

# Hamilton Quaker Newsletter

March 2021



***In worship we enter with reverence into communion with God and respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Come to meeting for worship with heart and mind prepared. Yield yourself and all your outward concerns to God's guidance so that you may find "the evil weakening in you and the good raised up".***

*Advices and Queries #9*

# Upcoming Events and Announcements

In last month's newsletter, the name of author and playwright Drew Hayden Taylor was given as Glenn Hayden Taylor. We apologize for any confusion this might have caused.

Meeting for Worship will enter silence at 10:30 a.m. The Zoom space will be open at 10:25 to allow people a time to chat and settle in before worship begins.

March 17 (Wednesday) is our St. Patrick's Day Potluck, via Zoom! Join us beginning at 6:30 p.m. Location: your own cozy home-place. Parking is free. All ages welcome. Dress code is casual, but wearing something "green"... in whatever way or style suits your fancy... would be a nod to the traditional. Welcome, but not required!

March 21 will see a Zoom-based meeting of the Reading Club. Please email Shirla if you would like to join this group. This meeting will focus on chapter one of Richard Wagamese's book, ***One Drum***. The meeting will convene at 3 p.m. A Zoom link will be provided to all those who have expressed interest.

March 24 there will be a meeting of the Peace and Social Action Committee on Zoom at 7 p.m. If you would like to be added to the participants' e-list, please contact Paul Dekar ([pdekar@cogeco.ca](mailto:pdekar@cogeco.ca)).

The Cambridge Worship Group (CWG) will be meeting separately in our own homes at 2 pm on Friday, 26 March. At 3 pm we will join together via Zoom for After Word and fellowship. If you would like to participate please let Christina know ([cmeedwards64@gmail.com](mailto:cmeedwards64@gmail.com)) so that we can send you the Zoom link.

During our March 7 Meeting for Worship for Business, we strengthened our subsidy program for participation in Quaker programs and activities. The subsidy, which can be used to cover up to half of the costs of participating in a Quaker program or activity including registration, travel, and accommodation, (up to a lifetime amount of \$1000) is now available to all members and attenders of Hamilton Monthly Meeting. Applications for such funding should be made to Meeting for Worship for Business. For more details, please contact our Treasurer Wilf Ruland (905) 648-1296, [deerspring1@gmail.com](mailto:deerspring1@gmail.com).

April 11 will be our next Meeting for Worship for Business. The meeting will be held at 12:30 p.m. in our Zoom Meeting space. Email will be sent inviting members and attenders to this meeting.



## **Wordless**

*by Beverly Shepard*

There is much to be said about a cedar wood --  
things about age and strength,  
about loss and breaking,  
dying and renewal;  
things about dimness  
and shafts of light,  
about silence  
and rustlings;  
things about rocks and moss,  
the quick or stealthy movements of animals,  
the persistence of plants.  
There is much to be said --  
there is too much to be said --  
about a cedar wood.  
Just go there.

# The Wearing of the Green

*submitted by Darlene James*

The tradition of wearing Shamrock to celebrate Saint Patrick seems to date from the seventeenth or eighteenth century. This was a very turbulent time in Irish history. The suppression of the Gaelic way of life by the ruling British invaders resulted in many aspects of the Catholic religion in Ireland being forced underground. Strict laws were enforced which prevented the Catholic population from attending schools, so 'hedge-schools' were operated in secret.

These were schools run outdoors in secluded places (sometimes literally 'under a hedge'!). The teaching of religion was also forbidden so it is only to be expected that teachers would use naturally available resources to inform their pupils. Thus the Shamrock plant was used to illustrate the message of the Christian Holy Trinity. Saint Patrick was credited with using the Shamrock in such a manner so the wearing of the Shamrock by the oppressed Catholic population became a means of demonstrating their defiance to the ruling British class. It also imbued a sense of kinship among the native Gaelic people, differentiating them from their oppressors.

Wearing a clump of Shamrock is now a firmly established tradition throughout the world to celebrate not just Saint Patrick but Ireland itself. The Shamrock symbol is widely used by businesses seeking to associate with Ireland and, along with the Harp, is perhaps the single most recognizable symbol of Ireland.

It is a shame, though, that the Shamrock is not a blue plant as the colour originally associated with Saint Patrick was blue!



# The Past Future of Canadian Yearly Meeting

*Given the present and ongoing concern around the role of Canadian Yearly Meeting and its future in our Quaker organization, Dick Preston asked that we reprint this piece, which he wrote, and which was originally published in The Canadian Friend in 1987.*

At our yearly meeting session in 1986, we met to share our vision of the future for Canadian Yearly Meeting. In a Quaker dialogue, Friends spoke of looking to:

- share more effectively the excitement of being a Friend;
- an immediate future of our sharing the gospel in a way that can transform our world;
- be humble enough to learn from others – other traditions and other faiths, for which we may be particularly well suited as open, tender listeners;
- being open to continuing revelation; distrust of dogmatic fences; a warm and loving community, supporting and open to the lonely, oppressed and unhappy people of the world;
- Friends being able to express themselves in a more powerful way, the practical experiences of inner messages;
- discern and give oneself up to Friends; convictions and show them in the world. Meeting for Worship should be energizing and lived in a more gathered community, with concern for others' spiritual well being;
- discern and strengthen and share the core of faith among us, across the spectrum of Friends from secular humanism to strongly evangelical;
- guidance that we may use and recover the power of the Meeting for Worship and Meeting for Worship for Business, out of which come the testimonies, and that we may make these appear more practical in the outside world;
- a new birth of the transforming power of Christ, in our Meetings and at CYM;

- never underestimate the power of the Holy Spirit in every one and understand the importance of openness to receive divine leadings throughout life; seekers after truth, by whatever name, who can share the truth with others;
- deepening the life of the Spirit in meeting;
- address the Spirit, to walk in listening and reaching out.



## **The Parable of the Mustard Seed**

(St. Matthew 13:31, 32; St. Mark 4:31, 32; and, St. Luke 13:18, 19)

*by Sheldon Clark*

The Second Adam sowed mustard seed in a field.

The seeds' husks held the power of potential extravagance.

Potent grains to dispel death, decay, darkness, enmity, evil, fear, limitation.

Potent grains to dispense love, joy, peace, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

The mustard tree emerged from darkness to Light.

Rooted firmly, it sprouted to magnificent stature.

The seeds' endings marked the openings for abundance.

Joyful songsters miraculously alighted, rested, built, and raised their young.

Then, they flitted away, and away, and ever back again.

They announced the Good News: God is good.

Amen.

# A Surprising Story

*submitted by Robbie McGregor*

A number of years ago, I was using my anthropology training, and I had a favourite community, Sambaa K'e. This was a fly-in community, having no road access in or out.

One day I was visiting each “elder” to attempt to get a brief life story from each one. At the home of one of them, I was talking and listening to Tom, who, I had been told, was not born in the community.

He told me that he had been born in Fort Nelson, and as a young man in 1960, was the translator for the RCMP in its first visit to the community. He had met and later married his wife and stayed with her.

As he talked about his young life in Fort Nelson (in his mother's tent, following his father's death), he was saying that his mother was struggling to feed herself and two sons. There was a school there where they fed the native kids, and so he was happy to go to school. The worst of it was the teacher, who was pretty mean.

Suddenly my memories kicked in, of my aunt, who used to talk about teaching the “dirty Indian kids” in Fort Nelson “who only came to school to get food.”

I asked him if he remembered that teacher's name, and he named my aunt! I told him that the teacher was an aunt of mine, and the two of us were stunned to have a link between the little boy in the tent and my family. I expressed my knowledge of Aunt's fierce personality and told him that I was very, very sorry that someone in my family had given him no respect or understanding.

We ended by having a good laugh together about such an unexpected connection being possible!

# Celebrate the Earth... Unearthed!

*By Judith Murray*

Sorting through some old photos on one of those Ground Hog covid days I was surprised by a happy memory. I have been a TV producer and director for decades, and I am an environmentalist. In 1995, I co-produced and directed *Celebrate the Earth*, a one hour eco-variety show that aired on CTV and YTV. My co-producer, Donna Roberts, and I felt we would attract more interest with honey rather than vinegar. And so we did...! Our musical guests were Susan Aglukark (O Siam), Kashtin (Aqua Tu Ta), Jane Siberry, Sarah McLachlan, Julie Masse, Bare Naked Ladies, Bowser and Blue, Cory Hart, and our two co-hosts, Tom Jackson (then acting as Peter Kenedi on North of 60), and Rosie Emery, (a children's performer and song writer, and 2 time Emmy winner.) who sang their original songs.

Here is a photo I found with Host Tom Jackson in the centre, production assistant, Sarah Sniderman on the left, and me on the right.

Just seeing this photo brought back all the energy of that time. I re-connected with Donna, Rosie, and many others from that time, turning a dull covid day into one of swapping great memories in a time of group creation and an homage to our planet.

