Salisbury, Chris Skidmore, and Zoe White. *Nine Friends Press, Reading, UK, 1995. 96 pages. £6/paperback; £6.50 including postage from Nine Friends Press, P.O. Box 2165, Reading RG6 7YZ, UK.*

Good writing, said Kafka, is "an ice-axe, to break the frozen seas within us." To me, this exactly describes the power of this slim book.

Written by nine British Friends, it is dedicated to the memory of a tenth member of their group, the Quaker doctor Gordon Macphail, who died of AIDS halfway through the process that led to the book's creation. Meeting over the span of five years, the group was funded by the Literature Committee of Quaker Home Service, who originally intended that they might produce a modern version of the pioneering 1963 book *Towards a Quaker View of Sex*. Group members came from many different sexual orientations and lifestyles: heterosexual, bisexual, gay; single, separated, divorced, married. They based their meetings on creative listening techniques, and the book they ended up with was based on their own voices speaking their own experience. Literature Committee felt unable to endorse the book as an official "Quaker statement," so it has been privately published.

As one reads, it is like the deepest, most wonderful conversation unfolding. The authors speak from the heart and reach the heart of the reader. Their words unlock the unspoken and give language and context to experiences that may be amongst the most important of our lives, but are often the least explored and shared. As one group member put it:

I've also felt the gift and relief of hearing others' stories. The fact of our differences has not been significant, it's the honesty and humanness that has been important, and being able to locate and connect these feelings in myself. It's good to be released from isolation, to release my experience and put it in a larger human arena of experience and consciousness.

It is an intensely readable book, which teenagers might be particularly grateful to discover (although, as the authors point out, "you can be shy, lonely, and frightened at 50 as well as 15").

Here we find testimonies to many different truths, from the blessings of growing old together and the dear familiarity of the sleeping face of a lifelong partner, to the memory of the shock of being sexually abused, or the bolt of thrilling sexual electricity that can pass from one person to another, a moment that can resonate for a lifetime. I laughed aloud at one account of masturbation (with its "plea-

sure... mixed with fear and guilt"): "Never again!" I wrote in my Letts diary, in a futile attempt to convince myself that it was possible to reform. "As for masturbation," wrote another, "my confession is that I'd probably rather read a good book." And another: "Perhaps here is the place to admit something I have never dared to admit in the five years we have been together because I have felt so ashamed about it. I still fear that you will despise me and think me odd. I have never masturbated. That took a great deal of courage to type."

Apart from introductory and concluding chapters, the book is made up of extracts from writings the group sent each other between meetings, sometimes on a pre-agreed theme. Although anonymous, each extract is "owned" by the whole group: "So, this is our final act of faith as a group: though each piece was written by one person only among the ten of us, we all own everything that is said here, and have joined together to publish it." The group did not flinch from exploring feelings of suffering and failure, as well as joy and wholeness. I love this account of the menopause:

Whatever happened to the menopause? I missed the menopause—or maybe it missed me. I was so busy living that it just passed me by... I looked back and thought of one occasion when I might have had a hot flash, but then the room was warm and there was that sudden mutual attraction between a male colleague and myself as our eyes met across the table...

Some moments are extraordinarily moving, like the agonized exploration of this question: "How can someone who professes to be a pacifist... find pleasure in giving someone else pain?" The conclusion he discovers is that perhaps this passion, which induces such shame, is given to him, or indeed to the reader:

... to remind you... that you are only human, and that humanity has its unsafe districts, its places to avoid, that could do with cleaning up. Perhaps she [that passion] is why you joined Friends, perhaps she is why you are gentle, why you try so hard to be kind, to care. Not in horrified reaction to her, but in the light of her existence.

This We Can Say is true to the complexities of human experience. It is a wonderful book.

—Jane Serrailier Grossfeld
(Reprinted from *The Friends' Quarterly*, July 1995)

Jane Serrailier Grossfeld is a member of Reading (UK) Meeting.

Correction for "Resources" in the May issue: *Chickamauga and the Underground Railroad: A Tale of Two Grandfathers* is available from the author for a donation to FUM, AFSC, or FCNL. Contact James O. Bond, 17305 Quaker Lane, Sandy Spring, MD 20860.

Milestones

Births/Adoptions

Fleming—*Daniel Theodore Buckingham Fleming*, on May 2, to Robin Buckingham and Douglas Fleming, members of Fresh Pond (Mass.) Meeting and attendees of Atlanta (Ga.) Meeting.

Gillock—*Sarah Clemencia Gillock*, on April 24, to Chris and Consuelo Gillock, of Evanston (Ill.) Meeting.

Given—*Gabriel Scott Given*, on March 6, to Barbara Scott and Mac Given, of Media (Pa.) Meeting.

Kane—*Sarah Aislinn Kane*, on April 27, to Dorothy Cary and Philip Kane. Dorothy is a member of Germantown (Pa.) Meeting.

Roos—*Madeline Louise Roos*, on March 23, to Amy and Peter Roos. Amy is a member of Somerset Hills (N.J.) Meeting.

Marriages/Unions

Cannon-Courant—*David Andrew Courant* and *Kathryn Lee Cannon*, on June 15, under the care of Swarthmore (Pa.) Meeting.

Fritz-Baker—*Kevin Baker* and *Melissa Fritz*, on May 4, at and under the care of Winston-Salem (N.C.) Meeting.

Hutchins-Steinberg—*Dylan Joshua Steinberg* and *Amy Ayer Hutchins*, on June 22, at and under the care of Swarthmore (Pa.) Meeting.

Lee-Fatula—*John Fatula* and *Audrey Lee*, on May 18, under the care of Central Philadelphia (Pa.) Meeting.

Mickevich-Cullinan—*Katharine Cullinan* and *Janet Mickevich*, on March 17, under the care of Cambridge (Mass.) Meeting.

Deaths

Beer—*Winifred Cadbury Beer*, 69, on May 4, of cancer, at Kendal retirement community in Kennett Square, Pa. Born in Cambridge, Mass., the youngest child of Henry J. and Lydia Brown Cadbury, Winnie was nurtured in a thoroughly Quaker environment. She spent her summers in the Adirondack Mountains at Back Log Camp, which was operated by her family and frequented mostly by Quaker families. She was a graduate of Westtown School and Bryn Mawr College, where she majored in English. A voracious reader, she worked as an editor and as a curator of manuscripts at Harvard University's Houghton Library. Following her marriage to Martin Beer in 1951, Winnie worked at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. Two years later the couple moved to Haddonfield, N.J., and began a family. Winnie later earned a master's degree in library science from Drexel University in Philadelphia. After her four daughters were grown, she worked as a librarian at Marlton, N.J., Middle School from 1976 until retirement in 1992. For 29 years, she and her husband led bicycle tours through Europe, first with teenagers, and later with adults. As a member of Haddonfield (N.J.) Meeting for 43 years, Winnie devoted much of her energy to Quaker concerns. She served on virtually all posts and committees of Haddonfield Meeting; helped to found the South Jersey Peace Center and an organization providing



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affordable housing for minorities; served on many Philadelphia Yearly Meeting committees, including the committee in charge of Westtown School; and was clerk of Representative Meeting. In the summer of 1957, she and her husband directed "Interns in Industry," an American Friends Service Committee project for college students. Winnie was valued for her keen insight into group and personal dynamics and was sought after for advice by committees and individuals, both Friends and friends. She approached everyone with intelligence, sympathy, humor, and a straightforward, endearing manner. Winnie is survived by her husband, Martin; four daughters, Michelle B. Caghey, Carol B. Benson, Janet B. Garrett, and Christine B. Braun; 12 grandchildren; a sister, Elizabeth C. Musgrave; and two brothers, Christopher J. Cadbury and Warder H. Cadbury.

Compter—Herman E. Compter, 90, on Jan. 29, in Amherst, N.Y. Born in New York City, Herman graduated from Haverford College in Pennsylvania in 1927 and earned a law degree at Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y. In 1930 he married Frances Smith, whom he met at Cornell. The couple settled in New York City, where Herman worked in corporate law as a litigator until retirement in 1984. The Compters moved to White Plains, N.Y., in 1941 and joined Purchase (N.Y.) Meeting. Gas rationing during World War II made driving to meeting difficult, so they and other local Friends formed a worship group that became Scarsdale (N.Y.) Meeting, to which the Compters transferred their membership in 1946. Herman served as that meeting's legal advisor for many years. He also served several terms as a member of the board of trustees for Oakwood School. When his wife, who had served as clerk of both Scarsdale Meeting and New York Yearly Meeting, died in 1970, Herman established the Frances Compter Fund to help young Scarsdale Friends attend Quaker gatherings. Herman played an important role in New York Yearly Meeting during the 1950s. Minutes from committees on which he served provided the basis for the story of the 1955 reunification of the two New York Yearly Meetings, which had been separate since 1828, as told in *Quaker Crosscurrents*, a book commemorating NYYM's tricentennial in 1995. In 1953 Herman chaired the committee that submitted a 16-point plan of action (mostly his creation) for reunification that was "joyously" accepted at the 1955 joint yearly meeting. Herman then chaired the committee that produced a new *New York Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice*, which was approved in its entirety in 1968. In this process, his leadership, to which he brought his talents as a lawyer and organizer, was significant. At Scarsdale Meeting too he was a clear-eyed leader who provided wit and a steady hand. Herman is survived by two daughters, Ann Burrows and Mary Jane Lasher; a son, Peter Compter; four grandchildren, Jean and Bill Werner and Steven and Christopher Lasher; and a great-grandchild.

Hewitt—Polly (Mary) Oakley Hewitt, 88, on Jan. 17, in Palo Alto, Calif. Born in Trenton, N.J., she was a lifelong member of Trenton (N.J.) Meeting, where she served as a First-day school teacher. She attended Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania and Finch College in New York City. She was a member of the Junior League of Trenton, the Trenton

Garden Club, and the National Society of Colonial Dames, and she served on the boards of Mercer Medical Center, the Family Service Association, and the New Jersey State Museum. Through the later half of her life, she lived in the Western U.S. When her husband, Joseph Ramsey Hewitt, died in 1981, she moved to Palo Alto, Calif., where she helped found a Friends worship group. She is survived by a son, Oakley Hewitt; a daughter, Elizabeth Hewitt Thayer; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Malin—Caroline Cooper Biddle Malin, 90, on April 20, of respiratory failure, at Medford Leas, N.J., retirement community. Born in Mt. Vernon, N.Y., Caroline graduated from Swarthmore College in 1928. She became a member of Swarthmore (Pa.) Meeting while attending Swarthmore College and remained a member of that meeting for the rest of her life. As she and her husband, Patrick Murphy Malin, relocated, Caroline attended Friends Meeting of Washington (D.C.), Oxford (UK) Meeting, Fifteenth Street (N.Y.) Meeting, Scarsdale (N.Y.) Meeting, and Medford Leas (N.J.) Worship Group. Caroline is survived by three sons, Robert Abernethy Malin, Clement Biddle Malin, and Randall Malin; six grandchildren; one great-grandson; a sister, Grace Biddle (Schembs) Coppock; and many nieces, nephews, grandnieces, and grand-nephews.

Patrick—AraBelle Ione Mott Patrick, 95, on November 10, 1995. Born in Hastings, Nebr., the daughter of a Quaker minister, AraBelle grew up in several Nebraska communities before moving to Scott City, Kans., in 1908. She taught in a small school before attending Colorado College and Nebraska Central College. Over the next decade she taught and did social work in Pennsylvania with the House of Industry, a program administered by the American Friends Service Committee. She then took a teaching job in the coal fields of eastern Kentucky. AraBelle married Ira Patrick in 1934 and moved to Fruita, Colo., where she taught high school English and worked in the school library until retirement. After Ira died in 1966, she accepted a year-long assignment as headmistress of a girls school in Kenya. She volunteered for two winters at Quaker Hill in Richmond, Ind., and was an assistant staff person at Minneapolis (Minn.) Meeting during another winter. She also lived at Friends House in Central City, Nebr., where she was a member of Central City Meeting. AraBelle spent her summers at Rockcleft, a camp and retreat center for Friends in Colorado that she and her siblings established in honor of the dream of her parents. In 1990 she moved to a nursing home near Culpepper, Va., to be near her son. AraBelle brought joy and a contagious sense of wonder wherever she went. She had a great love of reading and fine poetry, and she had a wonderful sense of humor. She was preceded in death by her husband, Ira. AraBelle is survived by her son, Kent Patrick; a brother, Horace Mott; a sister, June Webb; and many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Pidcock—Frank Raymond Pidcock, 81, on Dec. 24, 1995, in the Medford Leas, N.J., Health Care Center. Frank was born in Trenton, N.J., and resided in Flemington, N.J., for 31 years before moving to Medford Leas in 1990. He was a lifelong member of Trenton (N.J.) Meeting, where he

served Overseers, the budget and property committees, and as a representative on Burlington Quarterly Steering Committee. Frank also served on the board of Mercer Street Friends Center and as treasurer of Burlington Quarterly Meeting. He was selfless in the discharge of his many duties. He worked for Standard Vacuum Oil Company until 1960 and later was a bank vice president until retirement. Frank was preceded in death by his first wife, Catherine Skillman Pidcock, in 1976, and his second wife, Elizabeth Toth Pidcock, in 1990. He is survived by a daughter, Catherine Thomas; two sons, Frank Stacy Pidcock and Sherwood Clark Pidcock; five grandchildren; and two brothers, Gerald Pidcock and Clark S. Pidcock.

White—Catherine Louise White, 86, in Sun City, Ariz. Catherine (Kay) was born in Hillsboro, Tex., and grew up in Arizona. After graduating from the University of California, she worked as a medical social worker and, later, as an elementary school teacher in California. She was a member of Orange Grove (Calif.) Meeting before moving to Sun City, Ariz., and joining Phoenix (Ariz.) Meeting. The first meeting of the Sun Cities Worship Group was held in her home. Kay was preceded in death by a son, Lou White.

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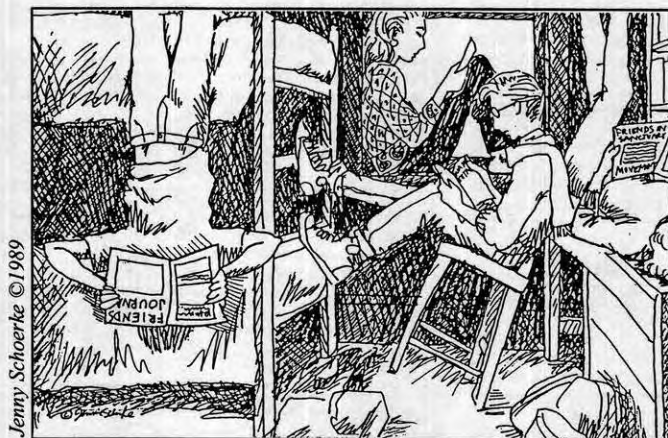
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Join a cooperative, intergenerational neighborhood with 24 townhomes and central community building. Optional shared meals, safe play areas, gardens, playmates and caring adults nearby. A few homes left for sale, 3-5 bedrooms, \$128,000 and up. Four wooded acres in town, radiant floor heating, fiber optics. Construction '96. Westwood CoHousing Community, P.O. Box 16116, Asheville, NC 28816 (704) 232-1110. <http://www.automatrix.com/bak/westwood.html>

Rentals & Retreats

Coast of Maine: One or two Friends to share a Barn-Residence throughout the coming winter with a relatively lively elder lady. Write immediately: Ms. Chouteau Chapin, R.R. 3, Box 832A, Woolwich, ME 04079 or telephone soon after Labor Day: (207) 443-2100.

Pocono Manor. Beautiful, rustic mountain house suitable for gatherings, retreats, and reunions. Seven bedrooms. Three full baths. Beds for 15. Fully equipped. Deck with mountain view. Hiking trails from back door. Weekends, or by the week, May through October. Contact Jonathan Snipes: (215) 736-1856.

A Friendly Maui vacation on a Quaker family organic farm. 20 minutes to local beaches. New stone and cedar building with large octagonal room, skylight, ocean view, walk-in closet, and private bath. Full kitchen, organic vegetable garden, and hot tub. Bed and breakfast or bed and supper: \$70 per day. Weekly and monthly rates available. Write or call Henrietta & Wm. Vitarelli, 375 Kawelo Road, Haiku, HI 96708. Telephone: (808) 572-9205. Fax: 572-6048.

Quaker-based, rural, desert community invites individuals, families, or small groups. We rent homes to prospective community members and space for modest retreats. Write Satya, Friends Southwest Center, McNeal, AZ 85617.

Bald Head Island, N.C. Panoramic view of ocean, dunes, lagoon, and golf course from four-bedroom, two-bath-room, beautifully furnished house with wrap-around deck, two electric golf carts. 14 miles of beach, championship golf, tennis, croquet, swimming, and fishing. 13,000 acres of maritime wilderness. Many birds and wildflowers. No cars on island. Peaceful, friendly. Rental by day or week. (215) 699-9186.

Retirement Living

Foxdale Village, a Quaker life-care community. Thoughtfully designed cottages complemented by attractive dining facilities, auditorium, library, and full medical protection. Setting is a wonderful combination of rural and university environment. Entry fees from \$40,000-\$140,000; monthly fees from \$1,164-\$2,354. 500 East Marylyn Avenue, Department F, State College, PA 16801. Telephone: (800) 253-4951.

KENDAL

COMMUNITIES and
SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

All Kendal communities and services reflect our sound Quaker management, adherence to Friendly values, and respect for each individual. Full service continuing care retirement communities:

Kendal at Longwood; **Crosslands** • Kennett Square, Pa.

Kendal at Hanover • Hanover, N.H.

Kendal at Oberlin • Oberlin, Ohio

Kendal at Ithaca • Ithaca, N.Y.

Independent living with residential services and access to health care:

Coniston and Cartmel • Kennett Square, Pa.

Individualized skilled nursing care, respite care, Alzheimer's care, and personal care residences:

Barclay Friends • West Chester, Pa.

For information call or write: Doris Lambert, The Kendal Corporation, P.O. Box 100, Kennett Square, PA 19348. (610) 388-5581.

FRIENDS HOMES

West

Friends Homes West, the new continuing care retirement community in Greensboro, North Carolina, is now open. Friends Homes West is owned by Friends Homes, Inc., specialists in retirement living since 1968. Friends Homes West includes 171 apartments for independent living and on-site health care services in the 28 private rooms of the Assisted Living Unit or the 40 private rooms of the Skilled Care Nursing Unit. Enjoy a beautiful community in a location with temperate winters and changing seasons. For more information, please call (910) 292-9952, or write Friends Homes West, 6100 West Friendly Road, Greensboro, NC 27410.

Schools

Come visit **Olney Friends School** on your cross-country travels, six miles south of I-70 in the green hills of eastern Ohio. A residential high school and farm, next to Stillwater Meetinghouse, Olney is college preparation built around truthful thinking, inward listening, loving community, and useful work. 61830 Sandy Ridge Road, Barnesville, Ohio, 43713. (614) 425-3655.

Westtown School: Under the care of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting since 1799, Westtown seeks Quaker children for day (PreK-10) and boarding (9-12). Boarding is required in 11th and 12th grades. Significant Quaker presence among 600 students, 80 teachers. Challenging academics, arts, athletics, in a school where students from diverse racial, national, economic, and religious backgrounds come together to form a strong community of shared values. Financial assistance is available. Westtown, PA 19395. (610) 399-7900.

John Woolman School. Rural California, grades 9-12. Preparation for college and adulthood, small classes, caring staff, work program, service projects; board, day. 13075 Woolman Lane, Nevada City, CA 95959. (916) 273-3183.

The Quaker School at Horsham, a value-centered elementary and middle school for students with learning differences. Small, remedial classes, qualified staff, serving Philadelphia, Bucks, and Montgomery Counties. 318 Meeting House Road, Horsham, PA 19044. (215) 674-2875.

Lansdowne Friends School—A small Friends school for boys and girls three years of age through sixth grade, rooted in Quaker values. We provide children with a quality academic and a developmentally appropriate program in a nurturing environment. Whole language, thematic education, conflict resolution, Spanish, after-school care, summer program. 110 N. Lansdowne Avenue, Lansdowne, PA 19050. (610) 623-2548.

United Friends School: coed; preschool-8; emphasizing integrated, developmentally appropriate curriculum, including whole language and manipulative math; serving upper Bucks County. 20 South 10th Street, Quakertown, PA 18951. (215) 538-1733.

The Meeting School: a Quaker alternative high school for 30 students who want an education and lifestyle promoting Friends testimonies of peace, equality, and simplicity. Students live in faculty homes, sharing meals, campus work, silence, community decision making. Characteristic classes include: Conflict Resolution, Native American Studies, Ecology, Human Rights, Alternative Housing, Mythology, Quantum Physics. College preparatory and alternative graduation plans. Wooded rural setting near Mt. Monadnock; organic garden, draft horses, sheep, poultry. Annual four-week intensive independent study projects. The Meeting School, 56 Thomas Road, Rindge, NH 03461. (603) 899-3366.

Westbury Friends School—Safe, nurturing Quaker environment for 90 children, nursery-grade 6, on beautiful 17-acre grounds. Small classes and dedicated teachers. Music, art, computers, Spanish, and gym. Extended-day, vacation-holiday, and summer programs. Half- and full-day nursery, preK. Brochure: Westbury Friends School, 550 Post Avenue, Westbury, NY 11590. (516) 333-3178.

Stratford Friends School provides a strong academic program in a warm, supportive, ungraded setting for children ages 5 to 13 who learn differently. Small classes and an enriched curriculum answer the needs of the whole child. An at-risk program for five-year-olds is available. The school also offers an extended day program, tutoring, and summer school. Information: Stratford Friends School, 5 Llandillo Road, Havertown, PA 19083. (610) 446-3144.

Junior high boarding school for grades 7, 8, 9. Small, academic classes, challenging outdoor experiences, community service, consensus decision making, daily work projects in a small, caring, community environment. **Arthur Morgan School**, 1901 Hannah Branch Road, Burnsville, NC 28714. (704) 675-4262.

Services Offered

Research by hour or project in Library of Congress, Smithsonian, etc. Established humanities scholar (Ph.D.) and social scientist. (301) 270-5258.

Low-Cost Full Internet for Friends through Penn'sNet from anywhere in the U.S. or world; PC or Mac. \$9.50/month plus usage charges of \$1 to about \$3/hour. Benefits William Penn House. Contact: Penn'sNet, 515 E. Capitol Street, Washington, DC 20003.

Desktop publishing, statistical analysis, and technical writing services to make your good idea better—completed easier. Information searching. APA manuscript formatting. Newsletters prepared. Brochure available. (302) 653-0769. Eastburn@msn.com or 1436 Clayton-Delaney Road, Clayton, DE 19938-9794.

Friendly Financial Services. Let me help you prepare for retirement or work out an estate plan. Socially responsible investments—my specialty. Call Joyce Moore, LUTCF, Joyce Moore Financial Services at (610) 258-7532 or e-mail JoyceM1955@AOL.com. (Securities offered by Washington Square Securities, 1423 N. 28th Street, Allentown, PA 18104, [610] 437-2812.)

Celo Valley Books: Personal attention to all phases of book production (25 to 5,000 copies). Typing, editing, layout, final delivery. Free brochure. 346 Seven Mile Ridge Road, Burnsville, NC 28714.

Friends Helping Friends Grow. Investment certificates are available from Friends Extension Corporation. These investments promote the growth of Friends by providing low cost loans to build new facilities or renovate existing facilities. For information contact Margaret Bennington, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, IN 47374. Telephone: (317) 962-7573.

We are a fellowship, Friends mostly, seeking to enrich and expand our spiritual experience. We seek to obey the promptings of the Spirit, however named. We meet, publish, correspond. Inquiries welcome! Write **Quaker Universalist Fellowship**, 121 Watson Mill Road, Landenberg, PA 19350-9344.

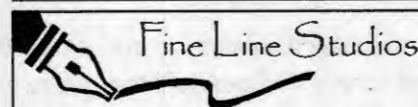
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Family Relations Committee's Counseling Service (PYM) provides confidential professional counseling to individuals and couples in most geographic areas of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. All counselors are Quakers. All Friends, regular attenders, and employees of Friends organizations are eligible. Sliding fees. Further information or brochure, contact Steve Gulick, 1501 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102. (215) 988-0140.



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Moving to North Carolina? Maybe David Brown, a Quaker real estate broker, can help. Contact him at 1208 Pine-wood Dr., Greensboro, NC 27410. (910) 294-2095.

Summer Rentals

Beautiful Vacation House. Maryland Eastern Shore. Air-conditioned, 2 bedrooms, 1.5 baths, loft, deck. Near beach, golf course; peaceful, wooded; \$550/week. (410) 433-0605.



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Woolman Commons in Mount Holly, NJ

*for people ready to give up the responsibility
of their own home, but not ready for a
full-service, continuing care community.*

Woolman Commons is known as a "partial-service" community. That means your biggest concerns are taken care of for you: building and grounds maintenance, real estate taxes, routine medical needs, prescription drugs, etc. (You have the option of giving up even more chores such as housekeeping for an additional charge.)

Because you're still active and able, you make your own meals and arrange your own transportation. At Woolman Commons, by continuing to do some things for yourself, your monthly maintenance fees are lower than they would be in a full-service community.

Also because Woolman Commons is a satellite community of Medford Leas Continuing Care Retirement Community, all your nursing and medical needs are assured through Medford Leas for your lifetime. In other words, as your needs change, our care and services can change to meet these needs — helping you maintain as high a quality of life as possible.

At Woolman Commons, you'll be stimulated by other independent, active people involved in civic and cultural activities, volunteer work, worship groups... just to name a few. People still energetic and spirited enough to enjoy and get the most out of life.

At Woolman Commons, you'll enjoy the charm and convenience of historic Mount Holly. You can walk to banks, the post office, many nice restaurants, and the lively business district. Nearby public transportation takes you to Philadelphia or New York City and shopping malls are just a short drive away.

Woolman Commons of Medford Leas

one and two-bedroom units in colonial brick
buildings... a community in the Friends tradition
of care and concern.

For more information and a brochure
giving many more specifics, including
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609-654-3000 or 800-331-4302 (except NJ)
and ask for the Director of Admissions.



Medford, New Jersey 08055

Medford Leas is a Quaker-related Continuing Care Retirement Community conducted by The Estaugh, a non-profit corporation founded in 1914. A special note to Friends: Medford Leas has scholarship monies available to assist Friends with limited assets or income who are interested in living as part of our community.

