

HAMILTON MONTHLY MEETING
of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
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NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2007

Refreshments for Meeting for Worship

Sept 2: Sybil
Sept 9: Jesse
Sept 16: Chris
Sept 23: Robbie M
Sept 30: Ray C

Friends are invited to sign up to provide refreshments on the new list that is in the foyer for this much appreciated service. If you have any questions please contact Christina or Nicki.

Upcoming Dates

Sept 16: Sunday First Day School Open Meeting after Meeting for Worship
Sept 23: Sunday Goodbye party for Caroline
Sept 27: Thurs Potluck discussion regarding Aboriginal land claim in Caledonia;
submit questions for Jennifer Preston via Robbie M
Oct 27: Saturday Yonge Street Half Yearly Meeting at Toronto Meeting House

WALKING AMONG OUR ROOTS

a potluck and discussion about HMM history and archives, October 27, 2007

Do you know how our wonderful backyard garden was started... who designed our meetinghouse... where Hamilton Friends held Meeting for worship in the early days... where the yellow piano came from...how we ended up in West Hamilton... where to find a short history of our Meeting...? Have you had a chance to browse through our photo collection? Would you be interested in a group "field trip" to Newmarket, to visit the Canadian Yearly Meeting Archive at Newmarket, to see what's there that pertains to HMM and other Quaker meetings in Canada?

Please come to the potluck as above! IF YOU HAVE ANY OBJECT RELATING TO HMM, SUCH AS A PHOTO, A WEDDING CERTIFICATE, A LETTER, NOTE, CARD, MINUTES OF MEETINGS OR AN OUT-OF-DATE NEWSLETTER (PERHAPS UNDER YOUR BED OR IN THE RAFTERS OF YOUR GARAGE), please bring it for "show and

tell". If not, bring yourself anyway!
Robbie M

News from Dawn

Good news! Dawn has been offered an electrical apprenticeship and will start work in mid-October. Until then, she'll be taking classes relating to the trade, playing with her cats, and taking a pottery class.

Report to Hamilton Monthly Meeting on Canadian Yearly Meeting

The 174th session of Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) was held the 4 – 11 August, 2007 at Kings-Edgehill School in Windsor, Nova Scotia. One hundred and sixty Friends participated.

The participants from HMM at CYM were:

Mona C (alternate delegate)

Jesse

Glenna (delegate)

Bev (Presiding Clerk of CYM)

Robbie S

Carol Leigh (Member of Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel)

The theme this year was, "Present in the Presence". In keeping with this theme, the Clerks opened a number of the Meetings for Worship for Business with reading of prayers from other faiths. This year we were mindful not only of the diversity of peoples and faiths, but also of the diversity within Quakerism: Erin MacDougall, a student at Earlham School of Religion and Andrew Esser-Haines from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, came to CYM with concerns for differences among "branches" of Friends, between generations, and between north and south.

The Consultation and Renewal (C 'n' R) Working Group final report completed 3 years of work. CYM sessions dealt with some of the recommendations, and focused on those at the core of the report – Religious Education and related areas. As part of the C 'n' R work, the Religious Education Committee is laid down and responsibility for Quaker education will be under the oversight of Home Mission and Advancement (HMAC). HMAC will develop a comprehensive resource base of Quaker Education materials for use by Monthly Meetings, worship groups and individuals. This will be facilitated through a Quaker Education Program Coordinator who will provide administrative support, coordinate visitor recruitment and organise and maintain the necessary supporting resources for the program. The support of Young Friends is an integral part of Quaker education. We approved the C 'n' R report recommendations that CYM employ a Youth Secretary to provide support, continuity and encouragement to Young Friends as they organise their affairs, and that CYM encourage and support more gatherings of Young Friends. An Implementation Coordination Committee is needed to

consult with committee Clerks and report to Representative Meeting / Yearly Meeting. Monthly Meetings are asked to discern names and send them to CYM Nominating Committee prior to Representative Meeting in November.

The above items do not appear in the 2008 budget. For the new positions mentioned, it is clear that “over and above” fundraising will need to be done. The interim treasurer noted that “finances tell us what we are doing”: I encourage HMM members and attenders to review the budget as presented in the 2007 Reports for Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends and to consider those ways in which they may uphold the work of Friends.

Although we struggled to “listen in tongues”, Friends were not in unity with the recommendation on diversity in the C ‘n’ R report. We agreed to deliberately create opportunities for open dialogue about beliefs and expression of spirituality and work to enhance our freedom to worship together and to minister to one another with a variety of spiritual language.

We laboured to “hear where words come from”, to demonstrate love, and to uphold our testimony of Equality as we worked within the YM business meeting and in a Special Interest Group (SIG) to make a decision regarding the budget item supporting Friends United Meeting (FUM). Due to our concerns regarding the continuing policy of Friends United Meeting that excludes Friends in committed same-sex relationships from service as employees of FUM, and our understanding that right ordering was not followed regarding the affirmation of the Richmond Declaration in February 2007, (this should have been referred back to member yearly meetings for further study and seasoning), we decided to designate our financial contribution to FUM for 2008 to a specific project, rather than to the general fund. We are also appointing a committee to review the involvement and participation of CYM in FUM.

At CYM 2007 in Winnipeg, we made a statement on our Peace testimony. Related matters were brought forward by Monthly Meetings:

- Toronto Monthly Meeting asked for CYM support for the initiation of work towards a Department of Peace.
- Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting presented their minute entitled, “Toward a Culture of Peace” (the same title as the CYM statement) as a next step towards Special Interest Groups consulting, discussing, and doing further work that will move us closer to preparing a minute on our peace testimony
- Prairie Monthly Meeting asked for CYM endorsement of the International Campaign to ban Nuclear Weapons
- Hamilton Monthly Meeting asked that the War Tax Concerns Committee be reinstated and that Canadian Friends Service Committee oversee this committee and work with Conscience Canada to assist with redirecting taxes. (A private members' bill is now before the House of Commons.)

In addition, there was a related item:

- Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) reported on its consultations with Friends on the Canadian Council of Churches statement regarding the government document on “The Responsibility to Protect”. There was unity for not supporting military intervention as a last resort. CFSC will organise an education program on non-violent responses and will do further work on the issue of “just policing”. There is, as yet, no clarity on the new CYM statement on peace.

Friends' concerns for a culture of peace were both upheld and challenged in Elaine Bishop's Quaker study sessions, “Text, Context, Spirit”. Elaine gave an overview of text (Books of Discipline, Biblical authority) and context (geography, socio-political movements and events) with reference to Quaker history and noted the shift in Quaker concern from what we want ourselves as Friends to do or not do, to what we want others to do or not do. Elaine reminded us that “it is essential for earth to be as close to us as breath in our spiritual journey” and that in the 1880s Quakers promised to “watch over” the situation of Six Nations, government and land, and encouraged us to work to understand “land” in order to be able to work for peace, and to remember that all of our testimonies interrelate.

Christine Davis of Britain Yearly Meeting (who with her family sojourned for a time at HMM in the late 70's) was the Sunderland P. Gardner lecturer and spoke on the topic, “Sing and Rejoice”. Her lecture provided another view on the importance of land to our testimonies, as well as an infusion of boundless Spirit.

The fifth and final draft chapter of the Canadian Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice, “Faithful Lives” is now available. This completes the first phase of the work. The committee indicated that excerpts relating to any of the draft chapters may still be sent to the Faith and Practice development working group, and emphasized that any submission must be on the proper form, which is available from the committee or online. They anticipate that their work will take another few years.

Beverly Shepard of Hamilton Monthly Meeting finished her term as Presiding Clerk of CYM at the rise of Yearly Meeting in session, and now moves into the role of mentoring clerk as Dale Dewar of Prairie Monthly Meeting takes on the duties of Presiding Clerk, and Anne Mitchell of Toronto Monthly Meeting begins her term as incoming Clerk.

The children's and Young Friends' programs were well attended. The children's epistle explained much regarding the work of this program: “At the beginning of the week we thought that we were Quakers – maybe – now we feel sure we are”.

The food coop once again did its important work of community-building among Friends – despite almost hurricane-force winds at times.

As with the children in their epistle, it is through CYM that I began to feel sure that I was

a Quaker. This was my 4th CYM: it confirmed and affirmed and challenged me in my spiritual journey. Thank you to Hamilton Friends for supporting me.

- submitted by Glenna, September 2007.

Hamilton Monthly Meeting
Meeting for Worship for Business
Sept 10th, 2007

Present: Jean, Glenna, Caroleigh, Jesse, Rex, Robbie M, Don, Bev (presiding clerk), Sybil (recording clerk)
Regrets: Ian, Helen B

- 1 The meeting began in silent worship at 1:15 p.m.
- 2 The June minutes were read and approved. The agenda was agreed with no amendments.
- 3 Business arising from the June minutes:
 - 3.1 The **Archives meeting in October**. We agreed this would happen as a potluck on Oct 25.
 - 3.2 **Auditor** to be Peter C, subject to consent. Mona C will contact him
 - 3.3 **Emergency request funds**. Ian's report will carry over to the next meeting
 - 3.4 Quaker involvement at **Caledonia**. This is carried over to the next meeting as there will be a discussion on native land claims with Jennifer Preston on Thurs Sept 27 which will cover this matter. Any questions for Jennifer are to be submitted to Robbie M
 - 3.5 **Regional Multifaith Committee**. Ian's report will be carried over to the next meeting
- 4 Canadian Yearly Meeting report from Glenna, delegate from HMM. This report in full is added to these minutes and was received with thanks.
- 5 New Business:
 - 5.1 **Summer start time**. Would Friends please consider year-round start times for Meeting to be discussed at our October meeting
 - 5.2 **Continuing Meeting at Ministry and Counsel** every half-year is hosted by a Monthly Meeting. The last two were Calgary and Coldstream MMs. Caroleigh asks that HMM consider hosting the next gathering in spring'08. What is needed is a Saturday potluck supper, transportation, billets, for six people. The date will be set at the Oct meeting.

5.3 **Outreach** to the meetinghouse neighbourhood. There is an Ainsley Wood and Westdale Community Association annual meeting on Sept 18 where we might take out membership. Jesse will attend and report to the Oct meeting

6 The next meeting is Thursday Oct 4

7 The meeting closed with worship.