

Wear It as Long as Thou Canst Reflections on Underwear and Prophetic Witness

John Humphries, Hartford (CT) Monthly Meeting

EACH YEAR, SOME FRIENDS LEAVE New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) annual Sessions frustrated with our failure to agree on some form of corporate witness embodying our testimonies. I share that yearning for a more visible Quaker witness, but I believe there are reasons that it eludes us.

Early Friends faced a similar period of social, economic, and political turmoil. In silent worship, they discovered the power of the Spirit to provide hope and vision. They saw themselves as midwives to the birth of the Kingdom of God—here and now in their own lives. They believed that the Light Within had the power to lead them into lives of purity, free from sin.

Their direct experience of that Power led to radical changes in their lives and inspired their prophetic witness. Because they knew that war arose from “the lusts according to James’s doctrine,” Friends repudiated war. Believing that pacifism grew out of spiritual transformation, however, they did not demand such high moral standards of the unenlightened (thus George Fox instructed William Penn to wear his sword “as long as thou canst”).

John Woolman believed that Friends would cease to own slaves and to live luxuriously once the Light had awakened them to the connection between the condition of their own souls and the well-being of the slaves and the poor.

What would “lives of purity” look like today? How might we experience more fully “that life and power that takes away the occasion of all wars?”

I imagine Fox and Woolman saying to us: “Live in your large suburban house” or “Let your children play violent video games” or “Pay your war taxes” or ... “— as long as you can.” “When you can no longer bear the thought of paying war taxes, regardless of the consequences, then stop.”

A simple example from my own experience is wearing long underwear in winter. A deep awareness of the impact on the planet now makes it morally painful to adjust the thermostat any higher. But this is just a small step. As a family, we’re still struggling toward clarity on the video games and taxes. And what about public witness on other issues that I care deeply about: war-without-end and torture? I try to discern what kinds of action might be both faithful and effective.

A quotation from James Nayler has spoken to my condition: “Art thou in the Darkness? Mind it not, for if thou dost, it will fill thee more, but stand still and act not, and wait in

patience till Light arises out of Darkness to lead thee.”

I believe that we are in the Darkness and that much of our activism arises from a desperate place of “We must do something!” rather than a powerful conviction that this action is what the Spirit is calling forth from us. I am painfully aware of how little time I spend in discernment—personal or corporate. I seek refuge from the Darkness in the busyness of good activities.

In our monthly meetings for business, we struggle to get through the agenda before people slip away to busy lives. Where is the space for open-ended discernment on how the Spirit might be calling us to powerful witness?

A Friend once reminded me that when a tree is not bearing good fruit, the best remedy is to prune the branches and fertilize the roots. The analogy that we, as Friends, often look for the fruits of action without being faithful to the discipline of tending the roots was one inspiration for the Quaker Peacebuilder Camp and our new Spiritual Transformation Program.

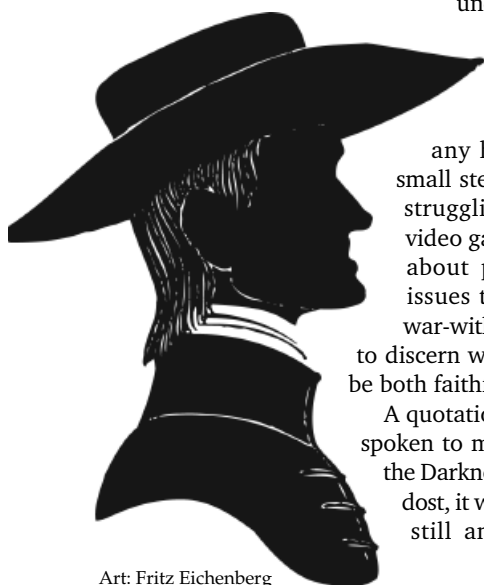
“We must each dwell in faithfulness if we hope to be faithfully led as a people.” Those words from Brian Drayton’s letter to NEYM [*Unity, Disunity, Diversity*, published by Beacon Hill Friends House, bhfh.org] last August speak powerfully to this need for fertilizing our roots. Just as our individual spiritual preparation nourishes and deepens our corporate worship, individual and local discernment of the Spirit’s call to faithful, prophetic witness will facilitate our hearing that Voice when we gather as a yearly meeting.

I continue to engage in activism that feels Spirit-led, but I am seeking to live more consciously, exploring which “overcommitments” I might set aside to create more time for standing still and listening for guidance.

Hartford’s Peace and Social Concerns Committee has begun sponsoring a monthly Iraq Moratorium Observance (www.iraq-moratorium.org) that features extended worship, potluck lunch and conversation about what it means to be faithful in these times. Instead of leading a workshop at NEYM Sessions 2008, I am inviting Friends to join me in “extended worship with a concern for witness.” Nurturing communities of seekers who challenge each other to question, to listen, to push the limits of our comfort zones, to be playful and experimental—this is a step along the path.

Last August, a Friend suggested that 17th-century Friends chose to doff their hats to no one, rather than everyone, because it was a more provocative and direct challenge to systemic injustice. How might our modern witness be more like that? Or like Woolman’s refusing to drink from silver cups?

The image of stripping down to my long johns when I find myself in a building that seems too warm in wintertime is both amusing and daunting. Imagine the consternation of the restaurant owner, the librarian or the dinner party hostess! And to ensure that my message is plain, I suppose I should purchase only organic cotton in Quaker gray.



Art: Fritz Eichenberg

“Talking Piece”—Cambridge Prison Fellowship

Patricia Wild, Friends Meeting at Cambridge (MA) Monthly Meeting

EIGHT YEARS AGO I BEGAN TO WONDER: *Whatever happened to the two African Americans who desegregated my high school in Lynchburg, VA in 1962? Nudged by Spirit, I found Dr. Lynda Woodruff, a college professor in Atlanta, and Reverend*

Owen Cardwell, a Baptist preacher in Richmond, VA. Way Opens: a Spiritual Journey, to be published by Warwick House Publishers this summer, tells the unfolding story of my leading. The book ends with a description of a meals and sharing program for the formerly incarcerated which my meeting, Friends Meeting at Cambridge, began recently. (To connect the dots between that initial question to my active participation in this meals-and-sharing program, you'll just have to read the book!) What follows is an excerpt from Way Opens:

QUAKERS AREN'T MUCH FOR CEREMONY, representational paraphernalia, ritual, or anything that might get in the way of listening to that “still small voice,” are we? Yet in 2006, when a few of us from Cambridge Meeting visited the Side-by-Side Community Circle, a weekly gathering for the formerly incarcerated, we were so deeply moved by what we'd witnessed that we decided to replicate Side-by-Side's ceremony, its ritual, and its use of a “Talking Piece” at Cambridge Meeting.

Held in a fusty church basement in Boston's Jamaica Plain (JP) every Monday evening, the Side-by-Side Community Circle offers a simple meal, a time for announcements about self-help and advocacy programs of particular interest to the formerly incarcerated, and a sharing circle. The number varies but, generally, ten to fifteen people participate. Some are formerly incarcerated, some work on prison reform and social justice issues, some belong to greater-Boston faith communities. Predominantly, but by no means uniformly, the formerly incarcerated are African American men.

By far the most important part of the evening is the sharing circle which faithfully follows the same prescribed routine; this routine includes a “cleansing ceremony,” borrowed from a Native-American tradition, and the use of a “Talking Piece.”

During the summer of 2006, five people from Cambridge Meeting, all of us members of the newly-formed Prison Fellowship group, took

turns attending the JP program. After we'd enthusiastically reported what we'd experienced, Prison Fellowship decided to initiate a meals-and-sharing program at Friends Meeting. The group proposed this idea to the greater-Meeting community in the fall of 2006.

For the rest of that year and the following spring, this proposal was the subject of much discussion at Meeting, both public and private, heated and Spirit-filled. In January of 2007, meeting for business gave the meals-and-sharing program its “blessing” but requested that Prison Fellowship seek final approval later in the year.

While these intra-Meeting discussions progressed, in anticipation that we'd eventually be given the go-ahead, Prison Fellowship began to set the table: We invited several regulars from Side-by-Side to give us their seasoned advice and under these men's guidance, drafted our own guidelines. Given Quakers' long-held squeamishness over ceremonial paraphernalia, we somewhat self-consciously shopped for just the right candles and a suitable holder to display them. A Somerville neighbor cocked an eyebrow when I explained that my Quaker meeting needed dried sage for a cleansing ceremony, but without comment or hesitation supplied an abundant, fragrant bouquet. A rug was found and Mehmet Rona, a member of Prison Fellowship, offered an exquisite, hand-carved walking stick as our Talking Piece.

“Think of the history this Talking Piece will have,” Ron, also known as Cornbread, marveled as he held Mehmet's donation one February evening. “Think of the stories.” One of the Side-by-Side advisors, Ron has continued coming to our meals-and-sharing program—which began, on a contingency basis, in January of 2007. Ron had more to say. Although this Talking Piece was to be used in a brand-new circle, he suggested, the stories told for years in a JP church basement resonated within our Cambridge circle, too.

Seated in that darkened Friends Center lit only by soft candlelight, the smell of my neighbor's dried bouquet heavy in the wintry air, I thought about Ron's words. His reflection invited me to contemplate the stories I brought to the circle. What seemed most clear in that sage-scented quiet was that it had been the stories of my leading which bore most directly and so powerfully on that moment...

In April of 2007, Friends Meeting at Cambridge approved Prison Fellowship's meals-and-sharing program. Praise Spirit!

Greetings from Burlington (VT) Meeting's Peace for Earth Walkers

Ruah Swennerfelt and Louis Cox, Burlington (VT) Monthly Meeting

AS YOU MAY KNOW, WE EMBARKED 11/2/08 on a 1,400 mile walk from Vancouver, B.C. to San Diego to share the message of John Woolman which we feel is very relevant to Friends today. We took the train across Canada, took our first steps of this journey on 11/11/08 and we have now walked 443 miles to Eugene, OR. Our walk, including encounters with Quakers of every stripe, has opened our hearts in ways that surprise us and delight us. We

have given presentations at Friends Meetings of Canadian YM and North Pacific YM and in Friends churches of Northwest YM (Evangelical)—including giving sermons!

We thought you would like to know that although the Northwest is known for its typically rainy winter weather, we are staying fairly dry underneath lots of rain gear and that Friends are taking great care of us with hospitality, great food, and walking itineraries. We are holding up quite well phys-

ically, despite a short period of slight colds around Christmas time. We are also having a wonderful time observing the geography and ecology of Washington and Oregon. We hope you will check in with our blog, which we update about every week or so by going to www.peaceforearth.org and clicking on the link to the blog at the upper right of the home page. We expect to arrive in California on 1/29/08 and are due to be home at the end of April.

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in New England

Martha Yager, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), South East New England Office

NEW ENGLAND IS BLESSED WITH A NETWORK of Friends Meetings across the region. From that base that nurtures us, many Quakers are deeply involved in their communities. The AFSC is also spread throughout the region, with field offices in each state as well as the regional office in Cambridge. The collaboration and mutual support is often rich.

Residents of Falmouth Massachusetts, including some members of West Falmouth (MA) Preparative Meeting, placed a resolution calling for the end of the war on the Town Meeting Warrant in the Fall of 2007. A few weeks before the Town Meeting, I got a call from Alta Mae Stevens in Falmouth requesting copies of the Cost of War brochure to help prepare for the meeting. When asked how many she needed the reply was "as many as you can send." I sent 500 plus another 200 from the regional office. Volunteers handed them out as residents filed into the town meeting. The resolution was toward the end of the meeting, but many stayed and there was intense debate. The resolution passed by 11 votes. Advocates felt that the Cost of War brochures had made a big difference and noted that several people had referred to them during the debate.

Much of the Quaker/AFSC connections are like that—quiet, behind the scenes, not necessarily noticed unless one is paying attention. Each field office has a Support or Program Committee that shapes the program work of that office, setting the priorities in the three-year plans and assisting with fundraising. Most committees reserve slots on the Support Committee for members of local Meetings. The Quaker membership of the committee understand Quaker testimonies and ways of doing business that substantially shape the local program work. Those representatives also serve as critical connections to the Meetings so that we know how to help one another build a more just and peaceful world.

The Cost of War campaign is AFSC's effort to help our communities understand the many ways we pay for this war and to then press our elected officials to work harder to end the war and more adequately fund essential services and infrastructure. It is local people, often Quakers, who have taken the initiative to have banners and brochures at their local vigils and demonstrations in small towns and busy city streets. AFSC was able to get funding to create the beautiful banners, display poles and brochures and local staff help get them out to the local vigils. In New Hampshire, in the final days before the Primary, AFSC-NH and NH Peace Action used the Cost of War banners to remind voters and the media of the need to change our spending priorities. Many local Quakers were among those holding banners and talking to the media at Romney, McCain, Huckabee, Obama, Edwards and Clinton events. They also provided support and media

assistance to several Iraq Veterans Against the War.

Work on these important issues also brings a Quaker perspective into new places. January 26th will be a Day of Action to bring the work of the US Social Forum into local communities following the gathering in Atlanta at the end of June (an event which AFSC played a large role in planning and supporting locally). The event in Providence will be held at a flea market in a low income neighborhood. It is being planned by people from the local groups that traveled to Atlanta and is designed to involve their communities, especially youth. The Cost of War banners will be on display. Volunteers will interview those attending the flea market about how they feel

Photo: Courtesy AFSC



AFSC Cost of War Banner at New Hampshire Primary

about the cost of war and ask them how they would rather see the money spent. There will also be art supplies for those that prefer to write or draw their answers. All of these things will get posted on a website the group is creating as well as shared with the Rhode Island Congressional delegation as other volunteers meet with them. The Cost of War brochures will be handed out, other AFSC literature will be available and, hopefully, a bit more of the bridge between communities in Providence will be built.

On the other end of the spectrum, the Quaker Meeting on Martha's Vineyard, along with the Martha's Vineyard Peace Council, arranged to have the Cost of War and Eyes Wide Open New England on display on the island for several days in late August. The display was set up in a park near a busy bus stop. Hundreds of people walked through the boots [representing the US soldiers killed in Iraq] and talked about the banners. We repeatedly heard people comment on how it touched them, that the war was an abstraction they didn't think about much. A few had been affected by the war and were grateful to have the terrible costs of war displayed in a way people from many different perspectives could approach. The event had great local media coverage as well, giving voice to the Quaker commitment to non-violence and to the value and dignity of all people, including Iraqis.

As we move into election year madness, there is urgent need for Quaker voices to draw attention to the issues instead of the political horse-race. We can help create the space for communities and individuals to talk about what we want our country to be, what we want it to value and how we want it to act in the world community. We can set up discussions, invite speakers, set up displays in public places and ask candidates for all elected offices about their positions on the war, economic justice and immigration. AFSC has all sorts of resources that can be used at those events and sometimes staff can help local groups with publicity or press work. The more we collaborate, the greater our impact will be in the communities where we live.

Quaker Youth Leadership Conference at Moses Brown School

Galen Rebecca McNemar, Director of Friends Education, Moses Brown School, Cambridge (MA) Monthly Meeting

Photo: Courtesy Moses Brown School



MBS QYLC Organizing Committee (Galen McNemar is 3rd from left)

THE 2008 QUAKER YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (QYLC) will be held at Moses Brown School (MBS), Providence, RI, from the afternoon of Thursday, 2/7/08 through mid day Saturday, 2/9/08. This is the first time that QYLC has ever been held in New England. It is being co-hosted by the students of the Moses Brown School, the Lincoln School, and The Meeting School. This year's theme is *Leadership through the Arts: A catalyst for social change*. Students will engage in activities designed to build community, expand their minds, share resources and cultivate leadership skills. There will be workshops, service projects, query groups, art activities, meetings for worship, all pertaining to *Leadership through the Arts*. The keynote speaker will be New England Friend Peterson Toscano [Hartford (CT) Monthly Meeting] and several New England Friends will be offering workshops on Saturday.

The students have developed 4 queries that they hope will guide the conference.

1. Have I experienced art as a universal language?
2. How can I create art that expresses my Inner Light?
3. How can we use art as a medium for social change?
4. How can we use art to lead our communities?

Here are two reflections from students who have attended the conference in the past and are helping to plan this year's conference.

Reflection from Jason Smith-Viduarre, MBS '09

"My father's side of the family is Quaker. All the relatives I have known since childhood have since passed away, have gray hair, or none at all. Before attending the Quaker Youth Leadership Conference in February 2006, Quaker meant old and aged to me. At the conference, I found this image of Quakers proved wrong! There was a multitude of young people, all of whom had made a specific and deliberate effort to attend a Quaker gathering. This spoke to the fact that Quakerism is not a dying way of life, but has potential to be carried through the ages by the youth.

The students at the conference came in all shapes and colors; ranging from Philadelphia, Virginia, New Hampshire, Providence,

and Palestine. The community there was warm and welcoming, which as a ninth grader made me feel relieved. I even felt comfortable enough to sing a song at the open mic session one night. The workshops led by students and/or faculty were enlightening, but they also allowed and expected one to put one's ideas out in the open, where students were not alone. This year with the conference at Moses Brown School I hope we can create an environment in which people feel comfortable enough to say what they feel and share the thoughts of their spirit with the rest."

Reflection from Aidan Greer-Heffernan, MBS '09

"I attended the Quaker Youth Leadership Conference in February of 2007, at the Tandem Friends School, in Charlottesville, Virginia. While there I gained a greater understanding of what I feel is the "Inner Light" of Quakerism rather than its outer spiritual practices. During the conference, I participated in a service project at the Salvation Army thrift store, met amazing people with whom I am still in touch, and learned a great deal about life.

The service projects, along with the attitude the school had was what showed me the "Inner Light." Rather than having adults organize the entire conference and strictly keep everyone in line, students ran and organized the conference. By allowing students to do so, the leaders created a real feeling of equality that permeated the conference as a whole. Equality and compassion were tangible throughout the conference and these are the values I apply most to Quakerism. This is why I am helping to organize this year's conference at Moses Brown. I feel that the Moses Brown Community can show these values to students from other Friends Schools and hopefully also show them a good time."

For more information about the Conference please go to the Moses Brown website, www.mosesbrown.org, and look for Friends Education/QYLC under the "About MB" menu.



Jason Smith-Viduarre & Aidan Greer-Heffernan

Photo: Courtesy Moses Brown School

Around the Yearly Meeting

Compiled from monthly meeting newsletters and correspondence by Jonathan Vogel-Borne

• **Durham (ME) Monthly Meeting (MM)** Women's Society is raising money to support a nurse at the Kaimosi Hospital. A nurse's annual salary is \$2400. Friends in Kenya with the help of Friends United Meeting (FUM) are trying to bring the Hospital up to standard after many years of sub-standard service

• **Middlebury (VT) MM** welcomed the addition of three new babies in the Meeting this fall. Over the past year, Middlebury has been actively restructuring some of the duties that formerly were under the care of Ministry and Counsel. In this way, more members are able to play an active role in the life of the Meeting by participating in committees.

• **Midcoast (ME) MM** is holding a series of public, panel discussions on "What about Quakerism is important to the way we lead our lives now and in the future?" These discussions explore both the spiritual and behavioral relevance of Quakerism now and in the future, in the context of individual and community life. The Meeting expects lively dialogue and new inspiration.

• **New Haven (CT) MM** reports that "after nearly 7 years of dreaming, planning, and hard work, Friends Center for Children [opened]... with a small number of children the week of 11/12/2007. The board and staff are gratified that the hard work has come to fruition. The staff is excited to finally have children to teach. The board is especially happy, relieved and blessed to [see]... the dream become reality." The Friends Center for Children, an initiative that began in the New Haven Friends community, is an independently incorporated non-profit day-care center, founded on Friends principles, located at the New Haven Meetinghouse.

• **Monadnock (NH) and Wellesley (MA) MMs** each sent intergenerational work teams over the holiday break to their respective sister meetings in Cuba YM—Gibara (Monadnock) and Puerto Padre (Wellesley)—as part of NEYM's Puente de Amigos, the continuing bridge of love between our two YMs.

• **Northampton (MA) MM's** Peace and Justice Witness Committee sponsored a listening circle on simplicity, realizing that "the pursuit of simplicity is also unavoidably linked to current concerns about the global climate crisis. Living simpler and more sustainable lives is an evolving daily practice. In recog-

niton of how challenging this can be, we are offering this group as an opportunity to support each other and be supported in finding our own expression of simplicity."

• **Mt. Toby (MA) MM** has created a "Committee of Affirmation and Care" for its member Irene Michaud who is following a leading to live and work among Friends and others in New Orleans. In a letter to the **New Orleans (LA) MM** the Committee affirms Irene's leading for this service and writes that "Irene has witnessed to us of your despair, your struggles, and your hope. Through her we affirm these seeds of hope, hold you in prayer, and affirm your gifts as you struggle to nurture new life in your city, your lives and your Meeting. We affirm your courage and faithfulness in keeping the Meeting alive and connecting to the larger Quaker world. We look forward to growing closer in spirit to you through our mutual connection to Irene and we send our love and openness to sharing your journey."

• **Fresh Pond (MA) MM** approved a "Code of Conduct for Youth Workers" for all paid and volunteer staff who work with the Meeting's children. The "Code" defines specific expectations around appropriate interpersonal boundaries, physical expressions of affection, friendships, conversations, and reporting responsibilities.

The Meeting has also begun a one-year experimental committee structure. Three umbrella committees—Administration & Stewardship, Quaker Education & Child Care, and Worship & Care—will each coordinate sub-committees and task groups to carry out the work and mission of the meeting. The restructuring reduces the number of committee slots to fill from 49 to 26, and more accurately reflects the number of people active in the meeting.

• **Plainfield (VT) MM** Ministry & Counsel and First Day School sponsored an interactive, intergenerational series on "Growing up Quaker" where individuals in the Meeting and at least one historical figure (Elizabeth Fry) told stories from the earliest parts of their lives. The program continues with meeting people telling stories about growing up Catholic, Jewish, or something else.

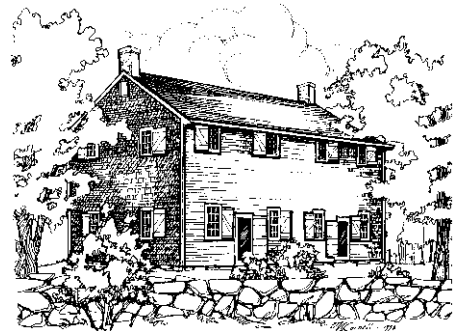
The Meeting's Peace & Social Concerns Committee sponsored an evening discussion on "How do we deal with our anger and

despair in a rapidly deteriorating world? How do we keep hope alive?" One participant noted that "although it was hard to keep away from the depressing state of things, we were all in agreement that we were glad we lived in Vermont where there is a community that works together to solve problems. ...The way we keep hope alive is to work to keep a loving, open heart and to try to live in the moment and appreciate life's continuous little miracles."

• **Portland (ME) Friends School** hosted a public panel discussion featuring Maine alumni of Quaker Schools on "How Quaker education has made a difference in my life's work." The panel was moderated by James Grumbach, Head of Portland Friends School (former George School teacher and Administrator) and Robert Levin, Assistant Chair of Portland Friends School (alumni of Haverford College, PA).

• **Wellesley (MA) MM** First Day School put on a "Parent's Night Out," an evening of tandem parties for families with children 6 years old or younger. At 4:30pm the children were dropped off at the meetinghouse where they played games, figured out puzzles, and went on a scavenger hunt. Parents met in the relative quiet of a meeting member's home for "good food, good conversation, and finished sentences."

• **Dartmouth at Smith Neck (MA) MM** welcomes Pam J. Cole as interim pastor. Pam is a long-time minister in the Dartmouth/New Bedford area and has served Smith Neck Friends from time to time, filling in when the Meeting's pastors have been away. As well as leading worship and facilitating pastoral care, Pam will engage with the Meeting to discern where God may be leading them, through a program of prayer, self-study and goal setting.



Apponegansett Meetinghouse, Dartmouth (MA) MM

In other Quaker news

Pastoral Letter from Kenyan Friends

In response to the violence surrounding the contested December elections in Kenya, Friends Church Kenya circulated a pastoral letter to “the leaders of this nation, Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga.”

The letter begins “Receive Greetings in the name of Christ Jesus. At this time of pain, horror, sorrow, suffering, and insecurity in our beloved country, we as Friends Church Kenya, being a PEACE church, are deeply concerned for the safety of ALL Kenyans and friends visiting Kenya during this time of political and social instability.” It continues with a powerful statement of the Quaker Peace Testimony: “We actively oppose all that leads to violence among people and nations. ...Refusal to fight with weapons is not surrender. We are not passive when threatened by the greedy, the cruel, the tyrant, and the unjust. We will struggle to remove the causes of impasse and confrontation by every means of non-violent resistance available. We must start with our own Hearts and Minds. Together, let us reject the clamor of fear and listen to the whisperings of hope.”

In closing, the letter states “Life is Sacred. Stop the Bloodshed. As Quakers we value every person. We believe that “there is that of God in every person.” Our central faith requires that we should proclaim, in deed as well as in word that war ...is contrary to the Spirit of God, whose name is Love. The same spirit must animate our business and social relations and make us eager to remove oppression and injustice in every form.”

Addressing child safety in meetings

A sub-committee of NEYM Ministry & Counsel has been appointed to assist meetings in addressing prevention of child sexual abuse in our communities. It hopes to be a repository of information about the efforts of various monthly meetings across New England. In this way it might facilitate other meeting’s efforts. The sub-committee hopes to be helpful, not judgmental.

What has your meeting done on this topic? Some meetings have labored and approved comprehensive procedures. Others have begun the process and found that they could not proceed. And many have wondered whether they need to consider this issue at all, given their small numbers or few children.

To begin the work, the sub-committee

would like to hear from monthly meetings about what they have done to date. If you have approved minutes, procedures, or policies that you would be willing share with other meetings, the sub-committee would like to collect them. In this way we can move forward without “reinventing the wheel.” The sub-committee offers itself as a resource. Would you like help in starting this conversation in your monthly meeting. Would a visit be helpful? Contact, Carolyn Stone, 617/964-3178 • carolynstone@comcast.net

Children & Family Calendar of Queries

Start off the new year with a year’s worth of child and family queries! There are still a few calendars left. \$10 each + \$3.50 shipping, contact the NEYM Office, 508/754-6760 • neym@neym.org. And, if you were one of the Friends who bought a Calendar at NEYM Sessions, monthly topic labels have been added to every calendar since then. For labels, contact Jean McCandless, 802/862-8665 • jmccandl@together.net

FDS Curriculum Workshop

The 5th Annual First Day School (FDS) Curriculum Workshop, *Threshing the Seeds of War and Peace*, will be held at Hanover (NH) Meetinghouse, Saturday, 3/29/08, 9am–4pm. How can we use the creative arts to help teach our children and youth to be effective peacemakers? How can we help them develop and use their gifts of creativity to strengthen their Quaker beliefs and practice? Join us in exploring ways art, music, movement, story telling and drama can be used in your First Day School to strengthen your peace education work. Check out curriculum materials and go home with new teaching tools. Participate in the afternoon curriculum lab to practice adapting and writing your own lessons. Workshop fee is \$40 for materials, lunch, speaker costs, and supporting childcare. Ask your Meeting for financial help. Send three participants for the price of two! Contact NEYM Office for registration, hospitality information and to request childcare for the day, 508/754-6760 • neym@neym.org

NEYM M&C/Woolman Hill retreats

Mary Kay Glazer & Mark Moss; *Transforming Conflict In Meetings* (co-sponsored by NEYM Ministry & Counsel), 2/29–3/2/08, Joanna Komoska; *Being and Becoming Friends* (co-

sponsored by NEYM Ministry & Counsel), 3/28–30/08, Beckey Phipps & Laura Melly. Contact Margaret Cooley, 413/774-3431 • www.woolmanhill.org

Interested in traveling ministry?

Come meet with others who visit meetings near or far, out of simple friendship or under a concern. Join Wellesley (MA) Friends for worship at 10am, Sunday 3/9/08, then gather with the “traveling ministries” group for brown-bag lunch, followed by a meeting to exchange news, get to know each other, and seek ways we can encourage each other. All welcome! Contact Brian Drayton, 603/654-6001 • brian_drayton@terc.edu

“The Way of Ministry” one-day retreat

An exploratory day retreat, Saturday, 3/22/08, will be held 9 am–4pm at Wellesley Meeting, for “The Way of Ministry,” a new program of The School of the Spirit (one-year with four short residencies at Pendle Hill, starts Labor Day weekend). This will be a mutually supportive, spiritually grounded, and practical program for Friends actively answering the call to all forms of Quaker ministry, including vocal and traveling ministry, teaching, spiritual nurture, peace work, etc. Join Marcelle Martin, Laura Melly, and Beckey Phipps, the core teachers. Contact Beckey Phipps, 781/891-3783 • baphipps@earthlink.net • www.quakerinfo.com/sots

Woolman Hill staff sought

Woolman Hill, a Quaker conference and retreat center in Deerfield, MA, seeks a part-time host (residence on-site required) and a part-time maintenance person. Individuals and couples welcome to apply. Good people skills, versatility, and appreciation for spiritual and simple living desirable. Experience with Quakerism helpful. Starting date flexible, with aim of August 2008. Submit a letter of interest, resume and references to info@woolmanhill.org or 107 Keets Rd, Deerfield MA 01342. Contact Margaret Cooley or Mark Fraser, 413/774-3431 • www.woolmanhill.org

BHFH seeks Assistant Director

Beacon Hill Friends House (BHFH), a Quaker Center and Residential Community, will be hiring a new Assistant Director to start work early summer 2008. Contact Holly Baldwin, 617/227-9118 • hbaldwin@bhfh.org.

NEYM Women's Retreat

A retreat for NEYM Quaker women to "Explore our Spirituality" will be held 4/25–27/08 at Geneva Point Center, Center Harbor, NH. "The uniqueness of Quaker women gathering in the Spirit in the safety of acceptance and love restores our souls. It is a time to look inward, a time to share our deepest feelings, a time to be nourished." Registration is limited—first come, first serve! Send \$25 non-refundable deposit payable to NEYM to Patsy Shotwell, 416 Conant Rd., Weston MA 02493 • 781/899-5367 • pshotwell@comcast.net

Quaker Peacebuilder Camp 2008

Making summer plans? Don't forget the Quaker Peacebuilder Camp 2008! This 10-

day residential camp (6/21 to 7/1/08) provides a hands-on exploration of community organizing and nonviolent action for high school youth. The camp begins and ends in Hartford, CT, with several days in-between at the rural New Hampshire campus of The Meeting School. We combine outdoor recreation and skill-building activities with the challenges of building community among an intentionally diverse group of youth and adults. Full tuition is \$600, with scholarships available. Contact John Humphries: 860/236-5175 • jhumphries@igc.org

BHFH 2008 Weed Lecture

Beacon Hill Friends House (BHFH) presents the 2008 Weed Lecture: *Conflict and Controversial Issues among Friends, Past and*

Present, delivered by Dr. Harold Weaver, Sunday, 4/13/08 at 1pm. New England Friend Hal Weaver is currently focusing his national and international ministry on using the arts to encourage international understanding and racial justice through The ChinaFilm Project, The BlackFilm Project and The BlackQuaker Project. Educated at Westtown School and Haverford College, Hal holds a doctorate in international education from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. BHFH presents this annual free lecture in memory of former Directors, Ernest and Esther Weed. The Friends House is a Friends center and 20-member residential community located at 6 Chestnut Street, Boston, MA. Contact BHFH, 617/227-9118 • www.bhfh.org

New England Friends Home—Thayer House

Gretchen Codon, Director, New England Friends Home—Thayer House

THE HOME SERVICE PROGRAM of the New England Yearly Meeting was initiated in 1903 when Friends attending Yearly Meeting in Portland expressed concern for those in need of a "boarding home." As a result, Sarah Alice Huntington turned over her residence in Amesbury for this use. Money left to Yearly Meeting, under Sarah Nichols Pope Dixon's will, helped meet expenses and repair. The foundations for a continuing Home Service were thoughtfully laid.

A crisis arose when the Huntington Dixon Home, after 50 years service, was found unsafe and had to close. Realizing the serious consequences, Polly Thayer Starr of Cambridge Meeting offered Yearly Meeting the lovely home in Hingham left by her mother. Alterations were necessary to prepare the Home for occupancy, so thoughtful, generous gifts were needed. Funding for the alterations was raised through individual Friends' and meetings' commitments. At this time the Permanent Board approved the recommendation that the residence be named the New England Friends Home.

Thayer House, a beautiful manor house situated on a hill in Hingham, has lovely grounds for walking and breathtaking vistas of the south shore of Boston. Hingham is a friendly community with an active senior population; the Home's residents often take advantage of the many events offered by the

Hingham Department of Elder Services. Hingham is also a scenic shore community and wonderful for ocean drives in the Home van. Quaker meeting gathers here for worship each Sunday under the auspices of the South Shore Preparative Meeting of Friends Meeting at Cambridge.

In 1995, the Home Committee came to the conclusion that the Friends Home needed substantial renovation. The primary goal was for all rooms to have individual baths, since residents and their families wanted the privacy an attached bath affords. Equally important was the improvement of emergency access by widening halls and the back staircase. An activity/meeting room and more resident rooms were added in a new wing which also includes a large elevator. At this time, the Home also dropped its Level IV rest home license and became certified as an assisted living facility.

One of the goals of the New England Friends Home is to maintain not only a lovely, homelike environment, but also an affordable one. The monthly rate includes all services: meals, housecleaning, laundry, escorted doctor visits, van trips, activities, and personal care. Every year, the Home Committee solicits contributions from New England Friends and local community members in order to help keep service high and room rates affordable.

The Home has only eighteen units, but



over its long history has served hundreds of elders. Most of our residents are local residents and not Quaker, but the Home is a wonderful setting for a Friend who wants the comfort of going downstairs to meeting every Sunday. Over the years the Home has been family to many lonely elders; single people or widows with no children have the Home to provide the same concern and care that a close relative would.

The mission of the New England Friends Home is to provide a home-like setting for elderly residents who will foster a congenial family atmosphere embodying the principals of simplicity, peace, community and equality. The Friends Home is open to all who no longer choose to live independently but wish to join a community which will allow them to age within that family setting.

The New England Yearly Meeting Home Service Program has served as an example of the love and concern for all people that is an integral part of the Religious Society of Friends.

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New England Yearly Meeting of Friends

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THE NEW ENGLAND FRIEND

YEARLY MEETING CALENDAR

February 2008

- 19 All School Meeting for Worship, 9am—Moses Brown School Field House, Providence, RI
- 29–3/2 Jr. High Retreat—Wellesley FM (MA)
- 29–3/2 M&C workshop *Transforming Conflict in Meetings*—Woolman Hill, Deerfield (MA) [see p. 6]

March 2008

- 2 Northwest QM—Plainfield MM (VT) [Change to Sunday]
- 8 Ministry & Counsel—Wellesley FM (MA)
- 9 M&C Traveling Ministries and Intervisitation Subcommittee—Wellesley FM (MA)
- 14–16 JYM/JHYM 6th Grade Retreat—Westport MM (MA)
- 14–16 Young Friends Retreat—Mt. Toby MM (MA)
- 15 Permanent Board—Beacon Hill MM (MA)
- 28–30 M&C workshop, *Being and Becoming Friends*—Woolman Hill, Deerfield (MA) [see p. 6]
- 30 Dover QM—Dover FM (NH)
- 30 Coordinating & Advisory—Location, TBA

April 2008

- 5 Sessions Committee—Amesbury MM (MA)
- 12 Committee Day—Location, TBA
- 19 Clerking/leadership workshop—Location, TBA
- 18–20 Young Friends Retreat—Wellesley FM (MA)
- 20 RI–Smithfield QM—Worcester MM (MA)
- 22 All School Meeting for Worship, 9am—Moses Brown School Field House, Providence, RI

- 26 Falmouth QM—Durham FM (ME)
- 26 Sandwich QM—New Bedford MM (MA)
- 27 Salem QM—South Shore PM (MA)

May 2008

- 2–4 Jr. High Retreat—Portland FM (ME)
- 2–4 Young Friends Seniors Retreat—Monadnock MM (NH)
- 3 Vassalboro QM—Pondtown/Winthrop (ME)
- 4 CT Valley QM—Mt Toby MM (CT)
- 16–18 JYM Elementary Retreat—Woolman Hill (MA)
- 17 Ministry & Counsel—Location, TBA
- 18 Coordinating & Advisory—Location, TBA

June 2008

- 7–8 Northwest QM—Farm & Wilderness (VT)
- 14 Committee Day—Location, TBA
- 21 Permanent Board—Winthrop Center Friends (ME)
- 28–7/5 Friends General Conference—Johnstown, PA,
- 29 Dover QM—North Sandwich MM (NH)
- 29 Coordinating & Advisory—Location, TBA

July 2008

- 9–13 Friends United Meeting Triennial—High Point, NC
- 20 RI–Smithfield QM—Providence MM (RI)
- 26 Falmouth QM—Brunswick FM (ME)
- 26 Sandwich QM—Mattapoisett FM (MA)

August 2008

- 2–7 YM Sessions—Bryant University, Smithfield RI