

Speed bumps and Quaker healers

John Calvi, Putney (VT) Monthly Meeting

EVER SINCE GEORGE FOX YANKED ON THE HEAD OF THAT POOR Quaker with the broken neck in New Jersey, Friends have been wary of Friends doing any sort of healing work. And for good reason—anything involving great power must be understood, approached, and practiced carefully and prayerfully. Fortunately, George was well guided—the broken neck was healed and the guy who had been left for dead got up and had supper.

There are many obstacles to Friends engaging in practices of healing. I want to consider some of them so that they may be anticipated and used for learning. An obstacle may be the beginning of important learning. Perceiving ‘that thing in the way’ as a speed bump and an occasion for careful observation will help make the journey ahead richer.

Personally, I have hit more bumps than a flat rock skipping across a lake in summer time. I hope I am getting more graceful about bumping into things. I know I laugh at myself more. And the reasons to laugh at myself don’t seem to be in decline.

There seem to be two types of speed bumps for most seekers in general and those seeking to heal in particular. There are the speed bumps of the world and the self-generated speed bump. The ones from inside are sneaky. Often the first response to an obstacle is blaming. It’s always so embarrassing to be hell bent on blaming someone for something only to find out that we are “them.”

Quakers speed-bump themselves at healing by trying to do too much, or claim too much, or think they know or control more than they do. These are great lessons in humility. What do we actually know, and how much control do we have, and what can we actually accomplish, are good things to keep track of and ponder every so often, especially as these things change with time and experience.

I think the first obstacle is learning how to pay close attention for long stretches. There was that day I was too tired to pay close attention. I showed up at the hospital to give a dying man some energy work. He’d lost all speech and kept looking at me oddly and then at my hands before I realized I’d given a twenty-minute healing to his catheter beneath too many blankets. All spiritual life calls for paying close attention—inwardly to the self, outwardly to the world, and upwardly toward the divine. All of these have messages to guide us and none ever stops its input.

The best obstacle to overcome is the confusion between talent or skill and the blessing of grace. There are a zillion techniques to learn and workshops to take regarding healing. Skills can be honed, techniques can be learned, but without a sense of reverence and surrender to the Divine, well let’s just say foreplay never made any babies. If you truly want to be guided in heal-

ing and feel the Holy Spirit deeply in your work, then you must deliberately find enough stillness, welcome, and surrender within yourself—as grace does not prefer a moving target, but can find the mover if need be.

The obstacles that come to us from the world tend to be larger, louder, and less private. Healing involves the powers of surrender, passion, release, and honesty in ways that can scare people. I know a wonderful Quaker woman whose healing gift is to see the colors around people well enough to see if their trouble is emotional, psychological, or physical—and all this from one

legally blind. She is very careful to share this gift as it could easily be doubted and dismissed. To dismiss a gift from God is a mistake of real blindness and easily done by impatience, intolerance, or arrogance.

I recall my cousin Ro bringing home her friend Polly from college. Polly could

sing. No, I mean this girl didn’t need a microphone for a two-state call. When the time of sharing a song came along as happened at my grandmother’s house, Polly sang at a volume and a power that had cows down the road giving cream without milk! It was scary to hear that kind of power until you realized it wouldn’t hurt anyone.

Quakers are often uncomfortable with power. They prefer that everyone have just so much and it not gather within a particular person. The Quaker tradition of recording ministers—Friends whose gift of vocal ministry is an obvious, large, and constant blessing—is an attempt to recognize and protect a kind of power from being lost to neglect or ego.

In healing work, the power of the Divine can scare Friends into thinking it’s too much because it’s more than usual. Healing might involve moving a vulnerable aspect of one’s self from hiding into the Light. It might involve touch or a greater awareness of life wounds. All of this can be scary. How that fear reveals itself will depend on each person’s strategies for protection.

Some of my most grateful receivers have been mental health professionals. They can be happy to leave their heady jobs and surrender to feeling their bodies deeply, letting someone else steer, and feel the delight of grace to relieve their hurt. Some mental health professionals have no desire to feel deeply, or surrender, or share the steering wheel, or give in to grace for goodness sakes! This resistance may be framed in some psychotherapeutic babble of misunderstanding that has, on occasion, been condescending.

Physicians likewise may know the moves of surrender in spiritual life and welcome a new modality for the relief of physical and emotional hurts. Or they may not want to experience anything they haven’t read about in professional journals. I once had

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We are not “healers.” We are instruments of God’s healing.

—Hobart Mitchell, *Prayer for Healing*

the same feeling about international travel. Why would a gay Italian Quaker go away somewhere to feel foreign when it can all be done so easily right at home! It was my globe trotting husband, Marshall Brewer, who loves international travel more than sleep or breath, who helped me to see that one indeed feels less foreign the more one travels and sees that there are wonderful people everywhere.

Quaker theologian, Elizabeth Watson, told me she knew I wasn't a fake when she felt the heat from my hands, saw bright lights, and heard angels singing as pain left her body. Elizabeth has always been known to have the 800 number to headquarters while so many of us are still doing the spiritual equivalent of tin cans and string. But what was it that day that made Elizabeth come forward for help? We don't know.

Spiritual jealousy, as mentioned in Marty Grundy's Pendle Hill pamphlet *Tall Poppies*, can also be an obstacle to learning or receiving healing work. All spiritual traditions, Friends included, participate in the reality that Light draws darkness. Remember Martin Luther King's *Letter from Birmingham Jail* was not written to friends wanting to name a holiday for him, but to all his peers who wanted him to stop taking the gospels so literally. Healing work calls up honesty that has always simply been the quickest way to get into trouble, good Godly trouble.

These obstacles to healing work have not changed among Friends in hundreds of years. Let us not be impatient with those who use separation to decline help. Let us know that as we provide more and more reverently and gracefully, those we can help do come forward.

Spiritual healing with love

Nancyrose Logan, Hanover (NH) Monthly Meeting

MY HEALING JOURNEY CAME WHEN I WAS SURROUNDED BY ANGELS and filled with unconditional love during a near death experience from an ectopic pregnancy. I was told I had work to do on earth that had to do with the white light, love, and my hands. Guided by God's messages in worship and constant prayer, I began my journey by agreeing to become a clean instrument for God by forgiving and loving myself and others. Often feeling as though my feet were of the earth and my heart was of the heavens, I began to feel as though I was not of this world. The world is so beautiful when seen through God's eyes. What was happening to me? Having no one to talk to, no one to understand, I prayed to God regularly about everything and began to read books about healing.

The answer to my prayer came when I met Hobart Mitchell at New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM). Finally someone understood. Through the years Hobart and Jean Mitchell have guided me through my spiritual journey in healing. My insecurities made me believe that I needed to study healing like a curriculum, and I traveled to study and earn certificates in various healing techniques. If God wanted me to do this work, I wanted to do a good job. After telling Hobart what I had learned during a Healing Touch weekend, Hobart looked at me with patience, and replied, "You can learn all these techniques if you want, but healing is simple. You just put your hands where God wants you to, usually on the shoulders. It is called 'laying on of hands' and it has been around a long time. God does

My own speed bumps include all the above over these many years. If only mistakes and foolishness made a good resume! My most current speed bump is the monster of old anger. It slows me down with a crash every so often and has brought on a course of study that is fascinating and exhausting. I am hoping I am in the graduate level of this study as it seems to have been a concentration of more than four years. I know I have been able to be a greater help to others in dealing with their anger because I have surrendered to this class as my own. I know the more I surrender and own and learn, the more grace and patience I am given to do this work—my interior work and my work in the world. It's a deal I don't always remember to be grateful for.

Most of us have the dual work of helping others with their life wounds and helping ourselves with our own life wounds. These two works will always inform one another. A gain in one can be transferred wisdom to the other. The obstacles may feel like setbacks in both or it might just be a surprise quiz that we need to take again and use the right answers in both realms.

Our dearly departed Bill Kreidler, who I miss each day, was fond of reminding us to tell each other our spiritual autobiographies. He knew this was a way to take down walls and make bridges. As we consider healing among Friends, let us share our stories of seeking and obstacles so that we may honor our best wisdom and know one another's light along the way.

John Calvi is a Quaker healer with 20 years of work with sexual abuse survivors, people with AIDS, and tortured refugees.

the work and it doesn't matter where your hands are. Keep it simple." Formulas and certifications were something I thought was important, so I didn't take his advice this time. Years later, when I gained some confidence in my faith, I learned that he was right.

My daughter, Rosemary ran to me crying, "Will you kiss my boo-boo and make it better?" Kissing the hurt finger, I hugged Rosemary and she happily returned to play. Rosemary's finger was healed. Like a lightning bolt it became clear. This was a simplified example of how God wanted me to serve. When we love, we, as children of God, open our hearts and pour God's love out as instruments to heal others. Healing is when God's love connects with a soul, filling it, healing spiritual wounds. The most important concept is that when we are healed the soul feels unconditional love, a sense of completeness, destiny, and peace. The body may or may not be healed, but we feel our soul has been healed. Loneliness dissolves as we realize that God's love is unconditional, with us always. Sometimes miracles occur as people are given faith in God for the first time, have visions of Jesus, are filled with unconditional love, or are physically healed.

Shyly, I began to offer to help Friends in my Meeting and miracles happened. God and Jesus never cease to amaze me. Although some have been physically healed, more often people have been connected by God's love, to a place where they hear or see heavenly messages. A universalist Friend was surrounded with uncon-

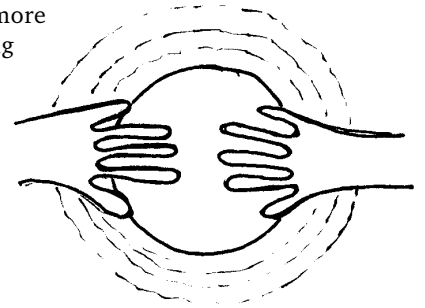
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ditional love as she had a vision of Jesus stand before her. During a NEYM workshop, three out of four of us saw Mary, shining in white light; walk into our healing prayer worship, with a breeze. There is great power in a group of people who meet, asking God to use them as instruments in healing. A Friend with breast cancer eventually died of the disease, but the healing prayer released her of the pain so she could sleep at night. Another Friend reached the point where her heart damage was irreversible and she would die unless a miracle occurred. With intensive prayer, she went from lungs full of fluid to the next day with clear lungs. Once I saw a thirty year old woman go from a wheelchair with arthritis to walking with complete health. These healings didn't occur on a stage. Most happened in a Quaker Meeting for Healing with conservative, everyday people of all ages asking to be instruments for God's love.

We only need three things to be able to heal: an ability to love others, emotional and physical health, and to be in a good spiritual place. My journey as God's instrument for healing has been more about connecting people to God's love, than anything else. God seductively worked me into a flexible reed so that I would be a heavenly flute that passes love as I walk upon the earth. Although being an instrument is a joy and blessing, it is also a humbling experience

to my human ego because I place myself where I feel called and I have no idea what will happen next. People may thank me for rearranging my life to be with them, but I always want them to know that I am only an empty reed placed by their side and God is the healing love that fills that reed. When people call me a "healer," I feel uncomfortable. God is the healer.

Hobart and I have worked over the years to teach others how to gather in a Quaker Meeting for Healing Worship, to send healing love to others. Although Hobart will be deeply missed after his death this year, he will live forever in all those who continue to pass the seeds of God's healing. My leading is to focus on prayer, pastoral care, supporting Friends in the healing ministry, and continuing to teach others how to be instruments in God's healing. As more Meetings create healing groups, God's seeds spread like dandelions. There is such power in a group, gathered in the name of the Holy Spirit. Why don't you start one?



Artwork: Bill Kriebel

A clear conduit of God's care

Kate Kerman, Monadnock (NH) Monthly Meeting

SOME TIME AFTER I GRADUATED FROM AN 18 MONTH COURSE IN Therapeutic Touch (TT)—a course which was a clear example of “way opening” repeatedly—I had a series of dreams about the two women who taught me this highly intuitive healing method. They were powerful healers, and I wondered at various times if I should be following in their footsteps in other ways than this discipline. For instance, Djuna was a vegetarian. Would I need to be a vegetarian to be a healer? Which of the spiritual practices that they used would also enhance my work? Although they were very supportive of each of us finding our own style and approach, they did not seem adverse to us looking upon them as gurus.

In my final dream, my teachers were setting up a circle for a healing ceremony. More and more accouterments of ritual were being brought out—crystals, sage, candles. People were embarking on a lengthy preparatory prayer. Impatiently, I stood up and shouted “Don't you know that you don't need to make a big fuss about this?” and started doing healing work without any ceremony. When I woke up, I felt lighter and excited—I had taken back the power I had been giving to them and established myself in my own subconscious as able to move forward on my own terms. I thought about George Fox's warning about empty rituals. In my waking life, I do at times use a candle, sage, or crystals when I am doing healing work; in my experience this clears energy. I do not see these practices as the center of the work I do. Rather they are external aids for my essential intention, which is to be a clear conduit of God's care. They are not at all necessary to the work, which I have done in such diverse settings as sitting on a bus, in a crowded cafeteria, or in a classroom. My interpretation of Fox's warning about empty ritual is not to see

ritual as the problem, but the empty repetition of forms that have replaced the intention behind them. By that interpretation, any form of healing could become an empty ritual, as could any programmed or unprogrammed meeting for worship, unless we are able to continuously renew our commitment to that which lies behind the form.

During my final year of taking the TT course I attended a Pendle Hill workshop on healing by Louise Wilson, a Friend from Virginia Beach. Louise feels clear that one must always heal in the name of Jesus Christ. I had a very powerful experience at that workshop of being “prayed through” for my father (who was, unknown to us, in the beginning stages of dying). In that workshop I also wondered if I would have to imitate Louise by becoming much more Christ oriented than I had been hitherto. Soon afterwards, I had a dream in which I knelt in awe at the feet of a tall, lovely alabaster statue of Christ. The words “How dare you worship a dead statue?” thundered out, the statue split and from it emerged the living Spirit of Christ. This was the prelude to an event of spiritual rebirth and comfort with naming myself as a Christian. It did not lead me to feel that I always need to call on Jesus when doing healing work; but I do pay attention to my leadings in that as in other aspects of the work. Thus at times I do ask Jesus to be present. I have also been blessed by the felt presence of Mary, mother of Jesus, in what felt like a very Catholic atmosphere, and by healers I have known who are now physically dead. I try to take anything that arises in my stride. I don't know if these images are external to me or are internal metaphors, nor do I much care as long as I feel I can stay centered and able to embody the intention of healing for the person I am with.

What is a Meeting for Healing?

Buffy Curtis, West Falmouth (MA) Preparative Meeting, Sandwich Monthly Meeting

THREE FRIENDS SIT HOLDING HANDS IN PRAYER WITH INTENT FOR healing and comfort of a meeting member. As twenty men and women sit in healing worship, each enters the circle, one by one, to be held in the energetic presence. Beside a hospital bed in the emergency room, a Friend stands in deep presence, holding the hand of a patient who may be dying. At a weekly designated time, one Friend holds another in thought and prayer as she sits in waiting in another part of the world. Several Friends agree to pause in their meeting, join hands, and send loving energy to other Friends who are struggling with a complex issue. After a few minutes they resume their own work, more firmly grounded in their purpose. For nearly two hours on September 12th, more than forty Friends and community members gather in the meetinghouse to give prayerful space and worship sharing. Peaceful grieving and comfort are found there. “Wherever two or more are gathered...”

These are but a few examples of experiences I have had among Friends being lead into the ministry of healing. Many Quaker publications are responding to this call by providing a forum for the topic of healing, prayer, and ministry. I, too, feel the awareness and urgency of the work both past and present. For me, it is exciting to experience the willingness of Friends to speak of their leadings, to give a name to what they are doing. Bringing this ministry openly to meetings and Quaker gatherings affirms the increasing need to bring a conscious healing presence and prayer into this present time. I watch as years, indeed centuries, of fear and misunderstanding begin to fall away. More of us are connecting out of our diverse backgrounds, searching each other out, defining what healing is and what this leading is asking of us. The meetings and Friends that are recipients of these gifts—the energies of love, warmth, and divinity—give witness to its values. The rewards for both the giver and receiver are immense.

My journey into this healing has been similar to my path into membership with Friends—by conviction! The deep similarity between Quaker worship and service, and healing work remarkably affirms my Quaker experience of direct connection to Spirit and faithfulness to the opening path. Increasingly, I have been asked to incorporate my background and experience to assist with the nurturing of healing ministry within the local, yearly, and regional meetings. Each event has easily become what I have come to call an “Oh Wow! Oh No!” moment of consciousness; out of the rapture comes the responsibility. At times, “way would open,” at other times it would slam shut, usually at the very point I thought I knew what to do! When least expected, I encountered the greatest results and experiences. The ongoing miracle of getting one’s self out of the way in order to let Spirit work is truly a humbling experience. Showing up and being fully present is sometimes the greater challenge, as is remembering that this is not the work of curing or the “power” to

heal; it is not my work, but, “thy will be done.” The joy of sharing what I have learned with others and acknowledging that this work is accessible to all is a wonderful extension of the foundation of Friends testimony to “that of God” in all of us.

Where has this path taken me thus far? Most recently I helped in establishing local monthly meetings for healing, three gatherings of Quaker Healers (Friends Involved in the Practice of Spiritual

Healing) at Powell House, NY, and the first annual meeting of New England Friends in the Healing Arts at Woolman Hill. A group of Friends from several yearly meetings are exploring the possibilities of establishing a program of nurture and teaching within the context of healing as a spiritual ministry in the northeast. Local meetings are requesting meetings for healing to hold Friends who are sick or dying in the Light. We have also been asked to hold monthly meetings that have been wounded by conflict or struggle. Healing worship and prayer has been indispensable in helping us all with our

grief and pain surrounding the events of September 11. Like the ripple effect from a pebble dropped in water, the influence of the strength and community building that has occurred from these gatherings is becoming more apparent as each meeting leads to another and to another.

I struggle to describe the many miracles surrounding these gatherings. It is difficult to place words into the sacred space of these profound spiritual experiences. The opportunity to reclaim our long, deep history of the ministry of healing as a part of our heritage is fulfilled with each gathering. My experiences are not unique among Friends who have felt and answered this call into healing. There are Friends who have been doing this work for years. We honor the memory of the late Hobart Mitchell whose name was synonymous with meetings for healing among New England Friends for many years. He leaves us with remarkable memories of his ministry. Many individual Friends and meetings continue this corporate work. The support of our meetings at all levels is essential to its continued growth and development. It benefits everyone in our Religious Society, for indeed, it is all of us who gain from this healing ministry. There must be companionship, oversight, and mentoring—supported by loving understanding and education—to nurture these leadings in the manner that Friends know so well. Friends need to honor the faith and practice of this leading. It is my prayer that all will prosper from this work, be affirmed and cautioned by our history, be tender in this place, and by grace, find nurture in the effort.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit...For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another faith...; to another gifts of healing...; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits... But all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit.

—1Corinthians 12:4-11

To have in each monthly meeting one or two or more members meeting together, prepared and ready to carry on a healing ministry, ready to hold anyone sick into God’s healing light, would be most helpful for the health of the Meeting

—Hobart Mitchell, *Prayer for Healing*

Around the Yearly Meeting

Compiled from monthly meeting newsletters and correspondence by the Editors, Delia Windwalker and Jonathan Vogel-Borne

• **New London (CT) Monthly Meeting (MM)** mourns the loss of Hobart Mitchell, who died 3/3/2002. A meeting for worship to celebrate his life was held at the New London Meetinghouse on 3/16/2002. Hobart was an anchor for many Friends engaged in the work of healing ministry, both in New England and elsewhere. This issue of *The New England Friend* is dedicated to his memory.

• **Middlebury (VT) MM** Friends co-sponsored a workshop on "Practicing Peace" with the Middlebury Unitarian Church on 4/6/2002. Leaders Joanne Ranney, the New England regional coordinator for Witness for Peace and Aikido instructor Richard Salzman offered "nonviolent strategies to end personal, interpersonal, and systematic violence."

• **Durham (ME) MM** Peace & Social Concerns Committee sponsored an evening lecture and a day-long workshop by Pat Patfoort on Nonviolence Education. The premise of her training identifies two paths we typically follow when threatened or in conflict: 1) We let it happen, we are passive, and harm is done to us. 2) We attack, we fight back and harm the other. Pat calls us to break this cycle with the alternative, non-violence—a third way. Participants explored strength and assertiveness with out being offensive or aggressive. Durham Friends expect to continue equipping themselves with tools for peaceful resolutions with another 16 hour training in a process called "Conflict Transformation." Local mediator and trainer, William Galloway, will lead the program. He describes his training as, "Moving beyond an individualistic world view and win-win problem solving, this workshop highlights the relational world view with emphasis on strength of self and connections with others."

• **Mt. Toby (MA) MM** in a day-long workshop on "The Power of Money" facilitated by Diana White, former NEYM Treasurer, Friends explored the query "Tool of the Spirit or the root of all evil?" Intended for everyone, not just the financial types, the workshop goals included exploring attitudes about money and how our individual attitudes might apply to corporate decision making.

• **Acadia (ME) MM** Friends in Unity with Nature devised an interesting tool for stimulating consideration of non-monetary personal wealth. The committee issued "Friends Universal Currency" featuring the image of George Fox amid a harbor side settlement. The green 'bills' are for members to document "ways I feel rich" and donate to the meeting's collection basket. An accounting of the meeting's combined wealth will appear in their April newsletter.

• **Dover (NH) MM** Friends decided to forward a generous donation made to the Meeting by the Imshausen community in Germany to Dover MM member Tom Jackson. Imshausen is an ecumenical residential community pledged to poverty and pacifism. Their donation expressed their support of the Meeting's commitment to nonviolence in the Middle East. Tom's work for the Campaign for Conscience and the War Resister's League includes travel to Iraq and a video documentary project. [see p. 6 for more info]

• **Smithfield (RI) MM** announces that meeting for worship is held at the historic Uxbridge Meetinghouse on the second Sunday of each month from 4–5pm. All are invited to worship in this classic meetinghouse, built in the 18th century and relatively unchanged. The meetinghouse is located in Uxbridge at the corner of Quaker Highway (Route 146A) and Route 98.

• **Providence (RI) MM** First Day School has earned \$459 planting flowers at the North Burial Ground and Saylesville Meeting. In their own meeting for business the children decided to make donations to the Nature Conservancy to help protect rain forests, and to a local animal shelter. They also plan to buy a bird feeder and seed for the meetinghouse. This year's planting is scheduled for 5/19/2002.

• **Wellesley (MA) MM** Ministry and Counsel invites Friends to re-examine vocal ministry. "Can we, through reflection, improve our vocal ministry? We believe that we can. Meeting for worship is a corporate discipline based on holy obedience. And if our vocal ministry is to spring from expectant waiting upon the Lord, we need to avoid messages that sound like analysis, debate, argument, or therapy. God must speak through us; ministry is not a matter of self-

gratification. Quaker truth more resembles a flash of insight. A single sentence delivered in the power of the spirit is more likely to be persuasive than an elaborately developed exposition."

• **Hanover (NH) MM** Ministry & Counsel planned a series of potluck gatherings for fellowship and discernment on three discussion topics. The first, "How do we live our faith?" will focus on the hunger for a spiritual life filled with the presence of God and leading of the Spirit. The second discussion "Ecological Integrity" was inspired by the minute accepted at NEYM Sessions "Quakers' Responsibility to Protect Ecological Integrity and Public Health." The series concludes with an evening of prayer, discernment, and discussion on the Peace Testimony as it guides our thinking and action in these uncertain times.

• **Cambridge (MA) MM** wrote to President Bush urging him to reconsider expanding the U.S. anti-terrorism campaign. Friends cite the suffering and risks already brought about by the government's selective disregard of our international obligations. As Quakers, with deep commitment to nonviolence, they ask him to put down the bombs and guns and pick up the tools of international law and collaboration.

• **Westerly (RI) MM** sent out a "Call for Alternatives to War on Terrorists." The page long minute addresses the distressing realities of these times. "...We call upon our nation's leaders and allies to find alternatives to military force. ...We call for international and intercultural accords in line with the values for which we stand: human rights, religious freedom, and justice through rule of law. ...We call for open debate now on globally important treaties regarding the environment, arms control, and biological weapons..."



Westerly (RI) Meetinghouse

In other Quaker news

Admin. Assistant/YAF Coordinator

NEYM is looking for an enthusiastic Young Adult Friend to fill the position of Administrative Assistant/Young Adult Friends Coordinator, for approximately 2 years. Qualifications: active member/attender of a monthly meeting, familiarity with Friends structure/program, experience in Young Adult Friends groups, computer and people skills, efficiency and organization a must. Responsibilities include: administrative and clerical support for Young Adult Friends, Traveling Ministries, Youth Programs, and the NEYM Office. Salary \$24,000 plus benefits. Start date, Summer 2002. Application deadline 4/15/2002. Contact NEYM Office: 508/754-6760 • neym@neym.org

F&P Revision invites participation

The *Faith & Practice* (F&P) Revision Committee has begun to meet monthly. As the current, 1985, edition took 8 years to complete, NEYM can expect the completion of the next revision to take a similar amount of time. The Committee sees that the process of revision "offers us a chance to look carefully at

the spiritual realities and current practices of New England Friends. Our intent is to create a book of *Faith & Practice* that speaks to our circumstances today. We hope this process will deepen awareness of our personal faith, the range of faith expressions among us, and our underlying unity as a corporate body." Broad participation is encouraged in the revision process. The Committee is happy to hear from anyone at any time about topics they should address. Friends can approach any Committee member personally: Marion Athearn, Betsy Cazden, Lee Noel Chase, David Coletta, Jim Douglas, Maggie Edmondson, Eric Edwards, Arthur Fink, Lisa Gould, Jan Hoffman, Debbie Humphries, Eric Kristensen, Phebe McCosker, Marnie Miller-Gutsell, Scott Nielsen, Joyce Sutherland. Send comments in writing to: Jan Hoffman, Clerk, 343 West St., Amherst, MA 01002 • jsh@scire.hampshire.edu

BHFH welcomes new staff

Beacon Hill Friends House (BHFH) welcomes new staff. Director, Lyn Danforth came to her post last August, after running a B&B and services for the elderly on Nantucket island. Lyn's Quaker activities have included Clerking the Nantucket Allowed Meeting and serving as Recording Clerk for Sandwich Quarterly Meeting. After Christmas Kaite Tedoldi made a shorter move from House's non-resident bookkeeper position, which she filled for the last five years, into the Assistant Director's place—living in the House. Kaite's interest in Friends developed during her term as bookkeeper.

AFSC/SENE plans conference

The AFSC-SENE (American Friends Service Committee/Southeastern New England) office is co-sponsoring a *Conference and Celebration of Hope*, 4/27/02, 9am–4pm at Gaiage Hall, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI, to explore the "No More Victims, Anywhere" theme. There will be panel discussions and workshops; David Potorti of September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows will offer reflections; and Pete Seeger will present a new song. Contact: Anna Galland at the newly reopened AFSC-SENE office, 401/521-3584 • sene@afsc.org

NEFUN Transformations Retreat

"How do we and nature transform each other? Come explore connections between

inner spirit and nature" at the *Transformations Retreat*, 4/26-28/2002, co-sponsored by New England Friends in Unity with Nature (NEFUN) Committee and Woolman Hill. "This retreat offers an opportunity to deepen our awareness of nature's changes and our own through discussion, unprogrammed worship, and outside activities. Come prepared for walking in the woods, listening to the natural world, and reveling in spring." Contact: Daphne Bye, 413/774-3431 • woolmanh@gis.net

YAF retreat at Smith Neck Meeting

Young Adult Friends (YAFs) will hold a retreat on 6/14-16/2002 at the Smith Neck meetinghouse in South Dartmouth, MA. The theme is "Our Spirituality and the Queries." Contact Christine Linares-Kemp, 603/643-7695 • yafcoord@neym.org

Newport (RI) Meetinghouse open

The Newport (RI) Historical Society reports that for the first time in several years, the Great Friends Meetinghouse in Newport will be open for tours on a regular schedule this summer, 6/12–8/31, from 10am–4pm, Wednesday – Saturday. First erected in 1699, it is the oldest house of worship in Newport and has been described as "the finest medieval structure in America." NEYM held its annual sessions at the Great Meetinghouse from 1699 to 1909. A meeting for worship is planned in the Meetinghouse on 6/30/02. For more info. or to volunteer as a guide contact: Jessica Files 401/846-1853 or Jim or Trudi Brown, 401/841-0441.

FGC Gathering at Normal, IL

Friends General Conference (FGC) holds the 2002 Gathering of Friends at Illinois State University, Normal, IL 6/29 – 7/6/02. The theme is "To Be Gathered Still." Speakers and presenters include John Punshon, Walter Wink [from South Berkshire (MA) MM, NEYM], Susan Stark [former NEYM Friend], and Mary Rose O'Reilly. Contact: FGC at (215)561-1700 • www.fgcquaker.org

Nurturing the Meeting Community

A conference for Friends who are called to "care and counsel in their Quaker communities" will be held 9/19-22/02 in Rusholt, WI, sponsored by Friends General Conference (FGC). Contact: FGC at 215/561-1700 • deborahf@fgcquaker.org

Opportunities for NEYM service

Youth Programs Committee oversees all retreat programs for youths (2nd–12th grades), and programs for those ages 0–18 years at NEYM sessions. This year, in addition to our regular business, we assisted 9th–12th graders in developing an anti-smoking policy. Currently we are working on a program to strengthen all the programs against the possibility of sexual abuse occurring within them. If you are interested in working on this committee contact Josh Baker 617/491-6459, or Sara Burke, 617/825-0444.

Interested in reading Quaker literature, reflecting on the needs of meeting libraries throughout New England, publishing occasional pamphlets, and distributing literature to meetings? Over the past 127 years the **Mosher Book and Tract Committee** has donated a variety of books to monthly meetings, including FCUN's *Earthcare for Children*, and *Captain Paul Cuffe's Logs and Letters* by Rosalind Wiggins. If you are interested in this committee contact Teddy Milne, 413/584-8547, or Bill Walkauskas, 203/488-1075.

Selected Woolman Hill happenings

Focus on Families, 4/19-21/2002, with Kevin and Betty Ann Lee. *Annual Spring Workday*, 5/27/2002, with free overnight and meals. *First Annual Woolman Hill Friend-zy*, 8/22-25/2002, four days of intergenerational camping and community with Jay Goldspinner, Bruce Kay, Gurunam Kaur Khalsa, Kevin Lee, Minga Claggett-Borne and Jonathan Vogel-

Borne, and more. Contact: Woolman Hill, 107 Keets Road, Deerfield, MA 01342 • 413-774-3431 • Info@woolmanhill.org

Tom Jackson video on Iraq available

Tom Jackson, a member of Dover (NH) MM, is available for screenings of his documentary video about ongoing sanctions and bombings in Iraq, *Greetings From Missile Street*. The video shows interactions between

delegates from Voices in the Wilderness and the families and friends who hosted them in Basra, Iraq during the summer of 2000. *Greetings From Missile Street* provides a rare glimpse into the day-to-day lives of ordinary Iraqis. Willing to travel anywhere in New England, Tom holds discussion sessions after the video to discuss living conditions in Iraq. Contact: Tom Jackson, 603/659-2272 • coffeeanon@yahoo.com

So what happened to that survey on elder issues?

TWENTY-ONE MEETINGS RESPONDED TO the questionnaire on elder issues sent out by the Committee on Aging in the Fall and many reported that it prompted valuable discussions, raised consciousness among the membership and stimulated new action. The Committee will be putting together a detailed report to go to each Meeting, which hopefully will spark more ideas, and serve as a resource for those seeking to expand their outreach to elderly members and their caregivers.

Many small Meetings deal with needs on an individual basis as they occur. Others have a plan for care of elderly members, including visits, phone calls, taking meals, and offering rides. Some have a more formalized way of handling needs, routing them through Ministry & Counsel, a pastoral care committee or an established care giving list.

The most frequent needs being met by Meetings are, perhaps predictably, transportation and provision of meals as needed. Some find inventive ways of providing other kinds of support eg., having Young

Friends give time to doing household chores, or having the Meeting as a whole offering work days to accomplish household tasks.

Several meetings report holding study groups and meetings for worship in the homes of house-bound elders. Newsletters, copies of the minutes of meeting for business, photos of Meeting events, all contribute to maintaining the ties of fellowship. Noting the wealth of resources and wisdom in our elders, Friends have found ways to help them maintain involvement in committee work, First Day School, and intergenerational programs.

By far the most frequently named difficulty for our elders in the meetinghouses is difficulty in hearing. Most of our buildings are well adapted for physical access, but the hearing problem was almost unanimously expressed, and many have attempted to improve matters with sound systems, hearing enhancements, behavioral changes (reminders to speak up and rise when giving a message) with little success resulting in frustration all round. If any of us finds a

really good system for dealing with this let's be sure to share it.

Several Meetings have extensive materials available on elder issues in their libraries and also keep details of members wishes in the event of death on file in the Meeting records. A few have offered workshops and speakers and many maintain close ties with community resources.

Nurturing caregivers of elderly relatives is a challenge. Meetings who have members who are in this situation try to offer some respite care, if only brief times of visiting so that the caregiver can take a break. Activities held very close to home were more possible for caregivers to consider than NEYM events.

This is just a brief overview of the results of the survey. It was exciting to read the many ways that meetings are sensitive to the needs of elders and caregivers, maintaining the ties of friendship with house-bound members, and continuing to seek out and value the spiritual benefits and joy of such fellowship.

—Maggie Edmondson, Committee on Aging

Quaker programs opposed to militarization established

PEACE & SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE (P&SC) and the New England Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC/NERO) are working together on matters related to opposition to military service and use of the military as a way to resolve conflicts. We hope to establish a New England network among Friends, monthly meetings, and AFSC offices. Friends and all nonviolent activists are urged to organize local groups around these issues. Please inform Robert Dove, AFSC/NERO, 617/661-6130 • rdove@afsc.org, about individual or group efforts in your area.

A Draft and Military Counselors Training last fall resulted in the formation of two

groups based in AFSC's Cambridge office. A "speakers bureau" aims to counter military recruitment and to question war as a means of international conflict resolution. We are also establishing a branch of the GI Rights Hotline. The Hotline will operate every Saturday afternoon. Volunteers are needed to staff it. Please notify the AFSC/NERO office if you can help once a month or even once every other month.

Contributions to help cover the cost of phone and photocopying are warmly welcomed! Send your check made out to AFSC/NERO, 2161 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02140, earmarked for "draft/military counseling."

Military draft legislation in committee

The Peace & Social Concerns Committee reports that a bill, House Resolution (HR) 3598, has been filed to reinstitute a military draft for all U.S. male residents, aged 18-22. For full text of the bill, see HR 3598 at thomas.loc.gov. The bill has only two sponsors and is currently in the House Armed Services Committee. Generally this legislative process takes time, so we should not panic. Friends should, however, contact their representatives with opinions on the reinstitution of a draft and about possible elimination of draft registration and selective service, which has also been proposed.

—Marguerite Helen, NEYM P&SC

Presiding Clerk, Deana Chase ■ **Treasurer**, Ken Hoffman ■ **NEYM OFFICE**: 901 Pleasant Street, Worcester, MA 01602-1908 • 508/754-6760 • FAX: 508/754-9401 • neym@neym.org • www.neym.org • OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday–Friday, 9AM–5PM ■ **Administrative Secretary**, Katharine Clark ■ **Interim Young Adult Friends Coordinator**, Christine Linares-Kemp ■ **Youth and Education Secretary**, Christel Jorgenson ■ **Field Secretary**, Jonathan Vogel-Borne ■ **THE NEW ENGLAND FRIEND: Editor**, Jonathan Vogel-Borne; **Editorial & Production Volunteer**, Delia Windwalker ■ **FRIENDS CAMP**, Susan Morris, Director, P.O. Box 84, E. Vassalboro, ME 04935 ■ **MOSES BROWN SCHOOL**, Joanne Hoffman, Head, 250 Lloyd Ave., Providence, RI 02906 ■ **NEW ENGLAND FRIENDS HOME–THAYER HOUSE**, Gretchen Condon, Administrator, Turkey Hill La., Hingham, MA 02043 ■ **YOUTH RETREATS**: Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) Elementary Retreats grades 2-5, jymretreats.org: Kevin Lee 508/994-1638; Grades 6-8: Cynthia Rankin 508/540-6570 & Nort Salz 508/263-0862; Grades 9-12: Christel Jorgenson 617/625-4494.

The New England Friend
901 Pleasant Street
Worcester, MA 01602-1908



Please send **ALL FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS** to the Yearly Meeting **DIRECTLY** to the Treasurer, Ken Hoffman,
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THE NEW ENGLAND FRIEND

YEARLY MEETING CALENDAR

April 2002

- 12–14 Women's Retreat – Geneva Point, NH
- 12–14 Eldering Workshop – Woolman Hill, MA
- 13 Committee Day – St. John's Methodist Church
Dover, NH hosting
- 19–21 Young Friends Retreat – Mt. Toby, MA
- 20 *Practice of Clerking* – Portland, ME
- 21 RI-Smithfield QM – Smithfield, RI
- 26–28 Transformations Retreat, – Woolman Hill, MA [see p. 6]
- 27 Sandwich QM – Mattapoisett, MA
- 28 Salem QM – Acton, MA

May 2002

- 3–5 Young Friends Seniors Retreat – West Falmouth, MA
- 4 United Society of Friends Women – Durham, ME
- 5 CT Valley QM – South Berkshire, MA
- 10–12 Elementary Retreat – Woolman Hill, MA
- 11 All Maine Friends Gathering – South China, ME
- 11 Permanent Board – West Falmouth, MA
- 17–19 Jr. High Retreat – Woolman Hill, MA
- 18–19 Friends Camp work weekend – China, ME
- 18 Ministry & Counsel – East Sandwich, MA

June 2002

- 1-2 Northwest QM – Farm & Wilderness, Plymouth, VT
- 8 Committee Day – Wellesley, MA
- 8 Ministry & Counsel – Wellesley, MA

- 14–16 Young Adult Friends Retreat – South Dartmouth, MA
- 15 Youthworkers Training – Location, TBA
- 30 Dover QM – Gonic, NH
- 29–7/6 Friends General Conference Gathering – Normal, IL

July 2002

- 10-15 Friends United Meeting Triennial – Nairobi, Kenya
- 21 RI-Smithfield QM – Westerly, RI
- 27 Falmouth QM – Hosted by Brunswick (ME) MM
- 27 Sandwich QM – Westport, MA

August 2002

- 3–8 NEYM Sessions – Wheaton College, Norton, MA
- Theme**: “Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace...”
- Keynote**: Tom Hamm
- Bible Half Hour**: Peter & Annie Blood-Patterson

September 2002

- 13–15 Vassalboro QM – Friends Camp, China, ME
- 14-15 Northwest QM – at Farm & Wilderness, VT
- 21 Ministry & Counsel – Location, TBA
- 28 Sessions Committee – Location, TBA
- 29 Dover QM – North Sandwich, NH

October 2002

- 5 Committee Day – Northampton, MA