

August 2013 Newsletter

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FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON

MONTHLY MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH A CONCERN FOR BUSINESS

July 21, 2013

Advices

Since its founding over 350 years ago, the Religious Society of Friends has testified to the worth of every individual by refusing to participate in war. We repudiate war because it violates the primacy of love, destroys lives that God has given, and tears the fabric of society. Members of our Society have traditionally refused to serve in the armed forces. The Peace Testimony is, however, more than a mere refusal to participate in war.

Fox's assertion that he "lived in that light and power that takes away the occasion for war" and Woolman's advice that we "examine our lives to see that the seeds of war are not contained therein" firmly establish connections between this and other testimonies. As we work for peace in the world, we search out the seeds of war in ourselves and in our way of life. We refuse to join in actions that lead to destruction and death. We seek ways to cooperate to save life and strengthen the bonds of unity among all people. We work to create the conditions of peace, such as freedom, justice, cooperation, and the right sharing of the world's resources.

Our faith calls for us to be fully present to the person before us. We need to bring into God's light those emotions, attitudes, and prejudices in ourselves which lie at the root of destructive conflict,

acknowledging our need for forgiveness and grace.

Queries

How does my life reflect “the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion for war”?

Where there are hatred, division, and strife, how are we instruments of reconciliation and love?

How do our lives illustrate our understanding of the basis of our peace testimony?

As we work for peace, are we nourished by peace within and among ourselves?

How do we regard those we believe have harmed us or others?

How does this affect our spiritual lives?

Voices

It is not our Quakerism, or our pacifism, or our knowledge, or skill, or emotion that overcomes hate and violence. We shall surely fail if we become proud of our virtue and traditions and become vain in our witness. We shall fail if we think the power that may move through us is our own. The power is not ours, it is God's.... The foundation is faith in the power of God's love to transform us and our society and to bring justice to the poor and the oppressed. Our task is to act, as best we understand what we are led to do, in obedience to that power. –Mary Lord

Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal. –*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

May we look upon our treasures, the furniture of our houses, and our garments and try whether the seeds of war have nourishment in these our possessions. –John Woolman

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins;

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nation,

To bring peace among brothers and sisters,
To make music in the heart.

–Howard Thurman

Why are we here? If I understand the message of God, his response to that question is that we are to take part in the creation of the Peaceable Realm of God. Again, if I understand the message of God, how we take part in the creation of this realm is to love God with all our heart, our mind and our strength and to love our neighbors and enemies as we love God and ourselves. In its essential form, different aspects of love bring about the creation of the realm. –Tom Fox

If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner. –Nelson Mandela

2013/7-1 Opening The meeting opened with silent worship at 12:20 PM. David Etheridge served as Presiding Clerk, and Hayden Wetzell as Recording Clerk. The clerks read a Query from Baltimore Yearly Meeting's draft Faith and Practice, and appropriate advices and other readings. 32 Friends and visitors were present, including visitors Caleb O. Brown, Angela Erickson, Janet Parker, John Lozier (of Monongalia Friends Meeting, Morgantown WV), Christopher Adam Hixson, Jocelyn Burls, and EunSung Kim.

2013/7-2 Personal Announcements The Clerk announced that our members Sara Satterthwaite and William Cousins are both in hospice care. Judy Shaw, a member of Moorestown Friends Meeting and mother of member Rachel Kidane, is recovering from a serious fall. Friend Al Scott is likewise recovering from a fall. Out members Gerri Williams and Ray Allard are now resettled in Minnesota; their new contact information is available from the Meeting office.

2013/7-3 Requested Marriage of Caleb Brown and Angela Erickson Thomas Goodhue of the Marriage and Family Relations Committee, reported the request of Caleb O. Brown and Angela Erickson to be married under the care of this Meeting, with the Committee's recommendation for approval. The request lies over one month as is our custom.

2013/7-4 Requested Marriage of EunSung Kim and Jocelyn Burls Liz Pomerleau, clerk of the Marriage and Family Relations Committee also reported the request of EunSung Kim and Jocelyn Burls to be married under the care of this Meeting, with the Committee's recommendation for approval. The request lies over one month as is our custom.

2013/7-5 Committee Nomination Merry Pearlstein, of the Nomination Committee, reported the nomination of Jay Harris to the Property Committee for a term ending in December 2015.

Friends **approved** this appointment.

2013/5-6 Nomination to Nominating Committee David Etheridge, clerk of the Search Committee, presented the nomination of Harry Massey to the Nominating Committee for a term beginning in January 2014 to the end of 2016. Friends **approved**.

2013/7-7 Transfer Out of Lois Clark Jean Meyer Capps, co-clerk of the Membership Committee, reported the request of our member Lois Clark to transfer her membership to Bethesda Friends Meeting. Friends **approved** the transfer.

2013/7-8 Writer of Memorial Minutes Friends **approved** the Meeting historian, Hayden Wetzel, to write memorial minutes for our deceased members James Akins, Richard Atlee, Elaine Bundy, Raoul Kuhlberg, Joan Oesher, and Kie Sebastian.

2013/7-9 Proposed Changes to the FMW Handbook Todd Harvey, clerk of the Records and Handbook Committee, reported a number of changes to the Meeting's Handbook to reflect changes of procedure approved in the last years by Friends, with some slight corrections (attached). Friends **approved** these revisions.

2013/7-10 Committee of Clerks Hayden Wetzel read the minutes from the Committee of Clerks meeting held on 10 June (attached). The Committee approved the continuation of the Administrative Secretary's contract for a further three years, discussed the Meeting's policy regarding consumption of alcohol on our property (a concern brought by Property Committee), and also of the roles and responsibilities of committee clerks. A Friend spoke approvingly of this last discussion.

2013/7-11 Annual Report of the Personnel Committee David Etheridge, of the Personnel Committee, presented the annual report of that committee (attached). He pointed out the several useful revisions of personnel policy made in the past year and the encouraging abundance of good candidates for the positions of administrative secretary and youth program coordinator. Friends expressed their appreciation of the committee's work.

2013/7-12 Capital Campaign Committee Grant Thompson, clerk of the Capital Campaign Committee, spoke of the efforts of the committee to identify and approach potential donors to raise an initial fund of \$2 million toward expansion and renovation of our buildings. Of course, all Friends will be encouraged to participate in the longer run. The committee will make a more substantive report in September.

2013/7-13 Capital Improvements Task Force Neil Froemming, co-clerk of the Capital Improvements Task-Force, presented the attached report and said that revisions to the proposed roof design of our renovated buildings bring our architectural plans to near completion. The overall expected project cost now stands at \$2.15 million but the committee hopes to bring these costs back down.

The committee plans to discuss our drainage question with the adjoining Costa Rican embassy, whose excess storm water runs onto our property.

2013/7-14 Property Committee Steve Brooks, co-clerk of the Property Committee, reported the loss of a major renter of our Quaker House space (Promundo). Two smaller organizations, City Dogs Rescue, and National Catholic Reporter, have already taken some of the available space and the committee is looking for a further tenant.

The committee has made an experimental repair to the property in an attempt to stop periodic flooding of our kitchen and Assembly Room. In the recent major storm this method worked well.

The recent Work Day attracted many volunteers and accomplished much, and Friends are encouraged to participate in future events.

2013/8-15 Peace Banner A Friend raised the question of the replacement of the Peace banner that used to hang on our Florida Avenue fence. Friends **approved** referring the question to the Peace and Social Concerns Committee for its action.

2013/7-14 Minutes Friends **approved** the minutes.

2013/7-15 Closing The meeting ended at 1:35 PM with 21 Friends present, with silent worship.

FMW Records and Handbook Committee

Semi-Annual report to the

Meeting for Business, 7/21/13

Changes to the *Handbook of Practices and Procedures*

Section: Meeting Staff

p.17: “The Property Manager is supervised by the Property Committee or one person they designate. The Property Manager will report to the Property Committee, to which s/he will provide monthly reports as well as ongoing updates.

The Youth Program Coordinator will report to the clerk of the Religious Education Committee or another member of that committee designated by the clerk. The Coordinator supports Religious Education and Child Care in the meeting.” (Nov. 11, 2011 MfB)

Section: Standing Committees

p.18: “These exceptions for non-Members are held over for one month, in order that any concerns may be brought privately to Nominating Committee.” (March 2012 MfB)

Section: Table of Standing Committees

p.20: Religious Education Committee members include Youth Program Coordinator (Feb. 10, 2013 MfB)

Section: Table of Special Committees

p.28: Ad Hoc Committee for Special Events (Jan. 13, 2012 MfB)

p.28: Child Safety Committee, number of members is 6 (May 2012 MfB)

p.29: IT Committee members include Administrative Secretary (Jan. 8, 2011 MfB)

p.29: Deleted Senior Center Committee (Dec. 9, 2012 MfB)

Section: Description of Special Committees

p.31: Deleted Senior Center Committee (Dec. 1, 2012 MfB)

Section: Revision and Maintenance of the *Handbook*

p.41: “A report on *Handbook* changes is presented every six months. The official *Handbook* is reprinted on the Meeting website (quakersdc.org).” (Jan. 13, 2013 MfB)

Committee of Clerks meeting

30 June 2013

Present: Beth Cogswell, Michael Cronin, Merry Pearlstein, Kevin Camp, Meg Greene, Alex Matthews, Steve Brooks, Dan Dozier, Liz Pomerleau

Recording clerk: Meg Greene

Renewal of Debby Churchman's contract as FMW Administrator

Michael Cronin, Clerk of the Personnel Committee, conveyed the Committee's recommendation that we approve renewal of Debby Churchman's contract. The Committee further recommended offering her a three-year contract, noting that this would be a symbolic act since her contract would in any case need to be approved on an annual basis by the Committee of Clerks.

The Committee of Clerks discussed with great appreciation Debby's outstanding performance and contributions in all of the aspects of her role, including many that were not anticipated in the initial job description.

Friends wholeheartedly approved the recommendation to renew Debby's contract and to offer her a three-year contract. A detailed minute from the Personnel Committee is attached.

Discussion of role of clerks in committees and in the Meeting

Given the number of committees in FMW, we often have new clerks who are freshly taking up their roles. Are those roles on committees and in the Meeting clear, and how can we support clerks?

We also discussed the role of clerks in giving voice to the sense of the committee versus expressing their own opinions. The sense of the group was that clerks need to be able to express opinions in a way that creates space for others and does not close off or limit discussion. In committing to authenticity, clerks must be willing to concede the position of the group rather than acting unilaterally on the basis of their own opinions. One Friend mentioned the occasional need to bring in another person to clerk a specific discussion when the clerk or co-clerks are too involved in a topic.

A number of concrete suggestions were made regarding the care and feeding of committee clerks. Details for further discussion by the Committee of Clerks can be found in the Annex.

Alcohol consumption on our campus

The Committee of Clerks noted the need to identify a process through which we will identify 1) *who* will ask the Meeting for 2) *what*; and whether that request will be made via a 3) *veto or approval*; and 4) *how* Meeting as a whole will have this discussion. Several concrete suggestions were offered (see Annex). The Committee of Clerks can offer some suggestions after an additional meeting to resolve some of the details.

Annual Report of Personnel Committee

July 2013

FMW's Personnel Committee is responsible for the oversight of the staff employed by the Meeting. The Presiding Clerk serves as an ex officio member.

The Committee's duties include preparing and annually reviewing of job descriptions; making recommendations on salaries, benefits, and salary schedules to the Finance and Stewardship Committee; reviewing and revising employment policies and procedures as necessary; making ongoing evaluations and an annual written evaluation of the work of the Administrative Secretary and Event Planner; making a recommendation to the Committee of Clerks on the re-appointment of the Administrative Secretary and Event Planner; providing advisory assistance to the Administrative Secretary on personnel matters and office procedures; making recommendations to Meeting committees regarding activities that may affect the workload of the staff; and scheduling the Friendly Office Presence on First Days.

Our Handbook of Administrative Policies and Procedures requires the Personnel Committee to act as a search committee for an Administrative Secretary and recommend a candidate for employment to the Committee of Clerks. While acting as a search committee, the size of the Personnel Committee is increased by at least two persons recommended by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Meeting for Business.

In July of 2012 former Administrative Secretary Tom Cooke resigned. Personnel Committee hired a small cadre of temporary staff to maintain operations of the meeting.

Personnel Committee conferred with all committees in the meeting about the staffing, skills, and experience the meeting sought in a new Administrative Secretary. Based on comments and suggestions from FMW's committee's, primarily the Property Committee, the position of Administrative Secretary was changed in two significant ways.

One, it was expanded to include a new responsibility for generating revenue by renting the meeting's facilities for events. This item is identified in our financial documents as the "Occasional Use Budget," to differentiate it from revenue generated by long-term tenants on the FMW campus.

Two, it was changed to be significantly more administrative in nature, and, as with many administrative positions in the twenty-first century, to require extensive computer skills.

The new position was to be titled "Administrative Secretary and Event Planner." Despite the increase in responsibilities for generating income for the meeting, the salary was cut to less than half its previous level. A position description was prepared in consultation with FMW committees, primary among them the Property Committee, and was presented to and approved by the Committee of Clerks.

Following its approval by the Committee of Clerks, the new position description for the Administrative Secretary and Event Planner was included in the findings of an FMW Staffing Study. The Study's recommendations, including adding a Property Manager and a First Day School Coordinator to the staff, were presented to the meeting for business in June and approved in August 2012.

Once the meeting for business had approved a position description for an Administrative Secretary and Event Planner, a search committee could be formed to fill the new position.

The search committee began its work in August 2012.

From late August through early November the search committee advertised the new position, received electronic applications for it, met to review and rate the applications, and conducted interviews of three very well qualified applicants.

In early November the search committee chose an applicant and asked the Committee of Clerks to approve hiring Debby Churchman. The Committee of Clerks approved the recommendation. Debby Churchman was hired in November 2012 to be the new Administrative Secretary and Event Planner.

In late November Personnel Committee revised FMW's Statement of Employment Policies and Procedures. Revisions reflected approved changes in FMW's personnel policies on such matters as employee insurance coverage and sick and annual leave as well as the new position description for the Administrative Secretary and Event Planner.

On June 30, 2013, Personnel Committee met with the Committee of Clerks. At that meeting, Personnel Committee recommended the Committee of Clerks approve the re-appointment of Debby Churchman as Administrative Secretary and Event Planner for a three-year term, through Fiscal Year 2017, subject to annual approval by the Committee of Clerks. The Committee of Clerks "wholeheartedly" approved the Personnel Committee recommendation.

Capital Improvement Task Force Update

July 21, 2013

This week, we received updated plans and an updated cost estimate from the architects, reflecting changes and decisions from the now complete Schematic Design phase. The Meeting and Trustees have given us approval to move forward with the Design Detail phase, which is the last step before drawing up construction plans and getting permits. The focus is now on fund raising.

The new plans are much like those Friends have already seen, except that they now include the new grading and storm water management plans produced by a civil engineer.

In the new plans the roof, which was at first designed as a sloping slate roof combined with an extensive glass skylight area, has been replaced by a flat green roof. This roof satisfies the District's requirements that we upgrade our handling of storm water, so we will not need to have an expensive storm water capture facility (a sort of cistern) buried under the back garden lawn. That feature has been deleted from the plans, so the new green roof significantly lowers the overall project cost.

We have also received a new project cost estimate, updating the one we received a year ago.

The new cost estimate shows direct construction costs that are \$187 thousand higher than the prior estimate of a year ago. Adding the various contingency and overhead costs gives us a number that is \$343 thousand higher, taking the total to nearly \$2.2 million. That exceeds our goal of keeping the cost below \$2 million, so we are looking at options.

Why the increase?

While the green roof has saved us money, the changes we made to remake the garden into accessible upper and lower terraces raised the cost. It turns out that the increase is smaller than we might have expected, and is more than offset by the reduction in storm water management costs, so that the overall cost of the garden work has actually gone down a bit since the last estimate.

The cost of using stone on the Decatur Place façade and elevator tower, rather than brick, was inadequately reflected in the previous cost estimate, and that has added about \$116 thousand to the construction costs. We feel that we should try to retain that feature, as it makes a great difference to the visual connection between the Meeting House and carriage House.

The big surprise and largest cost increase was a dramatic rise in the estimated cost of the "Window Wall System" which visually opens the lobby and stairs to the back garden. The estimated cost of the

windowed walls went up from from \$53 thousand to nearly \$200 thousand. With overhead costs, that makes the total cost of the window wall system \$355 thousand. We feel that the feature cannot be justified at that cost, and the architects will be working with us to find alternatives. We hope to retain the light, open feel of the wall system in the current plans.

(this ends the Minutes & Reports for July 2013)

UPCOMING EVENTS – AUGUST 2013

Baltimore Yearly Meeting will return to Frostburg State University for **Annual Session 2013!** The Pre-Session Retreat will begin after lunch on **Monday, July 29** and conclude around 11:00 am on **Tuesday the 30th**. Annual Session will begin that day and continue through **Sunday, August 4**. For more information and register, go to <http://www.bym-rsf.org/events/annualsession/ashome.html>

Come to **S.O.M.E.** on **Saturday, Aug. 3** at 6:15 AM and be prepared to flip pancakes and help prepare breakfast for our vulnerable neighbors. The kitchen is at 70 “o” St. NW, adjacent to a parking lot. For more information and to sign up, contact Betsy Bramon at betsy.bramon@gmail.com

The **Grate Patrol** packs and delivers 120 bag lunches and soup to people living on the street on **Wednesday, August 7**. Soup or chili is made in the afternoon. At 5:30 PM we start making sandwiches and packing the lunch bags. At 7 PM, we load the van and one or two people go out on delivery for about an hour. You're welcome to help out with any or all of these things. Call Steve Brooks 240-328-5439 or email sbrooks@uab.edu for more information.

Debby will be visiting her grandchildren in beautiful downtown Mobile, AL from **Aug. 9 through Aug. 17**. Malachy Kilbride will be in the office on August 9, and Patty Murphy will be staffing the place from August 12-16. I've told them both how wonderful everyone is to the Administrative Secretary, so you have quite a reputation to live up to. No pressure.

Work Day! Work Day! Work Day! On **Saturday, August 10** from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, you have a wonderful opportunity to give back to your meeting, make new friends, and help to create and maintain the kind of space you want to see at Friends Meeting of Washington. All skill sets welcome. Lunch will be served. For more information, contact Steve Brooks (sbrook@uab.edu) or Steve Coleman (steve.coleman@washingtonparks.net)

Poetry and Stargazing, August 10 from 6:30 to 9:30 pm. Share in the beauty of poetry beneath the trees and sky (weather permitting) in the afternoon, share dinner (\$10) and then enjoy the majestic sweep of the night sky with a personalized stargazing tour by professional astronomer Kevin Boles who will bring his telescope for viewing. Come for all or part of this inspiring day. Details will be forthcoming. Contact **Sheila Bach** for reservations at **Friends Wilderness Center**, 305 Friends Way, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425, (304) 728-4820 or by **Email** at snbach@earthlink.net

August 9 – 11 – Help Increase the Peace Program at William Penn House (Washington, DC) Come learn basic peace, non-violent conflict resolution, and social justice skills in a community setting through experiential learning. HIPP combines serious reflection with energetic, fun activities, creating a balance that engages people. Presenter Courtney Burkey is a Help Increase the Peace Program trainer. She founded and directed the Jamaica Peace Education Program based on HIPP curriculum in partnership with the Rotary Club of Savanna la Mar, Jamaica. She is Restorative Justice facilitator for Northern Virginia Mediation Service's Restorative Justice Project in partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools. Registration is required for this program. The fee is \$125 per person. (williampennhouse.org/node/278)



50th Anniversary of the March on Washington, a program at FMW focusing on the contribution of the Quaker Bayard Rustin, chief organizer of the March. Plans are unfolding for a special called Meeting for Worship to celebrate the life of Friend Bayard, **Sunday, August 25**, starting at 2:00 pm in the Meeting Room. This will be followed by light refreshments, a showing of the film “Brother Outsider,” and a panel discussion of the life and times of Friend Bayard. For more information, call the office at 202.483.3310 or email admin@quakersdc.org

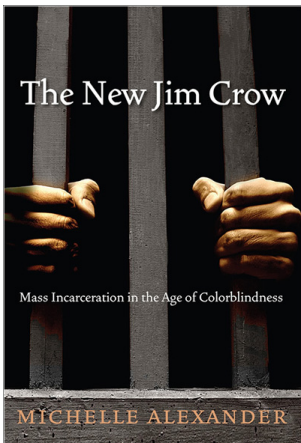
“Follow Me: Exploring Radical Discipleship,” 5th Annual Northeastern Christ-Centered Friends Gathering for both the committed and the curious will be held **August 30 to September 2** at Powell House in Old Chatham, NY. For more information, contact Connie Bair-Thompson, NortheastFriendsInChrist@gmail.com “Our aim is to explore what being a disciple of Christ means to us as individuals and as a Body.”

Wise women celebrating our authentic selves: A week-end retreat for women over fifty will be held at Pendle Hill Conference Center near Philadelphia, PA www.pendlehill.org from **September 13 to 15**, 2013. Contact Bette at 410-531-5610 or email bette@justpeacecircles.org to register.

Simply Close: Couples in Community Couples are invited to a Couple Enrichment program on **Sept. 14** at Sandy Spring Friends Meeting from 9:30 AM to 8:00 PM. Cost is \$50 per couples, and includes the program, two meals and a fun evening. For more information, call 240.678.3929 or email jrlivers@earthlink.net

THE NEW JIM CROW

A Book Discussion Group



The Baltimore Yearly Meeting Working Group on Racism asks that Friends in each Monthly Meeting in the Yearly Meeting form groups to read and discuss *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander. That book describes how the campaign known as the “War On Drugs” began in the 1960’s, resulted in dramatically expanding the U.S. prison population as well as incarceration rates among African-Americans that dwarf the rate of incarceration among white people even though studies show that people of all races use and sell drugs at remarkably similar rates.

In addition to the loss of liberty that usually comes with a drug law conviction, there are lifetime consequences. It is legal to deny employment and housing to those with a criminal record. Many states also deny voting rights to convicts. Black people who have been convicted experience life much as their ancestors did during the time of Jim Crow--hence the title of the book.

Both Jim Crow laws and the legalized enslavement that preceded it were based on overtly race-based laws. The laws and programs that are the basis for the War on Drugs, of course are not explicitly race based. In this regard the War on Drugs has an impact similar to that of certain other legal systems during the Jim Crow era that were also not expressly race-based.

One of those was leased contract labor. Racially neutral vagrancy laws were construed to make it a crime to be unemployed. Black people were convicted of this type of “vagrancy” and the prison then leased their labor to farmers and other businesses.

Another system was sharecropping/debt bondage. Former slaves farmed land belonging to a white person in exchange for a share of the crop. Because those former slaves had no money, they became indebted to the landowner for living and farming expenses to be paid from the worker's share of the crop. Typically the owner determined that the debt owed exceeded the worker's share of the harvest and the worker would be obliged to continue farming with little hope of ever repaying the debt.

Enslavement, Jim Crow laws, and the debt bondage and leased convict labor systems of that era no longer exist as they once did, but the War on Drugs continues. Michelle Alexander leaves us with two difficult questions: 1) how can we address the unjust racial impact of the War on Drugs? And 2) even if that impact is successfully addressed, what changes can we make so that our society does not continue to create systems that create Jim Crow like conditions for people of color?

Now is an especially good time for Friends to read this book and discuss the issues it raises because we have good company from outside our Religious Society. Many other faith groups are doing the same work right now. Questions about the fairness of criminal justice system to Black people are on the minds of many more Americans than before due to the verdict in the George Zimmerman prosecution. As Quakers we have an opportunity to bring our discernment and leadership to an important moral issue just as Quakers have done throughout our history.

Interested in discussing this book? Contact David Etheridge, david.etheridge@verizon.net, (202) 577-8431 to find out more.

Tell Your Spiritual Journey

The Committee on Ministry and Worship is pleased to announce that, beginning in early Fall, it plans to convene a series of gatherings where FMW Members and Attenders can share the story of their "spiritual journeys". We hope these will be cross-generational events where two or three individuals who consider themselves young adult friends, "recent" parents or older friends will share their stories in an all-embracing setting. In the past "spiritual journey sharings" have been occasions for light-hearted inquiry, thoughtful introspection and community enrichment. We hope many will come to nurture our collective sense of the Spirit moving within each of us.

Please let Gray Handley (handleygr@niaid.nih.gov) know if you would be willing to share your spiritual journey with our FMW family – all volunteers are welcomed. Listen for that small voice within that says "open yourself to others and find a Friendly welcome". We want to hear about you and know you better!

FROM THE VAULT

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



Friends Meeting of Washington -- Outside Ironwork Condition Report as of 01/06/05 by Sue and Clem Swisher

No. of Location	No. of Description	Total Bar	Height	Verticls	Width	Horztl	Length	Condition
Decatur Pl Excellent	QH Areaway Gate	7'	9	3'	6	63+18=81	- few chips	
Decatur Pl 2	Perimeter Fence	3'	33	14'	2	99+28+ 4=131	Poor	
Florida Ave 1	Southmost Perimeter	3'	37	15.8'	2	111+31.6+	Fair	

Of all the materials in our files this is possibly my favorite -- a six-page catalog of all outdoor ironwork by (who else?) Clem and Sue Swisher. The above is simplified -- several items are footnoted to give more specific information. The care that has been given to our property and holdings over the many years by a succession of dedicated Friends must give us all a kind of awe.

Hayden Wetzel
FMW Historian

Forging the Ties that Bind: Supporting Quaker Youth

By [Maia Carter Hallward](#) on July 1, 2007

Note: This was published in Friends Journal in July 2007, and written by FMW "graduate" Maia Carter Hallward. Maia and her husband Stoph met and married at FMW; both continue to give bountifully to the greater Religious Society of Friends.



...Returning to the U.S. after a year in Jordan (where there was no Quaker meeting and Sundays were the first day of the work week), I missed meeting and was anxious to find a worship community again. But I felt lost in a large sea of faces, and after several weeks of hanging around after meeting and having only one person ever talk to me, I started to leave as soon as meeting ended. Then came the September 11, 2001, attacks and Washington, D.C. went into shock. I went to meeting seeking space to listen, healing silence, and companions in worship. Instead I found a crowded room full of hurt, confused people who, rather than heeding the "still small voice" within, shared their personal pain, grief, and anger in political terms. When a second week's meeting for "worship" lacked any silence whatsoever and messages once again were more political than spiritual, I stopped attending meeting. Between the lack of welcome, the absence of grounded space for worship, and my heavy graduate course load, I felt I had better ways of using my time.

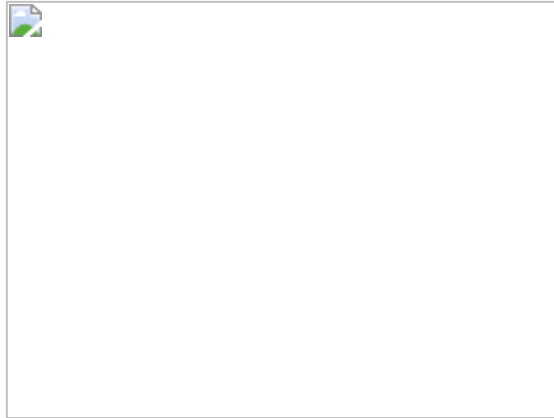
Forging Bonds

I did not return to meeting for several months. When I did, it was partly because I had not yet found a community of belonging and wanted to feel more settled in my new city. My mother repeatedly insisted that I try the meeting's Young Adult Friends (YAF) group. So I joined the YAF listserv, partly to humor her, and partly to be able to tell her (finally!) that I had done so when she asked again. It took several months before I actually went to an event advertised on the listserv, a worship-sharing group that was re-forming after a period of dormancy. I thought I would be able to connect to people on a different level if the gathering was spiritual rather than merely social; I was thirsty for deep, "real" relationships. In this group of a dozen or so YAFs I found what I had not found in the larger meeting, and so I made sure to keep my Friday evenings free to attend these gatherings. After attending a couple of worship sharings, I began to recognize people at meeting on Sundays, and as I gradually grew more involved in YAF I became more and more comfortable within the larger meeting. Finally, I had people to talk to after the rise of meeting. And, better yet, I met my husband that first night, which has a whole other set of implications for my continued involvement in the Religious Society of Friends. Not only do we share a religious faith and practice—as well as a supportive faith community—but we do not have to deliberate over whose religious services we will attend each weekend. We motivate each other to attend meeting and have each other for moral support as we venture out to meet new people and get to know the workings of ever wider Quaker circles.

Despite my increased involvement in YAF and the relationship with the man who is now my husband, my attendance at meeting would likely have continued to ebb and flow if it were not for certain (sometimes older, sometimes not) seasoned Friends who got me onto committees and the board of William Penn House. It was my active participation in the life and operations of the local Quaker community that finally changed my relationship to it. Before I knew it I was very involved in the meeting (I even became clerk of a committee), and suddenly that sea of faces was full of people I knew well. When a dear Friend approached my husband and me about the possibility of putting our names forward to the Nominating Committee of our yearly meeting for service on Friends General Conference's Central Committee, we were excited to extend our circles of involvement even wider. The condition we placed on such service, however, was that we could do it together. Too often our Quaker commitments were time-intensive and resulted in many afternoons or evenings apart. We wanted to have an opportunity to serve *together* and have it be a spiritual practice that we shared, especially as a newly married couple still learning our way together. It has been one of the best decisions we have made.

RANDOM HAPPENINGS

In July, a delightful young woman named Laura from the Atlanta Monthly Meeting stopped by to see the Meetinghouse, and we spoke about the role of Young Adult Friends in the Religious Society of Friends. She named several Friends who are actively engaged in supporting and strengthening the YAF community in Friends General Conference, one result of which is the new Quaker Voluntary Service (similar to the Mennonite Volunteers or the Jesuit Volunteers) which has just completed its first year in Atlanta and is expanding to serve 3 cities next year. (See photo, **below**. For more about this program, go to <http://www.quakervoluntaryservice.org/>). Interestingly, many of the Friends she mentioned spent a significant portion of their YAF experience here at FMW--**Maia and Stoph Hallward, Chris Pifer, Evelyn Jadin, Greg Woods**, just to name a few. I find this encouraging.



Laura pointed to an article that Maia wrote about her experience as a YAF and the lessons that may provide on how to nurture and maintain young Friends as they negotiate the path from adolescence to adulthood. In this newsletter, you will find a significant chunk of Maia's article, for your consideration.

The current YAFs for their part have sent this helpful [chart](#) to promote intergenerational dialogue, which is pinned to the bulletin boards. And **Elisabeth Johnson** recently encouraged attendees at worship in the Meeting Room to say hello to at least one person you don't know—a suggestion which probably increased dialogue by about 5000%. Hope we can keep it up. Thanks, Elisabeth!

We took a call from **Stephen McNeil**, who works for AFSC in Los Angeles and FCNL in D.C. Stephen plans to come to D.C. for the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington in August, and hopes to organize an event commemorating the work of the Quaker organizer of that march, **Bayard Rustin**. Want to help? Send me an email. Plans are unfolding; mark your calendars for **Sunday, August 25**.

We got an email from **Sandy Robson** at FCNL, who is organizing a joint meeting of her organization and AFSC to discuss “**A New Quaker Vision for Foreign Policy**.” Our Peace & Social Concerns committee has taken this on; to help out, please send an email to John Pepper, and mark your calendar for **Sunday, October 13**.

This has also been a month of deeper understanding of the edges of life, as we hold our dear Friends **Sara Satterthwaite** and **Bill Cousins** in the Light. Both are under the care of hospice; both

are teaching us about entering this “new adventure” (as Bill calls it) called death. Thank you for your teaching, Friends. Thank you for your lives.

- Debby