

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

Peace is not a relationship of nations. It is a condition of mind brought about by a serenity of soul. Lasting peace can come only to peaceful people.

—Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) India
thanks to the motto calendar

July

Tuesday	July 8	4:30 p.m.	Peace and Social Concerns Committee Meeting
Saturday	July 12	9 a.m.- 3 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	* Silent Retreat * Dinner with neighbors: Church of Latter Day Saints
Sunday	July 13	8:30 a.m.	Reading Group: NEYM Faith and Practice
Monday	July 14	5 p.m.	Ministry and Counsel Meeting
Friday	July 18	6 p.m. 7 p.m.	Potluck supper Monthly Meeting for Business
Saturday	July 19	2 p.m.	* Memorial Meeting for Chouteau Chapin at The Barn, Montsweag
Sunday	July 27	8:30 a.m.	* Reading Group: New book by Elaine Pagels

August

Sat. – Thurs.	August 2-7		* New England Yearly Meeting Sessions, Stonehill College, Easton, Massachusetts
Sunday	August 31	10 a.m.	* Picnic at Small Point, Phippsburg (St. John’s), Info: Carmen Lavertu 354-9556

~Bi-Weekly, ongoing~

Tuesdays		7 p.m.	Peacemakers mtgs. Info: Holly Baldwin, 644-1014
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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 Road, Damariscotta, 10:00 a.m. Meetinghouse phone: 207-563-3757. Directions: Take US Route 1 to Damariscotta and turn onto Belvedere Road (left if coming from the south, right if coming from the north. The Miles Home Health Care building is on the corner.) The meetinghouse is the second building on the right, 2/10 mile from the corner

Back Issues of the Newsletter and Meeting Information, are available at: www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

Friendly Reminders: Moving or changing your E-mail address? Don't forget to notify the newsletter of your changes. Electronic subscriptions via E-mail are environmentally friendly and cost the Meeting nothing. To receive your newsletter via the Web, E-mail a request to Nancy Terrell Hall at moonlite@lincoln.midcoast.com

The Entirely Unofficial **MONTHLY MEETING NOTES**, 6th month of 2003

based on draft minutes by Rob Patterson

Treasurer's Report

Paul Diamond made the end-of-fiscal-year report. Last year's budget was \$14,400 and we spent \$14,124 leaving us with a surplus for the year of \$276.00. Our operating expenses for the meetinghouse were actually over budget by almost 10%, but that was offset by a significant committee budget surplus. Building insurance went up 20% over the prior year, and utilities also increased, partly due to our decision to participate in the "green energy" projects which provide cleaner but more expensive heat and electricity. Contributions for the year were estimated at \$18,700, and we actually received \$18,666. Overall, the Meeting is in good financial condition, but we need to keep an eye on hard costs, such as utilities.

Cully Miller Gift

There was a discussion about how to utilize the bequest from Cully Miller. It was decided that a committee should be established to make proposals that would be in keeping with Cully's interests. Viki Diamond, Karen Cadbury, and Carolyn Miller will serve on the committee.

Dinner Invitation

Our neighbors worshipping at the Church of Latter Day Saints are inviting us to dinner on Saturday, July 12, at 5:30 p.m. We greatly enjoyed a dinner we hosted for them last fall in the meetinghouse, and they are very eager to have us visit their new church. There will be a tour of the building and grounds as well as dinner. Saturday church and community suppers are a popular tradition on the Maine coast; we hope Friends will mark this particular Saturday for dinner with our Mormon neighbors. (Won't it be a good time to informally discuss the idea presented last Sunday for a special connecting place?)

Friends coming for the Silent Retreat may consider special meetings or doing work at the meetinghouse between 3:00 and 5:30.

Query #6

Personal Conduct

Do you live with simplicity, moderation, and integrity? Are you punctual in keeping promises, careful in speech, just and compassionate, in all your dealings with others? Do you take care that your spiritual growth is not sacrificed to busyness but instead integrates your life's activities? Are your recreations consistent with Quaker values; do they refresh your spirit and renew your body and mind?

Hospitality

Viki Diamond reported that the fair trade coffee program is off to a rough start. Twelve pounds of coffee were purchased and made available for sale to the Meeting community, but only seven pounds have been paid for and nearly all the coffee is gone. How the rest was used or distributed is unknown. Viki will keep the next twelve-pound order at home and bring it in as requested. Friends are encouraged to contact Viki to purchase the coffee, and payment will be due when the coffee is picked up. It is good coffee at a good price (\$6.00 per pound).

Capetown Container Project

Claire Darrow reported in more detail about the proposed effort to acquire a shipping container for use as a mediation center in the Capetown, South Africa, township. Her research indicates that a container costs about \$1757 U.S. dollars, which includes transport and setup. Several possible methods for raising the funds were explored. Further developments will be forthcoming.

Worthy Needs Committee

This committee, which oversees the recommendations for the Meeting's charitable giving, needs to be reconstituted for the new fiscal year. It has three members, one of whom is always a holdover from the prior year, to lend continuity. Nancy Booth agreed to continue for another year. Several people were suggested as new members and will be asked.

Ministry & Counsel

The Meeting has lost two of its oldest and dearest members this past month. Erica Welter died at 105 years of age, and shortly thereafter Chouteau Chapin, 93, passed away as well.

Four clearness committees are in progress. Three involve people seeking membership, and one involves a family issue.

The next silent retreat is scheduled for Saturday, July 12th, from 9 till 3.

The committee asks that members of the Meeting community hold in the Light our friends Bill Bowers and Bronson Clark (both in poor health), their caregivers and their wives.

Peace & Social Concerns

Ernie Foust reported that the meeting with the Baha'is was interesting. They take a more spiritual approach to seeking peace in the world, while Friends are known for activism and political involvement. Like Friends, they have little or no central authority or hierarchy.

Gretchen Hull is working with state veterans' groups on issues related to their benefits.

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New Book Starting

By Paulding Phelps

The Book Discussion Group's next book will be *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospels of Thomas* by Elaine Pagels. *Publishers Weekly* says about the book, "At the center of her book is the conflict between the gospels of John and Thomas. Reading these gospels closely, she shows that Thomas offered readers a message of spiritual enlightenment. Rather than promoting Jesus as the only light of the world, Thomas taught individuals that 'there is a light within each person, and it lights up the whole universe. If it does not shine, there is darkness'.... the early Christian writer Irenaeus promoted John as the true gospel, while he excluded Thomas and a host of other early gospels from a list of those texts he considered authoritative. His list became the basis for the New Testament canon when it was fixed in [the year] 357. Pagels suggests that we recover Thomas as a way of embracing the glorious diversity of religious tradition."

Discussion of this book will be started at the book group's meeting at 8:30 a.m., Sunday July 27.



Hospitality Committee

Fair Trade Coffee

During the winter Fair Trade Coffee was ordered by the Meeting at the very good price of \$6 per pound. Although all of it is gone, only about two-thirds of it was paid for. We have more order requests but cannot fill them, as the Hospitality Committee's budget will not cover the expense unless there is reimbursement for a substantial portion of the amount ordered.

If you want and will pay for coffee, please let Viki Diamond know. She will keep the Meeting's second order at home in order to better monitor distribution. If you wish to purchase one or more pounds, you may call her at 236-0283 or e-mail at Pauld625@aol.com. Money for purchased coffee can go to Viki directly or can be put in the Donations Box with an identifying note.

Meeting coffee will be kept in the meetinghouse freezer and labeled FOR MEETING ONLY. We would love to continue having delicious Fair Trade coffee for Friends and guests to enjoy during social times at the meetinghouse. Please help us to operate "in the black." The new shipment will be available shortly and will include French Roast, Java, and some decaf.

Thanks!

Viki Diamond

New England Yearly Meeting 2003

By Carmen Lavertu

I urge Midcoast Friends to consider attending the sessions of New England Yearly Meeting which will be held August 2 - 7 (Saturday to Thursday) at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts. Yearly Meeting is an opportunity to participate with a thousand or more Friends from every meeting in New England, to experience our traditional deliberative process ("worship for business"), programs and presentations, study groups and spiritual and worship experiences, and so on. The theme this year is "To Build God's Peaceable World." The keynote speaker is Mary Lord. Most of us read the FCNL booklet of an address she made last year about the threat of war. For many of us, it was THE inspirational reading of the summer.

The registration application is in the summer issue of *The New England Friend* bulletin, copies on the credenza at the meetinghouse. Although the five or six day experience is a great way to spend a summer week, it is possible to attend on a part-time basis. Scholarship aid is available from what is known as the "Equalization Fund." Application is made through your Meeting clerk.

Do not delay—the advance registration deadline is July 5; there is a 5% discount for forms postmarked July 5th or before. For more information, do ask members who have attended in the past and are planning to go this year: Holly Baldwin, Claire Darrow, Deb Haviland, Carmen Lavertu (so far).



Meeting for Worship and Picnic in Phippsburg

On the Sunday of Labor Day weekend, August 31, we will have Meeting for Worship at 10 a.m. with picnic following at Small Point over Morse Mountain, Connie St. John's summer home. Her daughter, Susan, will be our host.

We will meet at the meetinghouse at 9 o'clock and form car pools, arriving at Morse Mountain around 9:45. Car travel beyond the parking lot at Morse Mountain is strictly limited. Susan will be there with passes to organize "shuttles."

Directions for friends coming from locations south of Bath: Route 209-S toward Phippsburg and Popham Beach (about 12 miles); at point where the road turns 90 degrees for Popham Beach, continue straight ahead—this is route 216—exactly one mile to the Morse Mountain parking lot.

Food: potluck with beverages provided. We will discuss details after Meetings or call Carmen Lavertu at 354-9556.

played a prominent role in opening the American West. She attended Bryn Mawr College, where her interest in acting developed into an equally strong interest in directing. Before she had completed her college degree she had, both at Bryn Mawr and in summer theatre, rubbed shoulders with many young theatre hopefuls, such as Henry Fonda, Margaret Sullivan, Katherine Hepburn, John Stix, and Joshua Logan, and with Martha Gelhorn, who was to earn fame as a war correspondent and for her marriage to Hemingway.

Chouteau's unpublished memoirs, entitled *In Time for Tuesday*, a reference to her failure to complete an original play required in a playwriting course at Bryn Mawr, recall her first acting job after returning from her studies at London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Art from 1933 to 1935. Sweltering under the weight of Elizabethan costumes, she had a series of walk-on and understudy roles in forty-five minute versions of several plays of Shakespeare in the Globe Theatre at the Chicago World's Fair, for which ticket prices were twenty-five cents.

Although she had next set her eyes on a modern treatment of *Macbeth* that Orson Welles was preparing for Broadway, that fall she was introduced to George S. Kauffman by a long-time friend from St. Louis. With the knowledge only that the script called for a lady with a carrying voice, she appeared for her audition backstage at the Music Box Theatre, where Kauffman and Moss Hart were rehearsing. As she wrote in her memoirs, "Kauffman read me my cue. 'Lydia Dahling!' I bellowed with an exaggerated English accent. "Stop, stop," Kauffman said, 'I'm half deaf already! You'll do!' And that's how I got on Broadway."

Although the impact of the Depression was being felt on all large-cast Broadway productions except musicals, Chouteau was next cast by Joshua Logan for his production of an adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, which played on Broadway and on tour.

Already curious about socialism and an active advocate for improved conditions for the women in the Garment Worker's Union, a favor for a colleague would open for Chouteau a very different theatrical door, that of "agitation propaganda" or "Agit Prop" theatre. She took charge of a drama club for girls at the Henry Street Settlement House in one of Manhattan's densely populated immigrant neighborhoods on the Lower East Side. There she became so enthusiastically involved in the production of new scripts with current social messages that she turned down her agent's

dream offer, her first equity role in a Broadway production.

In the closing years of the 1930s Chouteau became almost exclusively involved with her work at the Henry Street Settlement and, during the summers, with the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, where, for room and board, she used plays and improvisation to strengthen techniques of social activism.

Having fled Nazi Germany, Erwin Piscator arrived in Manhattan with an adaptation of *War and Peace*, which proved to be a turning point in Chouteau's life. Well known in Europe as a leader of the avant garde and Agit Prop theatre, Piscator, along with Bertolt Brecht, was the chief proponent of a new Epic Theatre for which he had gained fame before the

beginning of World War II. Piscator's presence at the young Dramatic Workshop at the New School for Social Research attracted many talented young theatre professionals.

First, as his directing student, then as his assistant director for *War and Peace*, Chouteau had a nine-year relationship with Piscator which shaped her life and her work into an almost seamless whole where new plays, new forms of theatre, and new styles of acting and directing were the order of the day.

Among the Piscator-Chapin students at the Dramatic Workshop were talents such as Walter Matthau, Marlon Brando, and Elaine Stritch, who also recalls the Piscator years in her recent Broadway review, *Elaine Stritch at Liberty*.

The next turning point in Chouteau's life was the renewal of her acquaintance with Stuart Chapin, whom she married in 1951. When she left New York for Wiscasset, Maine, she thought she had left the theatre behind. It proved, however, to be only a transition. Like Chouteau, Stuart Chapin, also an advocate for the Highlander Folk School, had been impressed with the peace-building of the Quakers in post-war France and Germany. Although they were not Quakers at the time, they began Quaker studies at Pendle Hill Study Center near Philadelphia and later went to work in Mexico with the American Friends Service Committee. Through the turbulent decades of the 1960s and 1970s, Chouteau always had an appropriate play on some "back burner" to address social issues and was well known for her skill at cutting a long script down to an hour's version for amateur readers. In her black-stockinged role as Charlotte, the spider, she became a

continued on next page

**Chouteau Chapin
Memorial Service**
Saturday, July 19, 2:00 p.m.
At Chouteau's Barn, Montsweag
Memorial Meeting for Worship and Potluck
(bring a dish to share)
**This will be an outdoor event, be sure to
bring sun protection (hats, parasols, etc.)**
**There will be over 150 people attending, so
please carpool! For information and
directions, call Dodie Lake, 207-443-6677**

familiar sight in midcoast Maine as she traveled around telling the E.B.White story, *Charlotte's Web*, to gatherings of children, as part of a cultural-enrichment program known as Treasure Hunt. Once, while standing in the check-out line at Burgess' Market in Bath a third-grade boy came up to her and said, "Hi, Charlotte." No greater flattery could have pleased her so much.

In the fragile years following the death of her husband in 1976 and midst a battle with cancer and the deaths of her brothers and sisters, Chouateau routinely won praise for plays she directed at the Chocolate Church's Studio Theatre in Bath and acting roles at the Theatre Project in Brunswick. Having finally completed a rough draft of her memoirs, she decided she was more effective as a storyteller than as a writer. At the invitation of Al Miller at Brunswick's Theatre Project, she told her life stories to a standing-room-only audience as a celebration of her 90th birthday. The closing line of *In Time for Tuesday* says it all: "I don't have the capacity or the patience for learning what is the point of it all, I'm just greedy for more!"

Her last public protest was in opposition to the U.S. military policy in the Middle East on Mother's Day of 2002, when she, in a wheelchair, and other Mainers crossed the Sagadahoc Bridge from Woolwich into Bath. The first placard she carried bore the word PEACE in three languages: English, Hebrew, and Arabic; the second said "Let My Life Speak."

Chouateau Dyer Chapin's Dyer survivors include her nieces: Lisa Merrill of Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts; Clarissa Gordon of Willow Street, Pennsylvania; Clarissa Dillon of Haverford, Pennsylvania; Alice Graves of Brunswick, Maine; and Nancy Dyer of Long Island City, New York. Her nephews are: Peter Passano of Woolwich, Maine; Mac Passano of Chebeague, Maine; John Dyer Passano of China Grove, Texas; and John Flint of Highland Park, New Jersey.

Her Chapin survivors include her stepdaughter Lee Hartford, East Boothbay, Maine; stepgrandchildren Kitty Hartford and Cory Hartford, both of East Boothbay, Maine; Paula Chapin Hartford Cull, Boothbay, Maine; Stuart Burnett and Peter Burnett, both of Hamilton, Virginia; Jonathan Burnett, Purcellville, Virginia; Rebecca Burnett Heenie, Litchfield, Maine; and Charlotte Burnett of Peonion Springs, Virginia.

She was predeceased by stepdaughter Paula Chapin Burnett Cowger; stepgranddaughter Ruth Hartford; nephews John Chouateau Dyer, Cambridge, Massachusetts and H. Chouateau Dyer; and niece Deborah Flint Longmaid.

Additional survivors include many great nieces and nephews and great stepgrandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 19th, at The Barn on Montsweag Road in Wiscasset, Maine. Memorial contributions may be made to The American Friends Service Committee in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Monthly Meeting Notescont'd fr. p. 2

Meetinghouse and Maintenance

The sign for the driveway entrance is still in progress. The committee will check on the status of the library bookshelf, which was ordered some months ago.

Other Business

The Mormons have asked us to join them for a tour of their new church on Saturday, July 12th at 5:30 p.m. They came out in good numbers in response to our invitation last winter, so it is hoped we will be able to show similar strength of numbers and enthusiasm.

New England Yearly Meeting will be in Easton, Massachusetts, August 2-7. Representatives from the Meeting are being sought. There are some funds available to Meeting members for travel-related expenses. Deb Haviland, Claire Darrow, and Carmen Lavertu are planning to attend.

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Next Monthly Meeting: Friday, July 18th, at 7 p.m. at the meetinghouse. A potluck supper will begin at 6 p.m. All welcome.

South Africa: The Next Step

By Claire Darrow

Recently at Business Meeting we discussed the article in the Newsletter about my trip to South Africa and experience in Cape Town in the township, and their need for a container. (See the June newsletter.) There was a lot of enthusiasm, and the Friends there felt as committed as I to the idea of raising money to buy a container for the mediators. I have heard from my friend Georgina that the cost of the container will be about 12,500 in rands, or \$1757 in dollars. That doesn't seem a lot for a structure that will help them tremendously in serving their community.

So here we go, Friends. I will be sending out a fundraising letter to all my friends and Friends and whomever I can think might be interested. In the meantime we will be making plans for a concert Viki Diamond has kindly offered to give. Natalie has said she'd donate a picture for something like a silent auction, and if people have other ideas I would like to know of them. My email is cdarrow@gwi.net, phone 371-2447. Let's see where this effort will take us, working together!

Erica Mather Welter—105 Years

By Carmen Lavertu

Erica Mather Welter of Damariscotta did not want to celebrate her 105th birthday. She told me she had led a very good life for 100 years, but after that she deplored the end of her independence. Two years ago, Erica's strength completely failed her, and she became bedridden. However, her mind remained active, and she continued to write her steady stream of letters, dictated to a caretaker or friends. In a letter published in the *Maine Times*, November 22, 2001, she wrote, "At my age, life is not worth living. I am terminally ill. I am ready to die. But the Maine state law forbids any doctor to help me die."

As forceful as she was to convey to us the need for a "right to die" law for those able and willing to enter into the responsibilities of such a decision, she also continued her life-long attention to public affairs. She wrote to us at the Midcoast Friends Meeting regularly on her views on peace and justice issues. She wrote to the president, senators, congressman, and the governor, always urging stronger support of education and health needs. Writing to the president on foreign policy, she instructed him to begin the complete eradication of nuclear bombs and to do more to help poor people around the world. She claimed the authority of having lived every day of the twentieth century. At the end of that century, she explained, "Born in May 1898, my 102 years' observations of this world have brought me to these conclusions."

Erica lived a productive and thoughtful life. She served in both world wars as a physical therapist. She was a teacher who continued her attention to children long after her years in the classroom were over, and she held friendships with children and young adults up to her death. She was dedicated and steadfast in her friendships as well as her social commitments. At the age of 91, she felt she had achieved a 40-year dream when the Thompson Ice House Preservation Corporation was formed to begin the building of the Ice Museum in South Bristol.

Erica held the philosophy of "self-reliance" and the morality of kindness. She frequently quoted Emerson and left us her principal rule of life: "Enjoy being alive and help others to enjoy their life." Erica valued thinking and urged everyone she knew to form their own opinions from their own observations and reflections. Erica was a naturalized American, having been born in England. Most important to her as an American was the constitutional affirmation of individual freedom, free thought and its expression. This freedom had enabled her to live a productive and interesting life and, she concluded, ought to give her the right to choose how to die.

Erica deplored the arguments made against a "right to die" privilege such as Oregon's law. Cautions about

the dangers of health-care workers or relatives affecting decisions about death were unimaginable to one so strongly independent and free-thinking. She had lived life fully and she could not abide the last years of helplessness and dwindling resources. (A frugal wage-earner for more than forty years, she had saved plenty for a "normal" retirement period.) At the time she became bedridden, she wrote, "Up until then I was walking and living a good life. Now I am utterly helpless. I have good home care but at times I am in severe pain. No pain pill is strong enough to relieve me for more than one hour. I must suffer the second hour before it is time for another pill. Under these circumstances life is not worth living."

For the past few years, I have been with a number of people at their approaching death, and I found Erica's open and frank acknowledgement of the dying experience to be unique. She fully disclosed the process, her mental and emotional states, as well as the physical discomforts. She reflected deeply about her life and believed she could exercise her freedom at the end as she had her life long. The freedom to choose to die, she insisted, should not be abrogated by society.

Many accept failing health, pain, and dependence as well as poverty, as life's natural course. These people, for religious or other thoughtful reasons, may be in the majority, as they seem to have been in the last referendum in Maine, but they should not hinder those who believe it is their right to end their life when they are terminally ill and have exhausted their financial resources. In Erica's memory, I urge the renewal of the effort to secure this freedom for those who choose it.



Erica celebrating her 95th birthday at a Meeting party

The Advices

Let us bring the whole of our daily lives under the ordering of the Spirit. Let our faith free us from crippling fears so that we may live adventurously. In relations with others, let us exercise imagination, understanding, and sympathy. Let us live and work in the plainness and simplicity of true followers of Christ.

In viewing the evils arising from the use of tobacco and intoxicating drinks and from the abuse of drugs, Friends are advised to consider whether they should refrain from using them, from offering them to others, and from having any share in their manufacture or sale. We should not let the claims of good fellowship or the fear of seeming peculiar influence our decision.

Let us maintain integrity in work and deed. Holding to the simplicity of truth, let us keep free of oaths. Remember how widespread and diverse are the temptations to grow rich at the expense of others, and how apparently harmless indulgence often leads by degrees to wrong-doing. Let us avoid and discourage every kind of betting and gambling and commercial speculations of a gambling character.

Friends have always held that the sacred nature of a sexual relationship is affirmed only in marriage. In recent times, however, some Friends have found such affirmation in other contexts. Let us be certain, in any case, that we hold up to the Light any sexual relationship we may be considering and reject any relationship that may violate the integrity or spiritual welfare of either of the partners or of others. No relationship can be a right one which makes use of another person through selfish desire.



Silence engenders the space called—so evocatively and beautifully—by David Steindl-Rast, the Benedictine monk, “God bathing.” In God bathing, the body is still, speech is silent, the mind is at peace. One bathes in the presence of, the very Being of God.

— Kathleen Dowling Singh in *The Grace in Dying*
contributed by Diane Kirkman

*Are you led to attend?
Ready for some peace and quiet?*

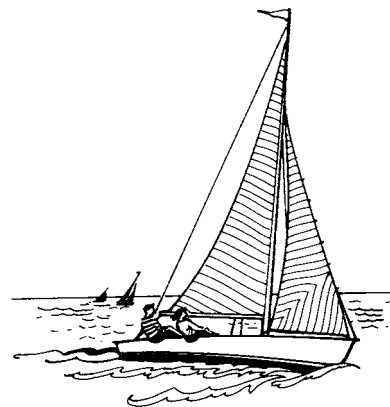
SUMMER SILENT RETREAT

at the meetinghouse

Saturday, July 12

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. (bring a lunch)

Come for as much of the day as you can
Questions? Call Jean Crawford, 236-4176,
or Deb Haviland, 354-8714



Outdoor Upkeep Project

Your participation is needed to help maintain the plantings around the meetinghouse. The scheduled workdays get the ball rolling but aren't enough to keep the beds properly weeded. Why not plan to come early or stay late sometimes after Meeting for Worship, and lend a hand doing a little weeding. It's good therapy for mind and body! If everyone can help a little, it won't take a lot of effort from anyone to keep things looking great.

America needs to develop a “holistic world view of interdependence, where diplomacy is used to create a world where we can make war archaic.”
—Dennis Kucinich, presidential candidate

Visit

www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org

In Memoriam

Chouteau Dyer Chapin, Actress, Director, Social Activist

By William Thrasher

Chouteau Dyer Chapin, whose most cherished role was Charlotte, the Spider, from E.B. White's *Charlotte's Web*, died on June 15th at Bath, Maine. She was 93. A resident of Wiscasset, Maine, since 1951, Chouteau was celebrated throughout her life both for her memorable, richly textured work as a theatre director and her relentless activism for peace and social justice—dual passions that emerged shortly after her acting debut on Broadway in 1936 in George S. Kauffman's *Merrily We Roll Along*.

She once said, "If you scratch me, I bleed *Twelfth Night*," the Shakespeare play to which she returned many times throughout her life. After seeing her production at New York's Dramatic Workshop in the early 1940s, the great English actor-director Charles Laughton told her it was the best Shakespeare he had seen in America. Such praise from a theatre hero could sustain a young director for many years. The play, however, would possess her till the end. Undoubtedly, the play's chiaroscuro landscape peopled by characters frequently confused between truth and illusion appealed to her sense of the way of the world. Yet, after all is said and done, the enduring affection she had for the play is mysterious.

Born in St. Louis, Missouri, she was given the ancestral name Chouteau after the 1764 founder of St. Louis, Auguste Chouteau, whose family

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Midcoast Meeting of Friends
PO Box 714, 77 Belvedere Road
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