

Hamilton Friends May 2019 Newsletter



Advices and Queries

#33

Are you alert to practices here and throughout the world which discriminate against people on the basis of who or what they are or because of their beliefs? Bear witness to the humanity of all people, including those who break society's conventions or its laws. Try to discern new growing points in social and economic life. Seek to understand the causes of injustice, social unrest and fear. Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters the desire to serve?

Coffee List

May 5: Harriet and Don
 May 12: Darlene James
 May 19:
 May 26: Christina
 June 2: Carol Leigh (early) and Shirla (late)
 June 9:
 June 16:
 June 22:



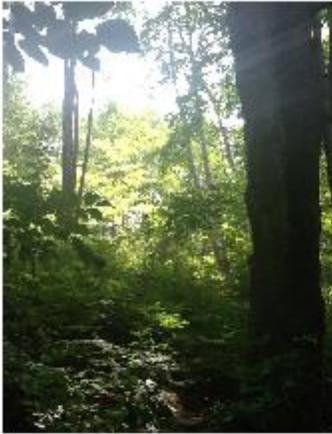
Calendar

Saturday 25 May: "More Than Talkin'! - The Truth about Quaker Ministry", a Spring Retreat at Cedar Haven: 9 am - 4 pm

Sunday, 9 June: Meeting for Worship for Business

Sunday, 16 June: Potluck lunch and Peace building presentation by Matt Legge





More Than Talkin'! The Truth About Quaker Ministry

**Hamilton Monthly Meeting spring retreat
at Cedar Haven
Saturday 25 May, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.**

Is Quaker ministry just speaking in Meeting for Worship? What about those who bring their silence into Meeting? Are there other forms of ministry? How can you tell if you're truly led by the Spirit to speak? When should you speak and when should you keep quiet?

Our State of Society report says: "The main indicator of the spiritual health of Meeting is the friendly and settled quality of sharing in our worship, both silent and spoken. We value the gathered silence sustained by all... We encourage all to heed the nudge to minister when called."

"Advices and Queries" says in #12: "Remember that we all share responsibility for the meeting for worship whether our ministry is in silence or through the spoken word." and in #13: "Do not assume that vocal ministry is never to be your part. Faithfulness and sincerity in speaking, even very briefly, may open the way to fuller ministry from others. When prompted to speak, wait patiently to know that the leading and the time are right, but do not let a sense of your own unworthiness hold you back. Pray that your ministry may arise from deep experience, and trust that words will be given to you..."

Friends are invited to participate in a one-day retreat at Cedar Haven, the home of Bev and Robbie Shepard, 1070 Tenth Concession West in north Flamborough. We'll seek the answers to these questions together.

We'll start at 9 a.m. with welcoming coffee and snacks. The day will include worship, discussion, lunch and other breaks, reflection, and free time. We intend to finish at 4 p.m. *There is no charge for this retreat.*

If you would like to come with your children and they would like a programme of their own, one will be provided, but we must know ahead of time! Please contact Beverly at 905-659-6119 or beverly_shepard@sympatico.ca if you would like a children's programme.



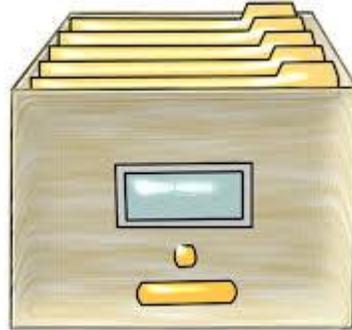
Note from the Archives

As HMM is having our benches adjusted to suit the Meeting needs, we thought this letter from the archives might be of interest:

Dated

Feb 21 2004

Hi, really enjoyed our visit at Norwich, I talked to Margaret Clayton about the pews and she was pretty sure that Arthur Haight made the benches. Albert quite probably helped in some way. She said that Jane Zavitz might have some info on them or Marie Avery who is in the History Society in Norwich. Hope this is helpful research.
Verna (McLellan)



Archives needs your help!

Does anyone have spare legal size hanging folders ? One of the drawers in our new cabinet only will take legal size folders. If you can spare a few hanging folders we would appreciate it.

Treasured cassette tapes of Burton Hill and Alan Newcombe were found in the archives. We are wondering if anyone can either transcribe these cassettes or possibly digitalized them for us.

If you can assist with hanging folders or the tapes please let Katherine or Harriet know.

Notes on Reconciliation

by Dick Preston

Starting with what three key words – Hope, Truth and Reconciliation - mean to me.

Hope: *“People talk about surviving, even thriving, because they didn’t give up, because they had hope -- not because everything turned out the way they wanted. Hope is interpreted very personally, not as some depersonalized reference to goals or expectations. Hope is not about naïve or excessive optimism. It is not solely about achievement. It is about not losing sight of the goodness of life even when it is not visible(Grand Chief Ted Moses 2004, quotes Ronna Jevne,. 2004. “Magnifying hope; shrinking hopelessness”, in Commission on First Nations and Metis Peoples and Justice Reform, Submissions to the Commission, Final Report, vol. 2, (Saskatchewan 2004) Section 6, p. 6-1. [emphasis in the original]*

Truth: *My truth and my processes of reconciliation as of today = “Quakers believe that there is that of God in every person. We do not know that this is true, but we have found that if we act as if it were true, our trust is justified.” This quote expresses my truth as a personal conviction – a matter of faith – and the attitude I bring to relationships.*

Reconciliation: *I don’t recall using the idea of reconciliation until now. It has been a puzzle to me. It suits talk about marital discord and therapy, business conflicts, or government failures. Fundamentally, though, reconciliation is a process of balancing our relationships that must be learned by each individual, according to their life situation and the experiences that have led up to it. In order to truly respect each other, we need to understand the situation and experiences. This is a personal process., but is manifested in group activities and also institutionally. = reconciliation is an attitude of respect that can guide our relationships. Getting there, to an attitude, is a process of “becoming” or growing up – probably a lifelong process. = friendship.*

My story: *what relationships do I have or remember that show the mutual respect that we can call reconciliation (because normal relationships have to 'grow' to achieve mutual respect). This does not exclude power and or wealth relations, but includes them in fair comfort.*

family...

colleagueship and workmates ...

HMM members ...

Being an anthropological fieldworker prepared the way for my becoming a Quaker, not vice-versa. That is, the process of reconciliation of my culture to Cree culture became deeply transformative. I realized that I was being assessed as Dick, an individual, not stereotyped as “the whiteman.” This was a relief, and at the same time, a profound lesson in cultivating respect for individuals. In return, I came to regard each person as an individual, only secondarily as representing a group The experience of trying to understand some of the Crees of Waskaganish as persons prepared me, a decade in advance, for trying to become a Quaker.

- Becoming an anthropologist, and discovering the feelings of another culture, that is, another attitude toward life (1963 -), including James Bay Cree composure, respect for persons, and respect of various kinds for all the variety of creation.

- But... At the political level ... the principle of partnership, for example, in resource extraction/utilization: OPG/Moose Cree partnership provides a stable economic base for generations of young people to mature in.

- At the personal level, this attitude of reconciliation came with **feelings of being at home**. Many starvation stories told me that, where need is visible, sharing is expected. When serious hardship is visible, compassion is expected. The attitude of compassion encourages building peace in the family, in a larger community, and now, in global awareness, in the world. [collaboration]

Looking at John's eyes, as he spoke, took me to the Cree "old ways" but farther – to a sense of our shared humanity. Our connection with his story could leave me feeling the hunger and cold of his starving relatives, as I went out of his house, well-fed, into a hot July afternoon.

. My attitude was formed out of my admiration and a few friendships. It has endured for more than 50 years.

I was told that looking another person in the eye is, or can be, reconciliation. I heard of a panhandler saying, "You don't have to give me money, but at least look at me." [i.e. recognize that I am a person.]. A lot hangs on eye contact. And moving on from that, words may be helpful – that's what diplomacy is based on. It may be a search for common ground, and then compromise from there. Reconciliation does not require that you agree or approve what another person says or does. It DOES require an effort to understand where the other person is coming from and looking for a compromise between the differences.

We have been encouraged to see the inherent dignity in every human being – to see ourselves in other people.

Becoming a Quaker, (1971 - on) eight years after my Cree vocation began, I was discovering the **feelings of being at home** among Friends gathered in Meeting for Worship. A part of this feeling is confidence in taking as a given that those in a Meeting are more aware of each other's feelings and life situations than can be expected in "external" relations. Put another way, we try to suspend selfish impulses in favour of caring ones.

Like Cree stories, Quaker stories express a wealth of thought, an ethics of living, and a spiritual integrity. I only know a small part of the stories that go with my tradition, but my experience of Quaker tradition goes well beyond stories, into belonging and acting within my home community, and both conscious and habitual (out-of-consciousness) guidance ideals for the actual intentions and actions in my daily life.

Defining reconcile:

-restore friendly relations between, where being friendly is not simply superficial.

*-"she wanted to be **reconciled with** her father"*

settle one's differences, make (one's) peace, make up, declare a truce

"her divorced parents have reconciled"

-cause to coexist in harmony; make or show to be compatible.

"a landscape in which inner and outer vision were reconciled"

So: what do WE do?

As individuals: education by reading and also experientially (George Fox's "to know it experimentally")

As a Meeting: support CFSC

As Canadians: Hold our government to its responsibilities

...

To see more from Dick Preston go to <http://www.richardpreston.ca/>

Cambridge Worship Group meets on May 24th at 2:00 p.m. at 157 Grand Ave S, Cambridge, ON N1S 2M1. All are welcome. Please contact clwehking@gmail.com to confirm your participation.

Running It Up the Flagpole

Friends:

A church in my neighbourhood has a regular "Breakfast Meeting", offered to congregants as a time of sharing, but which is also publicly advertised and attracts folks (like me) who may just be curious about the church community.

At HMM, we currently schedule a monthly Potluck Lunch (with topics and speakers), and a number of Supper Groups, which present us with an opportunity to share food and fellowship.

I wonder whether there is any interest among Hamilton Friends to occasionally plan a Breakfast Club, say at 9am prior to Meeting for Worship. This could be potluck, hosted/prepared, or some combination of the two. For those of us who are naturally early-rising "Larks", it might be quite pleasant to gather on occasion for some pre- Worship fellowship. I have fond memories of the pre-meeting "study groups" we had for awhile in years past.

Any interest at all?

Please contact me, if so.

We could discuss possibilities over.....I dunno, breakfast, some time.

Darlene James

Eat responsibly for our world

Last spring I heard a radio interview with one of the two Nobel Prize winners in Economics. I think it was William Nordhaus who is associated with developing the idea of carbon taxes. During the interview he commented that if only all of us would eat less meat, this would have a tremendous impact on reducing climate change. I believe he said this would have more impact than carbon taxation.

I had been wondering if there was anything I could do to help our planet. Something concrete, direct and impactful. I sign petitions, recycle and walk when I can but I didn't realize the power of eating less meat. It's big, concrete and, for some of us, not hard to do. You may be cutting back already.

Over last fall and winter I slowly decided to see if I could interest friends in Dundas in participating, and promoting, a local "Meatless Mondays" campaign. I was cautioned that there might not be much interest in this and to remember there are people who don't believe that climate change is real.

At a brainstorming meeting in April with eight kindred spirits I met Emily and Allison. They are high school students who are deeply committed to saving our world from climate catastrophe. Emily's mother, Elaine, got on board, and we put together a plan. It was Emily who gave us a name. "The Sweet Potato Project." Emily loves vegetables.

The Sweet Potato Project asks you to pledge to avoid eating meat on June 12. We picked one day to see how much local uptake and interest there is in cutting back on meat. If enough people do this (and, of course, that number must grow and eventually be very large to make a measurable difference), there is evidence that we can bring down the rising temperatures on our planet.

Please consider signing our online pledge. Can you ask others to take the pledge: your family, neighbours, co-workers and friends. If we get a reasonable number of Sweet Potato Project supporters on June 12 we'll continue our campaign.

This link will take you to our pledge form. Have a look.

<https://forms.gle/rwjkuVeYwoZBi5EW7>

Thank you so much.

Harriet Woodside, Emily Zelenyt, Elaine Zelenyt and Allison Suichies

PS: If you want to meet us, we'll be at a table in Memorial Square (Dundas) on June 1 from 11am to 3pm.

Magnolias

In the South
they are big as dinner plates,
opening white petals ostentatiously
among the dark and gleaming leaves
that have remained there
and green
throughout the undemanding winter,
despite their resplendence
almost casual
in their confidence that the warmth
won't let them down.

In the North
they wait for certainty
that spring has come
and then erupt in gathered gaiety,
in their hundreds covering the bare branches,
pink or white, the size of teacups,
crowded and
pure joy and
celebration.

-Bev Shepard

