

April 2011 Newsletter

 [Printer-friendly version](#)

CONTENTS

Minutes – [March 2011 Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business](#)

Attachments to Minutes:

- [Library Committee Annual Report](#)
- [Capital Improvements Task Force Update](#)

[Spring Events](#)

[Announcements](#)

[From the FMW Vault: Shoebox Project](#) – *Hayden Wetzel*

Minutes

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

Minutes – March 13, 2011

3/11-1 Opening: The Meeting opened at noon with a period of silent worship. David Etheridge served as Clerk and Debby Churchman served as Recording Clerk. The clerks read Advices, Queries and Voices concerning Meeting for Business which have been proposed by the Faith and Practice Revision Committee of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

Advices

Participation in the meeting for worship with a concern for business is the responsibility of all. Come with open minds, seeking the spirit, listening carefully, discerning the truth in what others have to offer. Proceed with forbearance and warm affection for each other. If you cannot attend, prayerfully uphold the meeting.

We do not seek a majority decision nor even consensus. As we wait patiently for God's guidance, our experience is that way will open and we shall be led into unity. Speak only when God gives you new insight into the matter at hand. Think it possible that you may be mistaken.

Queries

Are our meetings for worship with a concern for business held in the spirit of worship, seeking the guidance of God?

In what ways do we each take our right share of responsibility in the service of the meeting?

Voices

And that all may be careful to speak short and pertinent to matters in a Christian spirit, and dispatch business quickly, and keep out of long debates and heats; and with the spirit of God keep that down, which is doting about questions and strife of words, that tend to parties and contention: which in the church of God there is no such custom to be allowed. And likewise not to speak more than one at a time; nor any in a fierce way; for that is not to be allowed in any society, neither natural nor spiritual; but as the apostle saith, 'Be swift to hear, and slow to speak;'

George Fox, 1690

Spiritual discernment lies at the heart of Quaker spirituality and practice. It's grounded in the central Quaker conviction of the availability to every person of the experience and guidance of God, immediate as well as mediated. Discernment is the faculty we use to distinguish the true movement of the Spirit to speak in meeting for worship from the wholly human urge to share, to instruct, or to straighten people out. It is the capacity we exercise in a centered meeting for worship for the conduct of business to sense the right course for the meeting to take in complex or difficult circumstances.

Patricia Loring, 1992

Consensus is the product of willfulness. We will ourselves to a decision. Sense of the Meeting is a product of willingness in which we allow ourselves to be led. It is the difference between reason and faith.

Barry Morley, 1993

3/11-2 Attendance Approximately 25 Friends were present. The Meeting welcomed Mohamad Olabi, Kim Acquaviva, and Evan North, all from Washington, D.C.

3/11-3 Clerk's Report David Etheridge reported that the Memorial Meeting for Joan Oesher was held on February 26, 2011 in good order. On March 20, historian Betsy Cazden will speak on "Quakers and Slavery: What we know and why it matters." There will be a wedding on Saturday, March 26, of Mark Meinke and Frank Taylor under the care of FMW; all are welcome. On April 16, there will be a memorial meeting for Mada McGill, wife of John Scales. The family plans this as a private meeting open to family and close friends of Mada. The memorial meeting for Raoul Kulberg has had a date change; the new date is Saturday, June 25.

Gerri Williams held the Meeting in the Light during Meeting for Business.

3/11-4 Marriage and Family Relations Committee Byron Sanford, on behalf of Marriage and Family Relations, presented the second request for marriage under the care of the Meeting of Sarah Apgar and Alex Painter. The couple was not present. The Meeting APPROVED.

Byron Sanford also presented the first request for marriage of Justin Connor and Mohamad Olabi. This request lies over for a month, as is our custom.

3/11-5 Membership Committee -Hayden Wetzal, on behalf of the Membership Committee, presented a recommendation for the membership of Michael North. The recommendation lies over for

one month, as is our custom.

Hayden Wetzel also presented the committee's recommendation for the approval of the transfer of membership of Kevin Camp from Birmingham (Alabama) Friends Meeting to Friends Meeting of Washington. This request lies over for one month, as is our custom.

3/11-6 Nominating Committee David Etheridge, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, announced the resignation of Beverly Reader from the Healing and Reconciliation Committee. Friends ACCEPTED the resignation. J.E. McNeil announced that Friend Reader has received an honorable discharge as a Conscientious Objector from the Air Force.

3/11-7 Annual Report Michael North, Clerk of the Library Committee, presented the committee's annual report (see attached). He notes that the committee's main goal is to make the library more useful to the FMW community. The rare book collection was donated to Wilmington College; a Friend noted that this college is part of Friends United Meeting. Friends discussed how the collection might be responsibly weeded and provided suggestions on where the books might be donated. A Friend spoke in awe of how much the committee has accomplished, especially in making the library digitally accessible. A Friend urged the library to make the collection attractive and accessible to all people, with a special outreach to teenagers. A Friend asked if the Library Committee might be restructured along the lines of the Garden Committee, with one or two people appointed and other, non-appointed people joining in as interest leads them to do so. Another Friend spoke in support of maintaining the current system, and fully staffing the committee. A Friend asked if there is a relationship between our Meeting and Swarthmore, Haverford, etc. Michael says we have been in contact with them about possible donations. Asked about purchasing more books, Michael North noted that the library's budget has been reduced to \$150. A Friend encouraged Friends to examine the collection and make up their own suggestions for additions, which lists could be added to the website.

3/11-8 Updates

Ken Forsberg from the Capital Improvements Task Force presented its update (see attached). The Task Force continues to meet twice a month. The Task Force stated their preference that the elevator be located on the west side of the Meeting House, and are examining ideas on how to do that. A Friend spoke of the need to focus on improving the sound in the Meeting Room, and consider purchasing a microphone for speakers at events. Ken believes that the Property Committee would be the right place for this concern. A Friend noted that this meeting had an acoustical engineering report done on the Meeting Room in the late 1980s/early 1990s.

Loie Clark, Clerk of Finance and Stewardship Committee, presented its update. The committee has figures through the end of February, and thinks FMW may end this fiscal year close to even. Expenses continue to be less than budgeted due to having one unfilled staff position, and revenues are up, mostly due to space use fees. The committee expects to bring the new budget in May for approval in June. It's a conservative, bare budget, starting with the amount we realistically expect to raise. A Friend asked if it's possible to give earmarked donations. Loie said yes, as long as it's for an item or effort that the Meeting has approved.

311-9 Minutes– The minutes were read and APPROVED.

3/11-9 Adjournment With approximately 31 Friends present, the meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m. to reconvene as way opens on **Sunday, April 10** at 11:45 a.m.

Attachments:

- Library Committee Annual Report

- Capital Improvements Task Force Update
-

Friends Meeting of Washington, Library Committee Annual Report

Submitted March 2011

I. Introduction

The FMW Library has been a helpful resource to members and attenders for many decades, however, the nature and use of libraries in general has changed drastically over the past ten years. Most Americans now seek information online far more frequently than in books and libraries, and libraries have begun to provide more information to readers online. The Library Committee would like to reconnect with the Meeting community in light of some of these changes and hopes to make it a more useful and relevant institution.

II. Projects Undertaken during the past year

A. Disposition of the Rare Book Collection

Last Spring, a subcommittee of the Library Committee consisting of Todd Harvey, Michael North, and Hayden Wetzel took up the issue of the rare book collection in the FMW Library, comprising about 250 books dating from the late 17th century to the late 19th century. The books were primarily of use to historical researchers rather than the Meeting, yet the Meeting had no proper way to give access to researchers or to take care of the fragile and valuable collection. The Subcommittee sought out a college or university library with an interest in the history of Quakerism but which did not have very many of the titles already. The committee agreed that the library of Wilmington College in Ohio was the best place for the collection to have a permanent home. The Subcommittee proposed the transfer of the collection to the Library Committee and to the Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business in May 2010, and both bodies agreed to the transaction. The Subcommittee Members packed the books into boxes, and they were delivered to the Wilmington College Library in June, 2010. In addition, the Committee donated two 18th-century books unrelated to Quakerism to the Folger Shakespeare Library in honor of Jean Miller, former FMW Librarian and long term employee of the Folger.

B. Cataloging the Library Collection in LibraryThing.com

In April 2010, the Library Committee agreed to catalog the collection using a popular online service called LibraryThing.com, which helps individuals and small organizations catalog their books quickly and easily and allows free online access to the catalog from anywhere. The cost was a one-time fee of \$25. Over the past ten months, Michael North has been entering the collection into the site, and the catalog is now viewable online via the following

links: <http://www.librarything.com/catalog/FMWLibrary>; tag cloud of subjects in the library: <http://www.librarything.com/tagcloud/FMWLibrary>; author cloud: <http://www.librarything.com/authorcloud/FMWLibrary>; and a gallery of authors in the FMW Library: <http://www.librarything.com/authorgallery/FMWLibrary>. People can check the Library's holdings on their mobile devices by entering the mobile site, <http://www.librarything.com/m/> and

searching the collection of FMW Library. The Library hopes to begin publicizing the online catalog soon via the list serve and by expanding the Library's webpage on the FMW site.

Using LibraryThing's many tools, we are able to learn a great deal about the FMW collections. For instance, the average publication date for books in the collection is 1965. The Library acquired most of its current collection in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, then there was a precipitous decline in the 80s, 90s, and 2000s (see diagram). About a dozen other Quaker meeting libraries have also entered their collections on LibraryThing, and FMW appears to have one of the largest at nearly 1900 volumes.

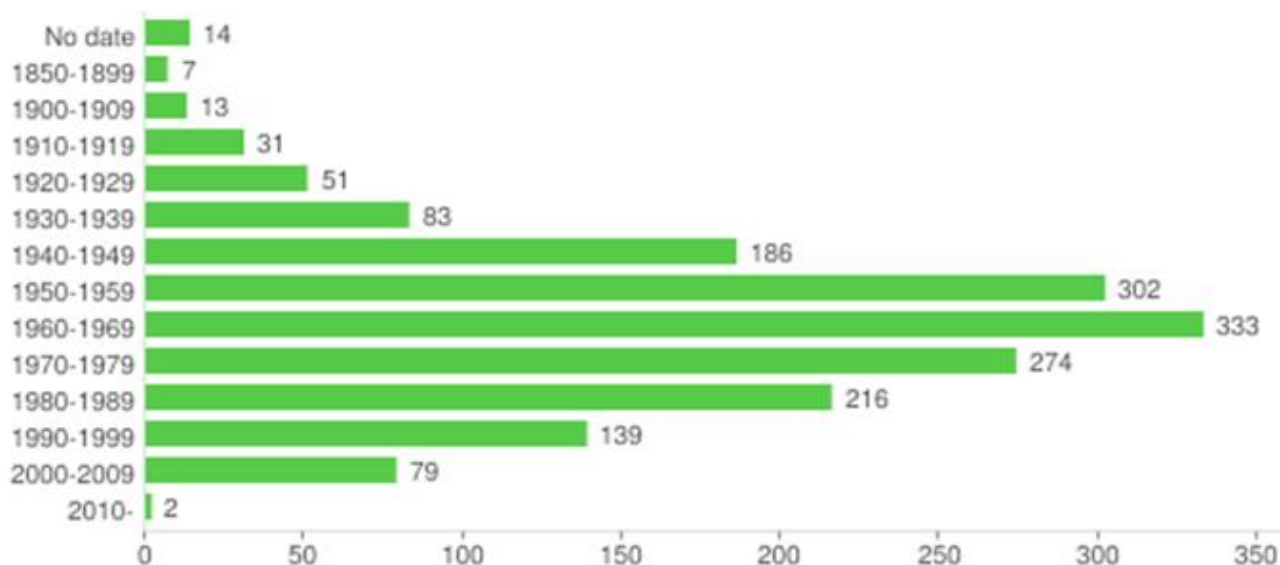


Fig. 1. Number of books in the FMW Library by publication date.

Cataloging the collection also gives us a chance to better examine the collection to see if it has materials of interest to the Meeting. The Library is strong in areas that are of perpetual interest to Friends, such as Quaker history and biography, spirituality, mysticism, social justice, and non-violence. Many books in the collection, however, reflect the timely interests of the meeting during different eras. For instance, there are a number of books on Fascism from the 1930s and 40s, on the Cold War from the 50s, on the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War from the 60s, and on nuclear disarmament from the 70s and 80s. While all of these issues have been important to Quakers over the past century, it is questionable if FMW Members would turn to the Library when contemplating them today; other issues and interests may be more prominent in the minds of the Meeting today, such as globalization, religious extremism, and the environment.

III. Plans and Projects for the Coming Year

In the coming year the Library Committee would like to carry out the following projects:

- A. Create a more useful presence on the FMW website, including links to the Library catalog and other online Quaker-related resources
- B. Create a friendly presence in the Library before and after Meeting for Worship for people wanting to use the collection (would require volunteers)
- C. Solicit donations of recent books from Meeting members and attenders that are relevant to the Meeting (perhaps create a wish list for the Library on amazon.com?)
- D. Solicit ideas for new titles from members, attenders, and committees

- E. Replace the outdated card catalog with print outs from LibraryThing.com
 - F. Responsibly de-accession some titles of little interest to today's Meeting
 - G. Add some DVDs of films to the collection?
-
-

Capital Improvements Task Force Update

March 13, 2011

In our most recent update, we reported that we agreed that this is a campus-wide project, that the planned elevator should provide accessibility to all of our buildings, if possible, and that we should present the Meeting with information about what it will cost to connect the elevator to Quaker House and Carriage House spaces.

We can now add that after reconsidering the details of several proposed options for locating the elevator, the Task Force finds that we share a preference for the location designated in previous decisions of the Property Committee, Planning Committee, and Meeting for Business -- in an addition on the west side of the Meeting House -- because of its advantages for creating accessibility for the full campus.

We are now studying the proposals for that addition, considering the different options for shape, size and placement of such an addition.

As usual, we'd be glad to hear comments, advice, or concerns. Write us at FMW-CITF(at)googlegroups.com.

Spring Events

William Penn House

The William Penn House, a Quaker Center on Capitol Hill, hosts monthly potluck dinners with a speaker and discussion afterwards. In addition to monthly potlucks, the William Penn House provides low cost accommodations and Quaker Centered programs and seminars. On Sunday **April 3**, at 6:30 p.m. Pete Schenck and Brad Ogilvie will be the presenters and they will discuss **Common Security Clubs**. Brad is a staff member of William Penn House, and Pete is a member of Friends Meeting of Washington. **Common Security Clubs** are places where people come together to increase our personal security in a rapidly changing world by facing the challenges of our times, learning together about the root causes and building relations to strengthen our security through mutual aid and shared action. These are places where we rediscover the abundance of what we have and envision ourselves as

part of a larger effort to create a fair and healthy economy that works for everyone. Pete and Brad will present more about these clubs and lead a discussion of how Monthly Meetings and people in our communities can explore creating and hosting clubs.

On Thursday, **April 28**, from 7:00 p.m. to 9 p.m. Laura Kohl will present a program – ***Jonestown Survivor: An Insider's Look***. Laura is a member of the Visalia (CA) Friends meeting and also attends La Jolla Monthly Meeting. She has recently written an autobiography. She will be at William Penn House telling her story that winds its way through the idealism of the early 1960's, through the violence of war, assignments and demonstrations, surviving Jonestown, and life afterwards.

On **April 30 and May 1**, the William Penn House will be holding a storytelling workshop. The workshop will be facilitated in partnership with Laura Zann, a DC-area writer, performer and educator. The cost is \$160 for the weekend, and the weekend will end on Sunday evening with a ***Story Telling Slam*** held as the **May 1** Sunday evening potluck. Effective storytelling is a fine and beautiful art that can cut across age and cultural barriers. Knowing the basics of effective storytelling can help strengthen the story, making it memorable long after the oration is over. The art of storytelling is not only useful for the telling of stories, but also in helping organize thoughts for any kind of public speaking from professional presentations to messages in meetings.

Don't forget that a yoga class is held every Tuesday evening from 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 pm. Elizabeth Goodman is the instructor and the class is held in the Cory Room.

The William Penn House is an alcohol and tobacco free facility located at 515 East Capitol St. SE Washington, DC 20003. For more information call (202)543-5560.

Garden Committee Work Day

On Saturday, **April 9**, from Noon to 2 p.m. the Garden Committee is holding a Work Day. No special skills are required, and everyone is invited to help tend the garden and help do a spring clean-up. For more information, contact Mark Haskell at (202)726-4616 or (202)309-8554 (cell).

Adult Study Group

The Adult Study and Discussion Group will meet on Sunday, **April 10** at 9:15 a.m. in the Assembly Room. The group will discuss playwright/author Thornton Wilder, a Quaker. It is not mandatory to attend every group meeting if a F/friend is interested in attending the session. For questions, or for more information, contact John Scales.

Inquirers Class

The spring Inquirers Class is scheduled to begin on Monday, **April 11**, in the Decatur Place Room. The class is a great way for newcomers to learn more about Quakers and our "peculiar ways". Friends who have "been around for awhile" are also welcome. The class will meet at 7:30 pm. for five consecutive Mondays. Attendance at every class is not mandatory. For more information contact either the FMW Office (202) 483-3310 or Michael Cronin.

FMW's Senior Center

Programs of slides or talks are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month in the Decatur Place Room at 1:30 p.m. On Wednesday, **April 13**, Carol Coffee will present a slide show- ***Italy I*** and on Wednesday, **April 27**, Clem Swisher will present a slide show on **Yellowstone Park**.

Living Our Queries

Please join Friends as we discover how the monthly queries, advices and voices connect with our daily spiritual experiences. The group meets the fourth Sunday of each month at 9:15 a.m. in the Quaker House Living Room. Participating in this monthly discussion can lead both long time Friends to a “deeper understanding” of the queries, and help newcomers better understand Quakers, our practices, our beliefs and our spiritual lives. The next session of Living Our Queries, is on Sunday **April 24**, and the queries to be discussed are “Fostering Community”.

Announcements

Friends Wilderness Center

On Saturday **April 2**, at 10:00 a.m. everyone is invited to join Wilderness Center poet Ron Weber, and other area poets and poetry lovers for a winter day of reading and discussing poetry around the wood stove at Niles Cabin. The general theme will be nature poetry and the human spirit, new signs of life, and changing seasons. Bring your own poetry to read. Listeners are valued as much as poetry writers and readers. To RSVP and get directions call Shelia Bach at (304)728-4820. Come early or stay late for a self guided hike through the woods. Lunch (\$7) is available for Friends who reserve in advance. A suggested \$10 donation will help keep up the buildings and preserve the 1400 acres of the Wilderness Center.

On Saturday, **April 23** the Friends Wilderness Center is hosting a Spring Work Day. There are jobs for everyone, including: painting the cabin, washing windows, clearing away sticks and branches so the yard can be mowed, and clear trails. Many other tasks will be added to the list by the 23rd. Bring gloves and old clothes. Please call Sheila Bach (304-728-4820) so she can prepare enough food for everyone. Lunch is provided for all workers.

Thinking About Race

Friends are invited to hear Laura Johnston Kohl share her remarkable spiritual journey on Saturday, **April 30** at 10 a.m. in the Quaker House Living Room.

Laura’s journey and commitment to rejecting racism as a white woman began as a high school in Rockville, Maryland in the 1960’s when she protested the segregation of the Glen Echo Amusement Park (along with FMW Friends Lib Segal and Esther Delaplaine -who is now at Bethesda Friends Meeting). While in college Laura helped with the DC Black Panther’s free breakfast program. She moved to San Francisco where she was attracted to the People’s Temple led by Jim Jones because of its thoroughly multicultural congregation. She moved to Jonestown, Guyana, with many other members of the congregation, but escaped the mass killings there in 1978 because she had been assigned to work in the Guyana capital at the time. After that trauma she found some healing in the Synanon community and has continued on her journey by becoming a Quaker, a wife, a mother and an elementary school teacher.

She has written an account of her journey so far entitled, *Jonestown Survivor—An Insider's Look* (iUniverse, Bloomington, IN, 2010), <http://www.iuniverse.com/Bookstore/BookDetail.aspx?BookId=SKU-000138304>. She will also be making a presentation at the William Penn House, 515 East Capitol Street, on Thursday, **April 28** at 7 p.m., <http://williampennhouse.org/index.php?q=node/221>.

NOTE: Friends who wish to comment on this or any other "Thinking about Race" items may do so at <http://racism.bym-rsf.net>. The BYM Web Manager has set this up a BYM Working Group on Racism blog. In order to leave comments you need to register first. You can do that by sending an email to webmanager@bym-rsf.net

From the Vault: Shoebox Project

A monthly series of edited extracts from the historical material of the Friends Meeting of Washington:

Dear Friends in Christ,

November 16, 1998

Last Christmas I was visiting in the Washington area. The Washington Post on December 22 printed an article on your wonderful Shoebox project. I wept, literally, at dear Jordan Morris the 5-year-old packer who was so proud of his task to remember "one from this pile and one from this pile." And 9-year-old Sarah Elkinton making boxes to put items in. This is such a wonderful mission and to see young children and families involved together was very heart-warming. Please accept this small check to further your good work . . . I want to be part of it.

Merry Christmas to you all. God bless you...

In His Love, JKF

Moon Township, PA

[This one is self-explanatory.] - File: ISSUES/PROJECTS: Shoebox Project 1990s

Hayden Wetzel
FMW Historian