

4th Month

MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING
 OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
 Damariscotta, Maine
NEWSLETTER

April 2007



Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.

--Luke 6:27

Jesus said about four things that are absolutely the core of Christianity, and one of them is you really don't get to hate anyone.

--Anne Lamott

April

Sunday	April 1	Rise of Meeting	Second Hour: State of Society
Friday	April 6	11 a.m.-1 p.m.	*Good Friday Peace Vigil, Newcastle Park
Saturday	April 14	2 p.m.	*Memorial Service for Susan McMurtrie Terrell, Reception following
Sunday	April 15	Rise of Meeting	Meeting for Worship for Business
Saturday	April 21	9 a.m.-4 p.m.	*Retreat: "The Testimonies--Histories & Relevance for Today" with Christopher & Jean McCandless
Sunday	April 22	Rise of Meeting	Work Hour
Fri.-Sat.	April 27-28		*All Maine Gathering of Quarterly Meetings

May

Sunday	May 13	Rise of Meeting	Work Hour
Sunday	May 20	Rise of Meeting	Meeting for Worship for Business

Upcoming

Saturday	June 9		New England Yearly Meeting Committee Day hosted by Midcoast Meeting at Great Salt Bay School
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*Look inside for more information regarding these items.

~Calendar events are held at the meetinghouse, unless otherwise noted.~

Sunday Meeting for Worship is held at the meetinghouse, 77 Belvedere Rd., Damariscotta, 10:00 a.m.
 Meetinghouse phone: 207-563-3757. Directions: Take US Route 1 to Damariscotta and turn onto Belvedere Rd.
 (left if coming from the south, right if coming from the north--Miles Home Health Care building on the corner).
 The meetinghouse is the second building on the right, .2 mile from the corner.

Moving? Changing your e-mail address? *Don't forget to let us know. Please remember that when you receive the newsletter by e-mail, you save the Meeting money and you lighten our workload. To receive the newsletter by e-mail, kindly send a request to Diane Kirkman at diane_kirkman@hotmail.com. Thanks!*

For newsletters, important links, & a current calendar, visit our website: www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org.

Highlights--Monthly Meeting for Business

Third Month 18, 2007

A period of worship-sharing on ‘**the state of the meeting for 2006**’ was held.

Paul Diamond presented a report on the first three quarters of the fiscal year. Committee clerks will please plan **budget requests** for the 2007-2008 fiscal year. Todd Garth, Jack Boak, Linda Cote-Small, and Nancy Booth will serve as a “**Worthy Needs**” Committee.

Gifts to the meeting in the form of stock are beneficial for both the donor and the meeting.

The meeting approved a **Memorial Minute for Charlotte Ritter** (*Ed. Note: See page 7 of this newsletter.*) Friends who would like to attend the April 21 **retreat** on “The Testimonies – History & Relevance for Today” should sign up soon with Linda Cote-Small.

The Peace & Social Concerns Committee is organizing a **steering committee for the new Peace Center**. They are planning regular meetings on the first Sunday of the month. There will be a **Good Friday (April 6) Vigil** again this year (*Ed. Note: See article page 3 of this newsletter*).

Outreach will expand beyond articles about events to **articles on other topics** about the meeting. Anyone with suggestions for topics will please speak to Jean Crawford.

There is interest in exploring the possibility of establishing a **Community Supported Agriculture (C.S.A.) plan** with local farmers.

Meetinghouse & Grounds is researching **security devices** for smoke or low heat in the meetinghouse and **enhanced lighting** for the parking lot.

The **next meeting for business** will be on Sunday, **April 15**, at the rise of meeting. All are welcome. Please bring a bag lunch.



NEWSNOTES:

As of March 28, Henry Beerits was still in Room 215 at Cove's Edge, being treated for pain from his vertebrae and phlebitis, but he is mentally alert and would enjoy cards and visits from friends. Janet visits every day. The address for cards is Cove's Edge, 26 Schooner St., Damariscotta, ME 04543.

QUERIES: Vocations

Do you respect the value of all useful work, whether paid or unpaid, whether physical or intellectual, whether performed in the home or in the larger community? Does your daily work use means and serve goals which are consistent with the teachings of Jesus? Are you honest and trustworthy in all business transactions, prompt and just in payment of debts? By counsel and example, do you encourage young people to enter vocations which will serve society?

WORDS ON WORSHIP

This month we bring to you more writings about vocal ministry from the second draft of the NEYM *Faith & Practice* chapter on worship. We encourage you to share your thoughts on worship and vocal ministry with the Ministry & Counsel committee by contacting Linda Cote-Small at chezcote@roadrunner.com or calling 563-6712.

At times one of us may minister through a reading, a poem, or a song. This impulse is tested and discerned in the same way as other vocal ministry. If the ministry is through song, the person offering it might not be led to sing the whole composition, but only that portion in which the message is conveyed. At times other worshippers may join the singer, but care should be taken not to join in too readily simply because the emotions have been stirred and the song is familiar. Where there is a hunger for singing in a meeting, this may be served by a separate designated period of singing on a regular basis. Music during the meeting for worship arises from the motion of the Spirit and is never focused on performance. It is not offered as an opportunity for communal singing, or for the pleasure of joining in a well-loved song. It is one way in which the Spirit may speak through and to us and is one which is capable of stirring us deeply.

After offering vocal ministry, we may experience a variety of sensations. We may feel calm and peaceful, energized or filled. We may feel unsettled, empty or exhausted, or that more was added than was necessary: we “outran our guide.” Sometimes our reaction is one of surprise at the words we have just uttered. At other times we may question whether we have been faithful. It may be that speaking to a more experienced Friend about these reactions will be helpful in future discernment. With experience we learn to discern when to speak, when to remain silent, and how to conclude the moment our inner guide says, “Enough.”

Good Friday is a day we associate with the suffering of Jesus the Peacemaker and the suffering of the world at war.

*There will be a **GOOD FRIDAY PEACE VIGIL** on April 6 at Newcastle Park, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. It is a silent witness meeting; there will be a handout and one sign for passersby to know it is a vigil. We hope many friends in the community will join us as they did last year.*

Directions to the park: Coming from Damariscotta Main Street, it is right past the bridge. Coming to Newcastle from any direction, it is at the crossroad with stop signs, the park is at the NE corner, parking at the Congregational church.

--Carmen Lavertu

ADVICES: Vocations: In our relations with others in our daily work, let us manifest the spirit of justice and understanding and thus give a living witness to the Truth. While trying to make provision for ourselves and our families, let us not be anxious, but in quietness of spirit trust in the goodness of God. When we suffer from unemployment, let us seek the support and encouragement of our meetings. When we have a choice of employment, let us think first of the service that we may render. Let us be ready to limit our engagements, to withdraw for a time, or even to retire from a business that we may be free for new service as God appoints it.

QUAKER TESTIMONIES: WITNESS AND TRADITION Saturday, April 21, 2007, 9:30 – 4:00

Our history of peace and justice work and commitment to the principles of integrity, simple living and equality are often what first brought our members and attenders to Quakerism. We will examine the historical roots, the unique characteristics and the growth of the important testimonies by which Quakers are known. We will also consider what new witness our religious society might be led to make in modern times. Christopher and Jean McCandless from Burlington Monthly Meeting will facilitate this retreat. Lunch will be provided. This Traveling Ministry Retreat is free of charge. For details, please contact Linda Cote-Small at chezcote@roadrunner.com or 563-6712.

LIBRARY NEWS

A number of new books have been added to our library this year. The committee hopes that the selection will offer something for each one of us to explore. We always welcome suggestions and ideas. We would also like to encourage anyone to write a review of a new book or of a book that has been on our shelves for some time. This is a way we can share with each other.

NEW BOOKS:

The Courage to Teach (with study guide) by Parker Palmer

Focusing by Eugene T. Gendlin

How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk by Elaine Mazlish

The Love of Impermanent Things by Mary Rose O'Reilly

Light to Live By: An Exploration of Quaker Spirituality by Rex Ambler

Margaret Fell, Mother of Quakerism by Isabel Ross

We are missing a copy of *Why I Wake Early* by Mary Oliver, a book of poems that someone returned and put on the credenza. If you took it home to read, we would like to know who has it or have it returned. Thank you. (Ed. Note: Library Committee is Barbara Foust, Deb Haviland, Nancy Nyberg, and Willow Rowntree.)

From our "Foreign Correspondent," Anna Needham

Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India.

Monday 12 February 2007

Hello dear people,

I promised some of you that I would write something about India, for the Newsletter. Well that is proving to be a tall order! I struggle to digest this over-rich diet of teeming humanity, paradox and contrasts.

I am only going to write to you about living in Ahmedabad,, which is the largest industrial city in the state of Gujarat, where my son lives with his wife whilst working for an engineering firm at the edge of the city. Often he is working for their sister office in Leeds. Such is globalization. Is it good or bad? I don't know. There are pros and cons; everywhere in India there are pros and cons. What I do know about India is that it is a place that makes me feel every emotion under the sun. So I do feel very alive, but with that vitality comes tension and guilt, particularly about the poverty and inequality which is so in your face. I am immensely privileged because of one thing only--I have money, sufficient money for instance to spend on two coffees, more than the family cook will get

for cooking our dinner tonight. Pay is low but jobs are

many, so sometimes there are three or four people to help you do what would be self-service in the West. I have never before seen so many assistants in a supermarket.

Beggars and strident vendors are hard to manage, or rather, the feelings that they raise are hard to manage. Both groups try it on with tourists, especially if they think you are American. It is difficult because we do have more money, and to give indiscriminately may ease our discomfort over the inequalities in the world, but it would be more productive to work towards a more equitable society. I respect Llanos, my daughter-in-law, who deals with this by doing voluntary work with SEWA, a self-help group for women. Tom feels quite strongly that it is better not to give money to beggars. He says that there were no



beggars in the Sudan until foreign workers were there and were prepared to give handouts, and the project he worked on there was all about enabling villagers to become self-sufficient. Here, there is a tendency to use children to beg. I even saw a child with tears painted on his cheeks last week. This morning two children grabbed my arms and legs to stop me walking away and would not take "No" for an answer. Often an adult will chase them off because they would not behave like that to an Indian. I can't bear to shout at them, and I never give money to children, but sometimes I give them fruit. On this occasion I didn't have any with me.

Ahmedabad's population is growing fast. It is a city of young people, and I have seen very few people my age. High-rise buildings, both offices and apartments, are going up fast, and new malls are conspicuous in this newer part of the city. The old city is quite different: houses, temples, and shops huddle around a courtyard, in small self-sufficient communities, usually with one narrow gate in and out. The passageways between buildings are too narrow to be called roads; scooters and rickshaws jostle with pedestrians and cows. Wonderfully carved doorways and windows decorate some of the houses, but most have fallen into disrepair or have been replaced by dingy concrete buildings.

Yesterday was a terrific informal occasion, in which all the city joined in. It was Uttaran, the annual kite-flying festival. All the young men (and a few women too) were flying kites, flimsy constructions of bamboo and tissue paper, without stabilizing tails, so they waft in the breeze and dive unpredictably. You buy them by the half dozen for a few rupees--even the poorest can afford to join in. A number are necessary because the fun is to tangle with your neighbor's kite. The string is treated in such a way that if it is jerked, it cuts, so that one or another of the kites will be cut loose to blow on its way to be collected where it falls by delighted children. They are not easy to fly. I had a go from the rooftop of this house. I was decidedly put out

when I at last got one flying only to have it "killed" by the neighbors. Down in the old city, where we went later, crowds were standing up on the rooftops--flat roofs, of course. Great cries went up as different houses cheered their warrior kites on. All very good humored. The rooftop we were on belonged to one of the beautifully carved houses which had been restored. We arrived just before dusk, and the house was lit by flickering lamps, but discreet lighting helped us to climb the steep steps up onto the roof. Later we had dinner on the terrace roof of a restaurant, where they flew a large kite with lanterns attached one at a time to the line. It looked quite magical, until a rogue kite from across the city managed to cut its string, and kite, lanterns, and all floated out of sight.

Gandhi was from Gujarat, founded an ashram in Ahmedabad, and lived here with his family during his mature years, when honed his principles and found the direction he was to follow for the rest of his life. There is quite a sizable Jain community here, and the principles which we Quakers particularly associate with Gandhi, those of simplicity and non-violence, are held by the Jain community and no doubt influenced Gandhi. The ashram is no longer a living community but has been kept as it was. It is a place of quiet reflection, an oasis in the busy city which has grown up around it. I visited on my first day here and was surprised at how choked I became, just looking at notes that he had written, the spinning wheel he had used, the simple cushions he had sat on, and the spectacles he had worn. Gandhi is such an inspiration, with his absolute dedication to non-violence and his willingness to take the consequences of his civil disobedience. I thought about the members of the Meeting who had felt moved to practice their own piece of civil disobedience recently.

In Friendship and love,

Anna

P.S. My e-mail address is now annaneedham@talktalk.net.

April 28, Vassalboro Quarter meets at All Maine Gathering

All Maine Gathering, which is our Quarterly Meeting, will be the last Saturday in April, the 28th, not in May. This is because Falmouth Quarter is the host. It will be at Friends Camp and will be a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Pond Meeting House located on Friends Camp campus. The program will provide a fascinating history with local Friends remembering stories about those incredible Quakers from China, Maine, who crossed the oceans to start schools and became leading educators in our own country.

Friday night, April 27, will be a sleepover for all of our kids in a cabin at Friends Camp. Ministry & Counsel, with everyone invited, will have a potluck supper at 5:30 pm at Friends Camp, I believe, and a meeting afterwards.

For further information, please contact Carole Beal <carolebeal@gmail.com>.



Susan M. Terrell--1920-2007 by Betsy Terrell and Nancy Terrell Hall

Susan McMurtrie Terrell, mother of Nancy, Betsy, Michael, and Harrison, died peacefully in her sleep on February 16 at her home overlooking the Damariscotta River in Newcastle, following a long illness.

She was born in Norristown, Pennsylvania, and lived in the Philadelphia area before moving to Maine in 1971.

Susan was a Quaker most of her adult life, having become convinced when she married our father, who was a birthright Friend. She found in the Quaker way of life a perfect fit for her own spirituality. She was for many years an active member of Valley Friends Meeting in Pennsylvania, including helping to organize and run a summer daycamp program for inner-city children and adults from Philadelphia. The program, which focused on literacy as well as giving city dwellers a pleasant rural experience and a healthful noonday meal, helped forge bonds of trust and friendship between underprivileged "ghetto" dwellers and suburban meeting members. The

program continued to operate for more than twenty years.

After moving to Maine, Susan hosted a worship group every Sunday in her living room for many years. She never tired of explaining the Quaker way and introduced a number of people to Quaker meeting. When she was hospitalized in early 2006, we brought into her hospital room a painting of a Quaker meeting which Nancy had done years before, and Susan used the staff's interest and curiosity in this painting as an opportunity to introduce them to Quaker ideas.

Susan was a natural teacher who organized playgroups while her children were young, then taught kindergarten and first grade in Pennsylvania and Maine over a span of 20 years. In retirement she was active in Literacy Volunteers and enjoyed tutoring, knitting circles, and other teaching activities, formal and informal.

There will be a memorial service after the manner of Friends on Saturday, April 14, at 2 p.m., in the meetinghouse with reception following.

I am working on getting the last three years of our Monthly Meeting minutes in shape to send to New England Yearly Meeting Archives. If anyone has minutes, preferably corrected minutes, in their computers, please send them to me electronically, and I can get them printed and ready to send. Archives is leery of having electronic material, as it is so easy to lose, so "snail mail" it is! Additionally, if you have non-electronic minutes, send them to Diane Kirkman (18 Atlantic Ave., Apt. 3, Camden, ME 04843), who will type them up and send them along.

It will be a fine thing if we get our act together and get these things sent off yearly. This is important. A lot of very valuable material is stored in Rhode Island, where Archives lives. Historians use these documents to pull together strands of our communal history, and some fascinating things have been uncovered. I would hate to have gaps in the material we have to offer to this historic effort.

--Claire Darrow

Charlotte Ritter
Memorial Minute
December 4, 1919 – August 13, 2006

Charlotte became acquainted with Midcoast Friends Meeting shortly after arriving in coastal Maine in 1986 and became a member on October 16, 1987. She had been a member of the Presbyterian Church in her youth but learned about Friends early from a neighbor with whom she remained close throughout her life. She was particularly attracted to the Maine Indian Program of the American Friends Service Committee and served as a member of that Committee. She is fondly remembered by a number of Native American people who live in Maine and Canada. On the Indian Committee she worked diligently to keep alive the traditions of the tribal groups in Maine. Charlotte served on a number of committees of the Meeting, among which were Peace & Social Concerns and Ministry & Counsel. She was Clerk of Ministry & Counsel when she was in her late 70s. She was also very active in Vassalboro Quarterly Meeting.

Perhaps she was best known to Friends for the breadth of her wisdom and knowledge about personal health and for the active outdoor life that she maintained. She hiked and camped, kayaked and swam, danced and played music right up to the end of her life. After a varied career of studying, practicing, and teaching occupational therapy, she studied yoga and other alternative healing arts, including Chi' Gong. She had a small health kinesiology practice in her home until 2006. Charlotte surrounded herself with energy-centered knowledge and practices.

In the early 1990s Midcoast Meeting was searching for a piece of land on which to build our Meetinghouse, and when we found our present site, Charlotte quietly walked over it by herself in the snow of early spring. She reported back to the Building Committee that she had "dowsed the entire tract and it all had wonderful positive energy" and was, therefore, thoroughly suited for our building. More than a decade later we can confirm that she was right.

Charlotte loved her home in Camden, where she participated in local discussion, art, and music groups, including ecstatic dance. Shortly before her sudden illness, she served as a co-host for a group of Tibetan monks who stayed in the homes of families in the community for several weeks while they demonstrated some of their religious practices of music and art. As an artist and a storyteller, she excelled in knowing about people and sharing her insights broadly. Her personal enthusiasms often infused others of all ages with her optimism and the joy of living. When Charlotte was 85, Moore Institute in Philadelphia (her art school of long ago) honored their oldest graduate by exhibiting recent watercolors she had painted a few years earlier during a trip to Greenland and Labrador.

The Meeting was saddened when Charlotte suddenly became ill in the spring of 2006. She entered a hospital for the first time in her life for diagnosis. She learned she had untreatable brain tumors. After entering a long-term care home in Rockland, she kept active physically for some months. She soon came to be known by the staff as "one of us," visiting other patients to help care for them in the final weeks of her long and productive life. She was still able to go for walks with her friends, and she joined some of us at a Meeting picnic at a member's home. The last few days of her life she was watched over by relays of caring friends until she died peacefully in her sleep.

She had reached the age of eighty-six years, eight months, and nine days. Her strong presence will always be a part of the lives of those who knew her well.

Approved 3/18/07 Midcoast Monthly Business Meeting

The Quaker Initiative to End Torture (QUIT) will hold its second conference June 1-3 at Guilford College in North Carolina. The convener is John Calvi, and the keynote speaker will be Alfred McCoy, the author of *A Question of Torture* and historian of the American occupation of the Philippines. The plenary session will feature Col. Dan Smith (Ret.), now working at FCNL, and Tony Lagouranis, speaking on his experience as an interrogator at Guantanamo.

Friends in our meeting or the community who are interested in attending may contact Carmen Lavertu, who attended last year and is planning to attend this year. You can reach her either by phone at (354-9556) or by e-mail at <clavertu@gmail.com>

For more information, check out the QUIT website, <www.quit-torture-now.org>.