

Hamilton Monthly Meeting
of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
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NEWSLETTER MARCH 2006

Refreshment List

March 5 Louise 12 Caroleigh 19 Ray 26 Sian, Rhiannon & Ben
April 2 Jean 9 Ian 16 Dick 23 ? 30 Janis
May 7 Lenny

Upcoming Dates

March 26 Discuss draft chapter in Faith and Practice on 'Lifelong Journey'; brown bag lunch after meeting for worship
April 6 Meeting for Worship for Business, 7:30 pm
April 9 Consultation and Renewal discussion after meeting; Brown bag lunch
April 22 Spring Retreat
April 29 Spring Cleaning
May 28 Memorial Meeting for Bea Fletcher

Addresses

Jean Johnson's email
For Quaker list: [john \(at\) johnmilton \(dot\) ca](mailto:john(at)johnmilton(dot)ca)
For personal; [jjohnson \(at\)mcmaster \(dot\) ca](mailto:jjohnson(at)mcmaster(dot)ca)

Lenny Ashton and Sam Khen
[lashton1 \(at\) cogeco \(dot\) ca](mailto:lashton1(at)cogeco(dot)ca)

Michael G Fox
[michael.fox \(at\) jus \(dot\) gov\(dot\) on.ca](mailto:michael.fox(at)jus(dot)gov(dot)on.ca)

Roy Hornesty

From Social Science Faculty
Place: University Club, McMaster University
Date and Time: Thursday, April 7, 4 p.m.

Please join us in a celebration of Roy's life as we share our memories of Roy. If you know of others, outside of our faculty, who might be interested in joining with us, please forward this message to them.

Cyril Levitt, Billy Shaffir

Afterword

"At Meeting for Worship for Business on Thursday, 2 February, Friends agreed to reinstate our practice of Afterword at the end of worship on First Days. The practice was discontinued on a trial basis because of the amount of time it has come to consume and the fact that we are trying to keep our young First Day

School children and their parents comfortable in our Meeting. We see Afterword as being valuable for several reasons. It allows Friends and attenders who are not accustomed to offering vocal ministry to try their contributions in a less formal atmosphere. It gives us a way to share thoughts that arise in worship but are not ready - and perhaps never will be - to be spoken as ministry. However, Afterword should not be a time to have a discussion based on what someone offers at that time. Those who, at the end of worship, still feel they have something to say, should feel welcome to say it in Afterword; those who ended worship without this feeling should continue in quiet to hear and reflect on what is said. Responses to thoughts shared in Afterword should be reserved for casual conversation over coffee.

First Day School is scheduled for 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month from 11:15 to 12:15. Friends were not happy with the idea of having Afterword only on Sundays when there is no FDS, since it is a time of spontaneous communication and communion. Yet it is not unreasonable to expect that both Afterword and announcements can be completed in close to fifteen minutes most Sundays, if we discipline ourselves, are mindful of the guidelines above, and respect the various needs of people young and old in our Meeting."
Beverly

Adult Study group New Theme: God and Science

We continue each Sunday morning at 9:30 to 10:45 before worship.

Starting March 26, we begin a new theme: God and Science. We'll start by watching part of the dvd documentary and engage each other in our reflections. Book excerpts will be used later.

Our primary resources will be a dvd by Peter Russell and his book by the same name. See www.peterrussell.com for a review.

"From Science to God" is the story of Peter Russell's lifelong exploration into the nature of consciousness. Blending physics, psychology, and philosophy, he leads us to a new worldview in which consciousness is a fundamental quality of creation. He shows how all the ingredients for this worldview are in place; nothing new needs to be discovered. We have only to put the pieces together and explore the new picture of reality that emerges.

Integrating a deep knowledge of science with his own experiences of meditation, Russell arrives at a universe similar to that described by many mystics -- one in which science and spirit no longer conflict. The bridge between them, he shows, is light. From Science to God invites us to cross that bridge to a radically different, and ultimately healing, view of ourselves and the universe -- one in which God takes on new meaning, and spiritual practice a deeper significance."

Some reviews:

A modern hero's journey - a record of a courageous traveler who has ventured where scientists aren't supposed to go, who has gained great wisdom, and who has returned to share it. This book will be invaluable to millions of individuals who are seeking to harmonize intellect and intuition, science and

spirit, in their lives. Highly recommended: Larry Dossey

The best book Peter Russell's ever written. This will get through to the Harvard Business School types: Hazel Henderson

You are welcome to join us. Rex has the dvd at present, and Heather has the book. Try to contact them on the next two Sundays if you want to borrow next. There is an online version at Russell's website. The book is available at Chapters for \$18 or amazon.ca used for US\$9 plus shipping.

Energy Issues: Fossil Fuel Depletion, aka Peak Oil

This is rapidly becoming the defining social, spiritual and economic issue of our time. If you are just now becoming aware of it, you may be feeling bewildered, even depressed. The spiritual side is where I am most concerned, because not only the ethics of relating to neighbours, both local and international, but also the implicit values of environmental stewardship and peace are bound up with it. We have started a Sustainability Resources collection in the library, check out books, dvds and periodicals.

Here are some places to get started in educating ourselves. There are many more.

Why Peak Oil is Probably About Now (Staniford, March 2006)

<http://www.theoil drum.com/story/2006/3/1/3402/63420#more>

PeakOil.com: A Community and Collaboration Portal on Peak Oil

<http://www.peakoil.com/sample/>

Energy Bulletin.net: a clearinghouse for current information regarding the peak in global energy supply.

<http://energybulletin.net/primer.php>

For the integration of financial, social, and lifestyle I like this one best so far.

<http://transitionculture.org/>

www.postcarbon.org

For community building, try

www.communitysolution.org; www.ic.org Intentional Communities

For financial and economic recourse, try www.Solari.com

Locally try; www.raisethehammer.org

Book Review: The Revenge of Gaia. James Lovelock, 2006

(edited from www.transitionculture.org)

Lovelock is of course best known as creator of the Gaia theory, that of the Earth as a self-regulating organism. He discusses of the various feedback loops that are starting which will speed up climate change, and that the Earth has 'caught a morbid fever that will last 100,000 years". In the same way that when a human has a fever their self regulation mechanisms go awry and do the opposite of what they are meant to do, the Earth is starting to act in ways that go against self

regulation.

So what can be done about it? He said that the challenge is to sustain life for as long as possible. We can't just turn the power off, we need to facilitate a gentle descent. Humanity, rather than being a virus on the planet, needs to act as its nervous system, we should be the heart and minds of Gaia, and act now while we are still a cohesive mass, rather than a broken rabble.

He argues that nuclear power is the only realistic way to power the transition, although he was not advocating a program of new nuclear power (in the UK), rather simply not decommissioning those that are due to be closed in the next 10 years. He seems out of touch with the movements looking to implement practical solutions. There was little mention of localisation, of actually creating localised infrastructure, but perhaps he is desperately trying to wake large numbers of us out of our complacency. After all, he was born in 1919!

Can we build the infrastructure for a post-carbon world around people's very real and pressing needs? Buckminster Fuller put it very well, "you can never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete".

Rob Hopkins, founder of www.transitionculture.org and much more, says "We have a huge job to do if humanity is to have any hope of waking up generations hence in a Garden of Eden, but I, for one, believe it is possible. It certainly won't be easy but it is the Work of our times. Whether you call it The Great Turning, The Great Work, Creative Energy Descent, or as Hopkins is calling it, The Great Adventure, what is essential is that we try, and that we assist people to visualize how wonderful it would be once we get there."

The main thing that makes it worth reading is Lovelock's perspective, and the way he tells the story of Earth and Life and the truly cosmological scale of the changes that we are setting afoot by emitting greenhouse gases. The ability of our species to actually develop such a perspective – through science- is one of there most amazing things, and could actually be part of the "solution", in that in order to be informed and make the right decisions, we need such a perspective.

Lovelock's main point is that whatever about the threats of Nuclear, GLOBAL WARMING IS WORSE. Much worse. And he lays part of the blame on the fact we limited our nuclear industry in favour of more oil and gas at the door of the environmentalists. The point is, we all KNOW the extreme destruction caused by an extractive oil/coal/gas industry, but somehow it doesn't provoke the same emotional response as nuclear does.

I don't think nuclear is any kind of answer to the problems we are facing- only localisation and a hopefully measured Powerdown can be - but the fact remains, countries like France are going to have their lights on long after places like Ireland return to the Dark Ages.

Deeper questions need to be asked: what will we do with whatever energy we have? And of course it is too late to start to think of building new nuclear power stations. Let's hope we are not past the point of no return for humanity and do everything we can to build lifeboats and to Powerdown.

Book Review

“Reminiscing” by Lize Smit-Pleging

This charming autobiography was published in November 1999 and mainly addresses the early years of Lize’s life. She wrote this for her children so they would know about her childhood. It highlights the war years in Holland and then her first years of married life in Indonesia. Lize and her husband Dick came to Canada in 1953 with Marianne and Jack, quickly becoming involved in Toronto Meeting. Robert was born in Toronto. Lize was an active member of Toronto Meeting until her death in November 2004. Hamilton Friends may have met her during her time on Canadian Friends Service Committee or at Camp NeekauNis. Pearl Jones told Mona at COD Camp (Carry on Discovering Camp) 2004 how much Lize treasured Camp NeeKauNis.

Marianne donated the book to Hamilton Monthly Meeting.
By Marianne Smith and Mona.

Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN

Meeting for Worship for Business on 5 March received this letter (which was circulated with the agenda for that meeting). We agreed to table this matter until April's Meeting. The Quaker Ecology Action Network is asking us if now is the time to create a standing committee of Yearly Meeting to focus on environmental issues. How do we wish to proceed?

Friends,

Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN) proposes formation of a Standing Committee of Yearly Meeting, for Ecological Concerns. We suggest introducing this at CYM 2006, toward a decision at CYM 2007. Please discuss the attached background information and queries with your Meeting. We would appreciate your responses in time for the next Representative Meeting, scheduled for May 5 and 6, 2006, either in writing to the co-clerks of QEAN (addresses below) or by way of your Monthly Meeting representative. (Check the 2005 Directory for names.) We would gladly welcome responses after May sent directly to the co-clerks in time for the August annual session of CYM.

There are QEAN participants in most Meetings now (more welcome!) who can guide consideration of this proposal. QEAN Co-Clerks will be happy to respond to questions, and your comments/suggestions will be appreciated.

In Friendship,
John Scull jscull@shaw.ca
Bill Curry mailliw@sasktel.net
Co-Clerks, Quaker Ecology Action Network

Information and Queries for Monthly Meetings

Background: recent history of CYM’s earthcare witness

Individual Quakers in Canada have long been active in environmental work, e.g. Greenpeace, Friends Committee on Unity with Nature which became Quaker Earthcare Witness. However in 1999 we sought a specifically Canadian focus by establishing the Ecology Working Group (EWG) of CYM through Minute 59 at our annual session. CYM's annual session in 2001 had as its theme "Seeking Unity with Nature". At that session the EWG became the Quaker Ecology Action Network (QEAN). QEAN has worked out its own rules for process. It is not a working group, nor an ad hoc committee as defined by Organization and Procedure. QEAN does most of its communications and decision making by email, although members on the e-list meet at annual yearly meeting sessions in special interest groups or at other times. QEAN has no regular CYM budget line. QEAN discerns and names its own clerks who work mainly by email. While QEAN has an archive of email messages, it doesn't have an established method of keeping records; hence it is difficult to track decisions of the group. QEAN clerks have written annual reports for documents in advance of annual sessions; this has been the main avenue of accountability. QEAN has no authorization to speak in the name of CYM or take actions on its behalf. In spite of the above limitations, QEAN has been a witness for Canadian Quakers and has accomplished a number of worthy actions. In 2005 annual session QEAN members and others held a special interest group which initiate these queries:

Queries for Monthly Meetings

Does your Monthly Meeting feel an urgency to increase CYM's witness to sustainable living with social and economic justice for all humans while preserving the ecological integrity of planet Earth? If the answer is "yes", will your Monthly Meeting approve a minute expressing this urgency to CYM by way of Representative Meeting in May 2006 for their consideration?

QEAN members have suggested that one possibility for increasing the effectiveness of CYM's witness would be to transform QEAN into a new standing committee under the direction of CYM with a specific mandate to work on environmental issues. Does your Monthly Meeting agree?

If not a standing committee, can your Monthly Meeting suggest alternative steps for QEAN and for CYM and its members, so that we can become more effective as a witness by example, a witness by education, and a witness by social and political action?

Standing committees have a budget line. Is your Monthly Meeting (as a Meeting or individuals within the meeting) willing to pledge additional money to CYM to support the work of standing committee if this seems to be the best way of increased effectiveness? Can you give an estimate of your possible earmarked contribution?

Point of information: There are no fixed rules in Organization and Procedure about how CYM standing committees are run except to follow the usual practices given to Monthly Meeting committees with modifications according to the national nature of the standing committee. Each committee writes its own terms of reference which then go to Discipline Committee and to CYM in two annual sessions for approval.

Hamilton Monthly Meeting
Meeting for Worship for Business
Mar 5th , 2006

Present: Mona C, Blair, Dawn (Clerk for the Month), Ian (recording clerk), Christina, Carol Leigh, Glenna, Nicki, Helen
Regrets: Dick, Betty, Sybil, Bev

1. Meeting began with Silent worship at 1pm.

2. **Minutes of Feb 2nd**, Meeting for Worship for Business (M4W4B):
Minutes were accepted as read, with addition of Helen in attendance.

3. Agenda was prioritized.

4. **Continuing Business**

4.1 Budget 2006. Blair distributed a draft budget spreadsheet with notes. We received the budget as presented, for approval at the April meeting. We asked Blair to revise the format to include the yearend actual revenue and expense for 2005 and in future quarterly reports. We asked for his report on trends in donations. We inquired about the trend of energy savings from the insulation of building. Blair undertook to investigate this. We gave our thanks to Blair for his work in this matter.

4.2 Meeting Retreat Carol Leigh reported that the date of retreat is Apr 22nd, no further planning details are available at this time. M&C and NC invite assistance from the membership.

4.3 Memorials

4.3.1 Bea Fletcher

The date of the memorial meeting is May 28th, at the meetinghouse. Content for the memorial minute should be directed to Carol Leigh by end of March.

4.3.2 Larry Pogue. Content for the memorial minute should be directed to Bev Shepard by Mar. 21st.

5. **Business Arising from the minutes**

5.1 Half Yearly Meeting June 2-4, 2006. Dawn is the contact person for the coordination committee for HYM. Carol Leigh and Glenna offered to take on the preparation and delivery of the children's program, and ask for more Friends to work with them. Children are up to 13 years of age.

We accept Mona's offer to be a delegate for Hamilton Meeting.

5.2 Response to Canadian Forces in Afghanistan. Bring forward to future

meeting.

6. **Reports.**

6.1 Nominating Committee (Robbie M, John, Mona) Mona reported that meeting members and attenders will be contacted by phone to inquire of interests and availability for contribution to the life of the meeting. A list of committees and roles is posted in the meetinghouse. The committee intends fill openings within HMM before attending to positions within wider Quaker bodies. They intend to present names at the April meeting for business.

6.2 Peace Discussion Feb 23rd. We received a verbal report that the event was considered very successful.

6.3 State of Society Report (Helen B) A draft was read aloud. Comments were offered. Members are encouraged to contact members of M&C for a copy and send in their feedback before March 19th. A copy will be posted on the bulletin board. We expect to approve the final document at the April Meeting for Business.

7. **New Business**

7.1 Spring Cleaning A date for annual spring cleaning of the meetinghouse is set for April 29th.

7.2 Camping Sybil proposed a camping outing for our meeting. Laid over to April for lack of information.

8. **Other Business**

9. **Correspondence**

9.1 Quaker Ecology Action Network. We received a letter from co-clerks, John Scull and Bill Curry regarding applying for committee status with CYM. The letter will be included in the newsletter. This matter was laid over to April.

10. **Date and time** of next Meeting for Worship for Business: Thurs. Apr. 6th, 7:30pm

11. The meeting ended with silent worship at 3:20pm.