

HAMILTON MONTHLY MEETING
of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
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NEWSLETTER MARCH 2009

REFRESHMENTS FOR MEETING FOR WORSHIP

1 March: Bev, 8 March: Ray, 15 March: Jean, 22 March Carol Leigh, 29 March: Tony

UPCOMING DATES – PLEASE COME!

15 March, 2009: Brown Bag Lunch after Meeting for Worship on the State of Society Report (see below for info on what this report is).

27 March, 2009: Potluck and Discussion, "Our Experience of Silence". Come at 6 pm with your pot to help set up. We plan to eat at 6:30 pm.

9 May 2009: HMM Retreat, "Reaching Out & Reaching In" at Cedar Haven near Freelon.

5 – 7 June: Yonge Street Half-Yearly Meeting, "Finding our Faith, Engaging our Diversity", at Camp NeeKauNis near Midland.

NEED MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS BUSINESS MEETINGS?

You can find Minutes from previous Meetings for Worship for Business, as well as other information on things Quaker at the Hamilton Monthly Meeting web site, <http://hwcn.org/link/hmm>

GARDENING AT THE MEETING HOUSE

Starting in about a month, I hope to spend a couple of hours on Wednesday mornings tidying up the gardens. If anyone would enjoy helping out, that would be much appreciated. Also anyone is free to share their ideas about the garden. I will announce the start times a little later. For those who cannot make Wednesday mornings, other times may be considered. Thank you. Jean

HISTORY OF THE SERVING TABLE AT THE MEETING HOUSE, 7 BUTTY PLACE, HAMILTON

At the Meeting on Sunday February 8, 2009 Mona had remarked on the large table at the kitchen hatch. It is an unusual table; Harriet asked me to record how it came into being for archival reference.

Our family (of four at that time) came to Hamilton from South Africa early in 1965: I had accepted an appointment in the faculty of Engineering at McMaster University. My wife Ruth discovered the Meeting in the following year, and we have attended since then.

In 1968 it was decided that the faculty lounge in the McMaster Engineering building should be remodelled, including its refreshments serving facility. The serving counter was replaced, and the original counter top was left for a few weeks in the rubble in the corridor outside of the lounge. This counter top had been well made, of quality materials, and coming from Africa with its abject poverty, I could not accept that it was to be chopped up and disposed of in the city dump. Even though I could see no possible use for it, I asked whether I could have it, and this was readily agreed to. Its size did not lend itself to be modified for any use that we could see, so it was left leaning against a wall in our basement for about three years.

The new Meeting House was built later, in 1971. Its kitchen opens into the Meeting Room by way of a two-door hatch, but provision had not been made for a serving facility within the Meeting Room. The

McMaster counter top seemed to be well suited for this purpose, but it lacked legs and a frame.

Meanwhile our older son Adrian (age 16 then) had developed a keen interest in woodworking, and had made a primitive table saw. So Morrie Barron suggested that Adrian should make the Meeting House table, using the top we had, and building a base for it.

The table legs were acquired by Morrie, and six inch walnut lumber for the frame was bought at Aitchison Lumber in west Hamilton. The counter top and legs were bolted to the frame to provided the required rigidity. The table has served us well for nearly forty years now. - Reuven, February, 2009

THE LIFE AND EXPERIENCES OF THE STATE OF SOCIETY REPORT

At Meeting for Worship for Business on Sunday afternoon, someone asked a question about what the purpose of the State of Society Report actually is, what happens to it, and so on...

Good question, Friend! Most of us do not in fact know what occurs over the lifespan of a Monthly Meeting (MM) State of Society Report, and it is not in the least self-evident. So, for those of you have wondered for years, and those of you who have never wondered, here is a summary of what a State of Society Report is and does.

Each year, each Meeting has the responsibility to prepare a State of Society Report. It is the members of Ministry and Counsel (M&C) who are charged with this, and guidelines are to be found in Organization and Procedure, which can be found online at <http://www.quaker.ca/Publications/discipline/index.html> for the entire document, and at <http://www.quaker.ca/Publications/discipline/chapters5-8.html#78> for State of Society Reports. It is an evaluation of the spiritual life of the Meeting, and is meant to be an opportunity to assess honestly both strengths and weaknesses, and to look to the future as well. Each year, M&C looks back at previous State of Society Reports as a grounding for the present document. Much thought and care go into the preparation, which is approached in a prayerful manner.

The draft report for each year is read in Meeting for Worship for Business (usually in February or March), and Friends present may comment and make suggestions. Sometimes there are substantial changes requested, sometimes very little is changed. When the report is revised, it is brought again to Meeting for Worship for Business and usually approved at this Meeting. Once approved, it is read out by a member of M&C after Meeting for Worship, for all in Meeting to hear.

This much may be obvious – but what else happens? At the Spring gathering of Yonge Street Half-Yearly Meeting (YSHYM), each Meeting sends its State of Society Report with its delegate or with a member of M&C who is attending HYM. Time is made to hear each Meeting's State of Society Report – this usually happens in the context of a Meeting for Worship, and to hear the four reports from the Monthly Meetings who are members of YSHYM is usually a powerful and moving occasion.

The Monthly Meeting's State of Society Report is also, as soon as approved, sent to the Yearly Meeting Office. All reports received in time (which all should be) are included in the Documents in Advance of Yearly Meeting, which in turn are sent to Monthly Meetings. (These Documents also include other reports, the minutes of Representative Meeting, and items relating to Yearly Meeting business, and are enlightening reading for anyone, not just those who actually attend Yearly Meeting sessions.) The State of Society Reports are also forwarded to Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel, the body of six Friends from across Canada who bear responsibility for nurturing the spiritual life of the Yearly Meeting throughout the year.

Continuing Meeting of Ministry and Counsel (CMM&C) reads the reports carefully and synthesizes them into a State of Society Report for the Yearly Meeting, which is read, revised, and approved at Yearly

Meeting in session in August. (This year it's right here in Ontario – a great time to give it a try!)

In addition, CMM&C looks carefully through the reports for particular concerns that need a response, and for what we have come to call "common concerns": issues that recur in reports by Meetings right across the country. CMM&C then addresses these concerns in several ways: after prayerful discernment, CMM&C may offer small groups at the Yearly Meeting Ministry and Counsel Meeting to discuss and share ideas; CMM&C may produce, with input from MMs and others, resources, pamphlets, or collections of both, designed to help MMs with these concerns; or other possibilities. These are then made available to Monthly Meetings; in this way we are able to tap into experiences and wisdom from all of the Meetings that comprise CYM. The State of Society Reports provide the insights needed, and thus the purpose of them comes full circle. - Carol Leigh

How It Came Into Being

Chaos

There was darkness everywhere, and things were just tumbling in any direction, helter-skelter. There was no particular hurry, since there was nowhere to go and nothing to do. Even if there had been somewhere to go, it could not have been found since it was so dark.

Light

The Spirit wished to see if there really was anywhere for anything to go, and so s/he wished a Great Light. S/he could see lots of places, with nothing taking their places in them. That was because whatever there was, had no eyes. The Spirit put some things in good places for them, and some just in whatever places s/he found for them. And some were left over and just bumped along, like clouds and wind and rain and snow and rivers, going along to somewhere but not there yet.

Life

It was pretty quiet sometimes, and the Spirit wished for something more interesting, so s/he tried making living things. Little ones first, like seeds and germs and gnats. They were interesting, but only if s/he watched them very closely for a long time without looking up. Because if s/he looked up they might choose just that moment to do something interesting. The seed might open up, or the germ might make the gnat sneeze, and if you weren't watching just then, it was disappointing. So s/he let the seed grow into a plant, and that was much more lively and interesting. Then s/he let the gnat find an animal to bug. It was probably First Born (Coyote, or Hare, or Monkey, or Tcikabesh – they're all the same) that the gnat found first, and so right away he tried to fly into Coyote's eyes. But Coyote was sleeping and they were shut. And then the gnat flew into Coyote's ears, and made Coyote twitch his ears. Finally the gnat flew into Coyote's nose. That was enough to wake Coyote up, and things really got lively and interesting. Coyote sneezed, and the Spirit laughed.

Joy

And that laugh, Dear Heart, was the first and greatest miracle of all time, because that laugh was A Joyful Noise. And so the Spirit's very first words were laughter, and that shaped the plan for all the rest of creation. Coyote got the joke, and grinned back, and then s/he started out on his/her travels, to do a lot of very very interesting things. Most of those things are already in stories about Coyote, or some of his adventures using other shapes and names. And since s/he is still going around, he might hear about this story, so I'd best not make up any new stories about him. Except maybe this one.

Humanity

But Coyote couldn't manage to laugh with the Spirit. He was only able to laugh by himself. It needed human beings to laugh with the Spirit. So then the Spirit made a baby, and s/he laid it on his/her loving hand, and the baby felt the love on its tummy, and laughed with the Spirit. That truly delighted the Spirit, so that s/he made quite a few babies, and a lot of parents and grandparents to look after them and bring them up. And that's how it all got started.

Eternity

Ever since those times, when they can be happy people will laugh. At other times they will have to be sad and cry. And sometimes sometimes they are just quiet, listening to see what is going to happen. When Coyote is around, or his stories are told, then the people all laugh at Coyote. And he grins back at us.

- Dick

HAMILTON MONTHLY MEETING
MEETING FOR WORSHIP FOR BUSINESS
SUNDAY, 1 MARCH, 2009

Note: action items are highlighted in green, with a name where appropriate. Items for April agenda are highlighted in blue. - clw

Present: Mona Callin, Christopher, Christina, Jesse, Glenna, Jean, Andy (Clerk), Betty, Dick, Beverly, Carol Leigh (Recording Clerk)

Regrets: Blair, Don, Helen B

- 1 **Worship:** Meeting began at 12:40 with silent worship. We thank Christopher for providing delicious food for everyone.
- 2 **Minutes of the Meeting of 1 February 2009** were read and approved with minor clarifying corrections.
- 3 **Business Arising**
 - 3.1 **Bullfrog Power** (Clerk): Switching to Bullfrog Power is still underway and will be dealt with in consultation with the Maintenance Committee. We will also continue to pursue the idea of solar power and feeding back into the grid. Chris reported that the group on greening of places of worship does exist and that this will be pursued. We look forward to a further report with recommendation.
 - 3.2 **Yonge St. Half Yearly Meeting** (HYM): Christina reported on the Organizing Committee's meeting. Yonge St. MM will prepare the adult programme on the theme "Finding our faith: engaging our diversity"; Simcoe-Muskoka has charge of the children's programme; Hamilton has responsibility for the registration and publicity; Toronto MM has responsibility for the food.

We note that Hamilton will host the Fall HYM; we need to be mindful that our publicity should be ready for the Spring Meeting.

We intend to name delegates for the Spring HYM at our April M4W4B.
 - 3.3 **Access and Equity Invitation** (clerk): The student that PSAC had in mind is not available at this time; no one attended on HMM's behalf.
- 4 **Reports**
 - 4.1 **Ministry and Counsel** (M&C)
 - 4.1.1 The **February potluck** was very successful on the topic of our Quaker diversity (as suggested by the Canadian Yearly Meeting C'n'R implementation committee). We thank Bev, Christopher and Jesse for presenting.

4.1.2 **Meeting Retreat, 9 May 2009** will be held at Cedar Haven. The theme is "Hamilton Meeting: Reaching Out and Reaching In"

4.1.3 **March Potluck:** M&C proposes the topic "Our Experience of Silence", for March 27, a Friday when our Clerk will unfortunately not be able to attend.

4.1.4 **State of Society Report:** Dick read the first draft of the State of Society report for 2008. Several thoughtful comments were made and noted by M&C. We also talked about what else happens to the Monthly Meeting State of Society reports within CYM. We look forward to the **revised draft report from M&C in April**. We thank M&C for their thoughtful and spirit-led work. We will have a **brown-bag discussion after Meeting on March 15** for another chance for input from Friends.

4.2 **Statistical Report for 2008:** Betty reported; this report will be appended to the newsletter (with one correction). We thank Betty for her faithful and thoughtful work.

4.3 **Nominating Committee:** Glenna reported. Diminishing numbers of active and able Friends creates a significant difficulty in filling positions. The following names were put forward for immediate service in HMM: Reuven as Auditor; Nancy on the Emergency Relief Group. Names put forward to serve HMM at the rise of Canadian Yearly Meeting (22 August 2009): Ministry and Counsel: Jean; First Day School: Wilf (Clerk), Mona; Coffee and Housekeeping: Janis; Darlene : Assistant Treasurer; Brian: Treasurer. Names put forward to (continue to) serve CYM at the rise of Canadian Yearly Meeting (August 22, 2009): Carol Leigh: Camp NeeKauNis Committee; Emily: CYM Program Committee. All these names have been approved. We thank Nominating Committee for their work. In **April we will need to find a naming committee** to replace Glenna, whose term on Nominating Committee ends in August 2009.

5 New Business

5.1 **March and Future Potlucks:** March potluck is set (see 4.1.3); **we will discuss later potlucks at the April M4W4B**.

5.2 **Request to co-sponsor a meeting about Conscience Canada:** the following note was received from Don: [deleted]

We agree to co-sponsor this event, which is compatible with our beliefs and activities.

5.3 **Cleaning of the MH:** Tony, who has been attending HMM for a few months, has offered to clean the MH without charge. We are grateful for this offer, and refer the matter to Don and Harriet who are our liaison with the contract with Marty Karl Centre. We will **consider this at the April meeting** after Housekeeping has looked further into the contract (which is part of a service which helps to integrate unemployed people into the workforce). There are several aspects to consider thoughtfully.

5.4 **Website minutes:** Dawn has reported that we are running out of space on our website server, and suggests the possibility of removing minutes prior to a certain date. **We will consider this in April**.

6 Correspondence

6.1 **Yearly Meeting Gathering:** A letter has been received from CYM regarding the CYM gathering this summer of 2009 in Kemptville, Ontario. We need to think of ways to promote

this gathering, which is so nearby this year. Also, we need to appoint delegates.

- 7 **Next Meeting:** Sunday, 5 April 2009
- 8 **Worship:** Meeting ended with silent worship at 2:35.

**THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)
CANADIAN YEARLY MEETING
2008 STATISTICAL REPORT
for Monthly Meetings
year ending December 31, 2008**

MONTHLY MEETING: Hamilton Monthly Meeting

Name of Friend completing this form: Betty; date March 1st 2009

* Please use specific numbers, not ranges*
* All figures should relate to the 2008 calendar year *

*For questions 1-9, please include persons in all parts of your Monthly Meeting, including Worship Groups, Allowed Meetings or Preparative Meetings under your care, as well as the Meeting's main body. It should also include children listed as "temporary members" (see **Hints and Definitions**).*

A. MEMBERS

*Questions 1 through 5 do **not** include sojourning members (official or otherwise) from other CYM Monthly Meetings or other Yearly Meetings. These Friends are covered under question 6.*

1. Total number of members (as of December 31, 2007) 50

This number should be taken from line (3) in the previous year's report. If, after completing the Additions and Losses in (2) below, this number does not agree with your new calculation, please make adjustments on the line at the end of (2) below and provide explanation on page 5.

2. Additions (January 1 to December 31, 2008)

- a) by birth, adoption or application by parents 0
- b) by request 1
- c) by transfer from other Meetings 1

Losses (January 1 to December 31, 2008)

- d) by transfer to other Meetings 0
- e) by death 1
- f) by resignation 0
- g) by removal 0

Past errors re (1) above: Add _____ Subtract _____

3. NET TOTAL NUMBER OF MEMBERS (as of December 31, 2008) 51

This should be the total reported in (1) above plus or minus numbers reported in (2) above.

4. Estimated number of active/inactive members

For guidelines on the definition of "active," see **Hints and Definitions**. If your definition coincides with this one, "attends at least half the occasions for worship, and/or participates in the work of the Meeting and/or

supports the work financially,” please check here . If not, write your definition here:

Changes to the age breakdown were made in 2007, partly to simplify things (one less age range, one less handful of hair pulled out), and partly to *approximately* reflect the age ranges of **Young Friends, Young Adult Friends, Adult Friends, and Senior Friends**—which seems a more useful categorization. Individual Friends, if asked, might “call” the age ranges differently (two randomly chosen Quaker websites used different age ranges for Young Adult Friends) or self-identify in a group “across the border” from an age range given below (a 20-year-old may consider themselves a Young Friend still). But for the purposes of this report, please record figures **for estimated biological ages** of Friends.

Please give your best estimate for age breakdown (with the understanding that some ages may not be publicly recorded and can be difficult to guess). Total should equal total in (3) above.

		ACTIVE	INACTIVE	TOTAL
Birth-18	Young Friends	1	0	1
19-35	Young Adult Friends	5	2	7
36-59	Adult Friends	6	6	12
60 and over	Senior Friends	18	13	31
TOTAL		30	21	51

5. Members’ residency status

“Resident” means someone who lives close enough to be able to attend Meeting for Worship regularly. Your total should equal the total in (3) above.

RESIDENT	31
NON-RESIDENT	20
TOTAL	51

6. Number of members of other Meetings active in your Monthly Meeting

This includes members of other CYM Monthly Meetings or other Yearly Meetings, regardless of sojourning status (official or not) **4**

B. ATTENDERS

“Attender” means someone not recorded as a member, but identifiable as affiliated with your Meeting. For definitions of “attender” and “inquirer,” see **Hints and Definitions**.

7. Estimated number of active attenders by age category

Birth-18	9
19-35	4
36 to 59	11
60 and over	9
TOTAL	33

C. MARRIAGES

8. Number of marriages held under the care of the Meeting (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2008) 0

D. AVERAGE ATTENDANCE AT WORSHIP

9. Attendance by Group

Please complete the **Attendance by Group Report** (page 4). Each worshipping group within your Monthly Meeting (i.e., Main body of the Meeting, Worship Group, Allowed Meeting, Preparative Meeting) should be listed in a separate entry.

2008 ATTENDANCE BY GROUP REPORT

MONTHLY MEETING Hamilton Monthly Meeting

Name and/or location of the group Hamilton, ON

Type of group (check one): Main body of the Monthly Meeting

Worship Group _____ Allowed Meeting _____ Preparative Meeting _____

- 1 Estimated *average* attendance at Meeting for Worship, *excluding* children in First Day School 18
- 2 *Average* number of children attending First Day School (i.e., not usually attending the full adult Meeting for Worship) 6 bi-monthly
- 3 *Average* frequency of Meeting for Worship: weekly twice a month ___ monthly ___ sporadic ___ other () ___