



# Brooklyn Monthly Meeting Newsletter

*A publication of the Brooklyn Monthly Meeting  
of the Religious Society of Friends*

D E C E M B E R 2 0 0 7

## Brooklyn Friends School Celebrates a Centennial and Looks Back on 140 Years of Intellect, Energy and Heart

*By Joan Martin*

In 1907 the world was at peace. The Hoover vacuum cleaner was invented, Maria Montessori opened her first Children's House in Italy, and the yellow cab made its first appearance in New York. This also was the year when Friends School at Brooklyn, founded in 1867 by the Religious Society of Friends, established a high school division to provide a comprehensive K-12 program and to prepare students for college.

In 2007 the Brooklyn Friends School community will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Upper School and, at the same time, look back on 140 years of the intellect, energy, and heart that have characterized the school.

"Our school has a remarkable history and an exceptionally strong commitment to the borough of Brooklyn," said Head of School Michael Nill on the school's opening day, September 6th. "Throughout the year, we will be looking back on the amazing people and noteworthy programs from the past that have informed, nourished, and contributed to our community of teaching and learning today."

A visit to the school archives illustrates notable similarities between the Brooklyn Friends School of 1907 and 2007. A century ago, the school's mission was "to develop the whole child, each according to his individual capabilities." Friends was coeducational in all divisions, unusual at the time when so many schools (even public schools) were single-sex. This feature

sprang from the Quakers' long-standing commitment to gender equality. Then, as now, there were small classes, personal attention, excellent faculty, and a first-rate education not only in academics but also in the visual and performing arts, physical education and athletics, and service.

In 1907, as in 2007, BFS held Meeting for Worship and students were encouraged to incorporate the Quaker principles of simplicity, peace, integrity, compassion, and equality into their daily lives. Another similarity between 1907 and 2007 is

**"Students are encouraged to incorporate the Quaker principles of simplicity, peace, integrity, compassion, and equality into their daily lives."**

that the school provides scholarships or financial assistance to students; while commonplace today, this was rare in independent education 100 years ago.

Also unique for the time were elective academic studies and a commitment "to assist, encourage and allow students to develop responsibility and self-government." Discipline was (and still is) "firm, but never harsh, and is founded upon a faith in the child's ability to know and prefer the right." In terms of educational philosophy, the Friends School of 1907 provided "a flexible course of study so that students are not held back in subjects in which they excel nor are they pushed harshly in subjects in which they are weaker."

As for the differences, Brooklyn Friends School is over four times the size it was in 1907-1908. The high school had

21 students in 1907-1908; today there are 160. The location has changed as well, but only by a few city blocks. The school began in the Meeting House on Schermerhorn Street, gradually expanded to 112-116 Schermerhorn Street, moved to 375 Pearl Street in 1973, and added a new space at 55 Willoughby Street for the high school in 2005. The Quaker population in Brooklyn was larger in 1907 than it is today, and proportionally, there were more Quaker students at that time than there are in 2007. Over the past hundred years, however, the racial, religious and socio-economic diversity of the student body and the faculty has grown to such an extent that Brooklyn Friends is known as one of the most diverse independent schools in the country.

## The Mercury Minute

*By Shannon Young*

At my suggestion, the Peace and Social Action Committee is working to pass before Brooklyn Monthly Meeting a minute advocating that the manufacturing of mercury-containing pharmaceuticals be stopped, that mercury-free stocks of vaccines be made immediately available for pregnant women and children, and that all individuals be given the right to informed consent before receiving mercury-containing pharmaceuticals.

Mercury, a known poison, is the second most toxic element on earth, after plutonium. Thimerosal (synonyms include: thiomersal, Merthiolate, thimerasol) is a severely toxic organic mercury compound (approximately 50% mercury by weight) that has been added to some vaccines and pharmaceutical products since the 1930s.

The Subcommittee on Human Rights and Wellness, Government Reform Committee, United States House of Representatives, following a three-year investigation into thimerosal, issued a report, "Mercury in Medicine," on May 21, 2003, that concluded: "Mercury is hazardous to humans. Its use in medicinal products is undesirable, unnecessary and should be minimized or eliminated. Manufacturers of vaccines and thimerosal have never conducted adequate testing on the safety of thimerosal. The FDA has never required manufacturers to conduct adequate safety testing on thimerosal. Studies and papers documenting the hyperallergenicity and toxicity of thimerosal (ethyl mercury) have existed for decades."

There are other safe, effective, and economical preservatives that eliminate the need for thimerosal (mercury) preservatives. In fact, a number of European countries have banned the use of thimerosal-containing vaccines.

**"Basically, they will continue using this toxic substance unless they are forced not to."**

However, many pharmaceutical companies prefer using thimerosal because it is cheap and allows them to use older factories and older manufacturing processes. Basically, they will continue using this toxic substance unless they are forced not to.

This issue was catapulted to the center of my attention when my son, Giancarlo, at 18 months of age, regressed. He lost the speech he had hitherto developed, lapsed into silence, and fell way behind in his development. Devastated, I investigated what had happened and discovered that he had been injected with a cumulative total of 275 mcg of mercury through his routine pediatric vaccines. According to the 1997 Environmental Protection Agency Mercury Report to Congress, it is unsafe to receive over 0.22 mcg of mercury per pound of body weight per day. My baby on two occasions was injected with 12.5 mcg of mercury (6 times the safe limit), on two other occasions

was injected with 50 mcg of mercury (19 times the safe limit), and on two other occasions was injected with 75 mcg of mercury (23 times the safe limit). Many individuals are genetically incapable of clearing mercury from their systems, especially when it enters the body in such large quantities. I have since learned that many thousands of parents have experienced this same tragedy.

In connection with the issue of mercury in vaccines, on June 7-8 I attended a rally at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. The rally was organized by Moms Against Mercury and The United Methodist Women, a national organization of one million women that has taken on the cause of removing mercury from all pharmaceutical products. The rally took place on the anniversary of a CDC meeting with researchers and vaccine manufacturers that took place in 2000 at Simpsonwood, near Atlanta. At that meeting, scientist Thomas Verstraeten reported on his study indicating that the mercury in pediatric vaccines was causing neurodevelopmental disorders in children. As the number of vaccines children routinely received in the 1990s was much larger than previously, so the dose of mercury had also increased. In 1983 children received 10 vaccines before the age of six. Today children receive 36 vaccines before the age of six (see <http://www.generationrescue.org>). Those present at this meeting decided to conceal Verstraeten's finding to avoid affecting public confidence in the vaccine program. Manufacturers started producing pediatric vaccines that were mercury-free, but they did not recall all of the mercury-containing vaccines. This latter decision is why Giancarlo, born in August of 2001, is injured. All of his vaccines were manufactured before manufacturers started removing mercury from vaccines. It was intended that this Simpsonwood meeting would be kept quiet, but a transcript of the meeting was released through a Freedom of Information Act request to the parents of vaccine-injured children.

There is the common belief promulgated today that mercury has been removed from

vaccines and they are now safe. This is inaccurate. The shots for tetanus, diphtheria, meningitis, and the influenza (flu) routinely contain 25 mcg mercury each (see <http://www.vaccinesafety.edu/thi-table.htm>). The flu shot is recommended for pregnant women, and infants receive the flu, tetanus, and diphtheria shots. A fetus or infant exposed to this level of mercury is at great risk of neurological damage. In July President Bush vetoed a bill that would have removed mercury from the flu shot.

I have been discouraged by the muted response of the public to this issue, and that the powerful organizations responsible are so adept at obfuscating this danger. Seeing the organized response of the United Methodist Women inspired me. The Methodist minister who helped organize the rally, also the mother of a vaccine injured child, Lisa Sykes, spoke of her frustrating attempts to get the governmental organizations appropriately mobilized to address this crisis. She was told that her enemies are very powerful, so she decided to take the matter before her church, and was overjoyed that the United Methodist Women courageously joined her in her fight (For more information about the United Methodist Women's response, please go to: <http://new.gbmg-umc.org/umw/> and search for vaccines, mercury).

I would like the Quakers, with their long tradition of advocating for the most vulnerable, to likewise join in this struggle. The Peace and Social Action Committee responded promptly and favorably to my plan to act. Now we are discussing the issue as a Meeting. If the BMM approves the Minute, we will forward it to the NYQM, and then to the NYYM. I would welcome any questions any of you may have so that as a community we can address this issue with the fullest comprehension. There is surely nothing more important than protecting our children from neurological damage.

Current EPA information on mercury can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/mercury/index.htm>. Additional information from the CDC's toxicology database can be found at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp46.html>.



**Interview with  
Samantha Segal-Isaacson, age 10**

*Interviewed by Thomas Glynn*

*Samantha is in the fifth grade at P.S.154*

**I know this is a boring question, but how do you like school?**

OK. We get to use the computer. I like that.

**What do you do on the computer?**

I like to go to a website where I can do touch typing.

**Anything else you like doing?**

I like to draw. One day I was bored and things started to pop into my head. I saw the sea, seaweed, all kinds of animals in the sea. I saw a cow surf boarding.

**Anything else?**

I like writing because if I have an idea in my head I can write it down. And I like to read because it builds up my stamina for reading.

**Any favorite books?**

I like *What Do Fish Have To Do With Anything?* Kids have problems in the stories in this book and they don't get solved. So you have to figure it out for yourself.

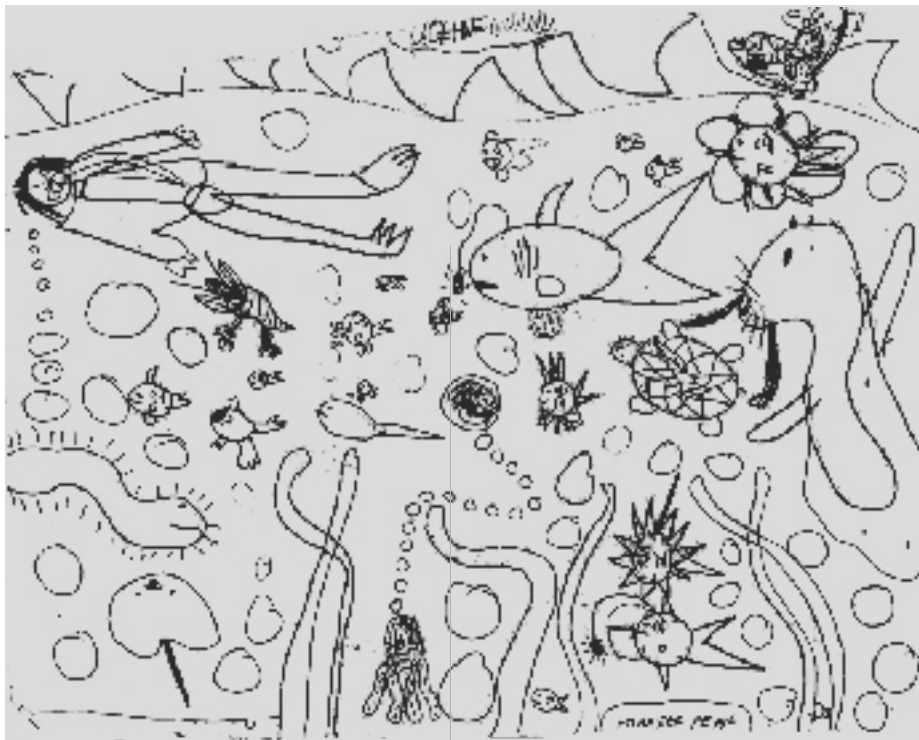
**Other stuff? Do you like math?**

I like the multiplication tables, especially the fives.

**Friends?**

I have two close friends: Bridget Duggan. She's 11 and short for her age. We do sleep-overs. Also Shea Brandt. We read books together.

*Ocean World drawn by Samantha Segal-Isaacson*



**Minute and Queries from the Youth Task Group of NYYM**

Friends of all ages have much to offer each other in order that we, individually and collectively, might experience the Divine and become fully who we are meant to be.

Without building spiritual community across the generations, we lose vitality and freshness of experience. We lose aspects of the spirit and a part of ourselves. We lose lessons of the past and links to the future. We need to take a searching look at our relationships across ages in every meeting and discern where more depth and breadth can come.

How do we celebrate the continuum of lives that make up our meetings?

How can we make the time and space to listen, talk and be present with each other?

How do we communicate to Friends of every age that their gifts are appreciated and needed?

How can we make our meetings, business and committee structures welcoming to families and youth?

How are we addressing the presence or absence of children in our meetings for worship?

In what way is our First Day School robust and spirit centered? Can we do more?

How do we include youth in the planning and awareness of programs?

How do we make Friends, including youth, aware of clearness committees and Quaker supports available to them?

What do our young Friends leave with? How do we teach our Faith and Practice?

**ECO-TIP**

**Paper:** While most U.S. papers are not made from tropical woods, reducing overall demand for virgin paper can have a global impact. You can support forest-friendly paper by buying paper made from sustainably harvested timber, a high percentage of post-consumer recycled content, or wood-free fibers such as kenaf.

## Summary of Minutes of Meeting for Business, First Day, Second of Twelfth Month, 2007

The State of Society Report Committee will present the first draft of its report at Business Meeting First Month 2008.

The Peace and Social Action Committee submitted to the Meeting for reconsideration and approval a minute that was carried over from Ninth Month 2007. The minute calls for specific measures to be taken by governmental authorities with regard to mercury contained in drugs, pharmaceuticals and vaccines. After a lengthy discussion, the Meeting was led to approve the minute in general, provided that Peace and Social Action added some introductory sentences that would link the content more clearly to our Quaker testimonies of equality and justice and to our concern for the environment. The revised minute will be brought for consideration to a future Meeting for Business.

Michael Black, clerk, read the annual report of the History Committee. The History Committee will also make available a calendar for planned events, as well as a booklet with photographs, relating to the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Brooklyn Meetinghouse. Friends provided more information and suggestions, and some amendments to the minute were made.

As requested last month, the Luncheon and Supper Committee informed the Meeting of the final cost for the catered dinner to be held for faculty and staff of Mary McDowell and Brooklyn Friends schools on Dec 06, 2007. The Committee has ordered 100 dinners from Second Street Café at a price of \$12 per meal. Friends were encouraged to attend and bring fruit and desserts. The total cost will be \$1,200 which the committee requests be added to their budget. Friends approved, but suggest that participating members and attenders of BMM be encouraged to make a voluntary donation to cover at least the cost of their own meal, if possible.

The Peace and Social Action Committee brought a proposal asking that BMM add its name to a list of religious institutions who have decided to co-sponsor an upcoming event held by Planned Parent-

hood of NYC on Jan 16, 2008, which commemorates the Supreme Court's decision in Roe vs. Wade. Joan Malin presents the historic decision as an affirmation of justice for women and children and women's right to choose. Friends approved the proposal. Joan Malin will make sure that BMM is listed and she will post information about the event in the Meetinghouse.

Ted Ehrhardt, clerk, read the annual report of the Nominating Committee, and distributed the latest roster for service on committees. Several corrections are made to both. The corrected roster is to be displayed on the bulletin board at the library. Friends accepted the report. The Committee on Ministry and Counsel was directed to present two nominees for service on the Nominating Committee at our next Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business.

For service on Committees the following people were proposed and accepted: History Committee: Michael Black, Naceo Giles; Ministry and Counsel: Danielle Dybiec; Social Hour: Mary Troutman, Karen Hansgen, Kate Rapoport, Susan Palm; Flower: Sheila Leeds; Communications: Miles Manning; Book Table: Paul Flint; NYQM Joint Nominating: Boyce Bengé.

A letter of Jennifer Barr requesting membership in Brooklyn Monthly Meeting was read for the first time. The letter is scheduled for consideration at the next Meeting for Business.

Molly Rusnak gave an oral report of a meeting that took place on Nov 25 between three trustees from the board of the Mary McDowell Center for Learning

who are also members of our Meeting (Nell Clark, Benjamin Warneke, Sue Wolfe) and members of BMM First Day School (Ted Ehrhardt), Child Care (Susan Laughter), and Property (Molly Rusnak). The goal was to foster an understanding with regard to the upcoming lease, since our basement rooms are no longer sufficient for the growing needs of MMD and BMM. After a tour of the Meetinghouse and the sharing of three previous minutes by this Meeting on this topic, the MMD participants expressed their appreciation and indicated that they now understood the current problems much better (including the question of fire safety). The meeting turned out very positive and Mary McDowell is now actively searching for an alternative space.

The Welcoming Committee requested and Friends approved an additional \$600 for expenses related to the Jan 12 Contra Dance planned in connection with the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the BMM Meetinghouse.

A letter and minute from NYYM Fall Sessions 2007, urging Friends everywhere to designate special times for worship with a concern to pray and act for peace, to work with other faith communities and to foster relationships with people of all nations, including those opposed to our own government, was read. Friends directed the Peace and Social Action Committee to find ways to further these concerns and to invite other committees to participate in these efforts.

The Clerk read a letter from NYYM's Fall Session 2007 regarding a Quaker Worship Group at Redemption Center in Bedford Stuyvesand. Redemption Center provides safe and drug-free transitional

***History Celebration planners: DK Holland, Boyce Bengé and Michael Black***



housing and other help to formerly incarcerated individuals. It was founded by Mark Graham who spent 22 years in various prisons and during that time was involved in and helped establish a number of Quaker worship groups and AVP workshops. While incarcerated, he studied and received a Masters Degree from NY Theological Seminary. He spoke at this year's NYYM's fall session. Friends showed a keen interest in learning more and in helping to spiritually ground the new Worship Group. The Meeting suggested that the letter be given to Ministry and Counsel for further seasoning and accepted Héloïse Rathbone's offer to get more information from Helen Toppins at NYYM, which will then be emailed by Kate Rapoport to the larger Meeting.

The Clerk gave a brief oral report on a weekend conference held in the tradition of Powell House in our meetinghouse from Sun, Nov 23 to 25 by the Circle of Young Friends (CYF) of New York Yearly Meeting (NYYM). A group of 14 very dedicated young adults stayed for two nights at the Meetinghouse, together with Héloïse Rathbone and Inga Schwarzkopf. The CYF has asked the Clerk to convey to the Meeting their heartfelt thanks, which they also expressed with a nice card and a donation.

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## Letter From a Sometime Attender

*By Ken Shaw*

I am not a member of the Brooklyn Meeting, but I feel affection for the congregation and their mission. I am a painter, and my studio activities are meditative. I work in my studio seven days a week, and free time is spent taking care of my wife who is very ill. There is no time for me to attend meetings. I have come to realize that George Fox's declaration that 1) God might be in us, not in books or buildings, "2) that therefore every person is sacred, and 3) we must respect everyone, including ourselves." I am descended from Judge Thomas Fell's cousin, Christopher Fell, of Langlands Hall near Keswick, where George Fox stayed and preached on his way to and from Scotland. Because a more immedi-

ate ancestor fought with Washington against George III, my ancestor was tossed out of his Friends Meeting in Buckingham, Pennsylvania, and he became a Methodist, but important to me was that his Fell-Kendall family passed down the Friends commandments that we respect one another, care for one another and respect ourselves because all are sacred. This was of enormous value to me when I grew up in the legally racially segregated South. A much loved companion, Philip Rothman, died in 2000, and among other books from his large collection, I have his copy of the King James Version, and I began to read it, fell in love with the stories and

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images of the early books, and I was also surprised to find that the committee that put James' English Bible together apparently copied the literary cadences of Gertrude Stein. A delight. The early book stories fell into abstract paintings that were underway in my studio, beginning with the amazing command, "LET THERE BE LIGHT!," and going up to David and Solomon, including moments such as Hagar and Ishmael finding a spring in the desert, the rape of Tamar by her brother, Mrs. Lot who looked back at her house, and the burning bush. Some of these works were recently exhibited at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art in New Orleans. The works were so well received by the public that the exhibition was held over beyond its scheduled closing. Some of the exhibition will be traveling to England later this year. Religiously I am a Deist, a lover of Spinoza (do not define God), a scientist as well as an artist, who is in love with a rational physical world filled with (mostly) irrational people. I like that the Friends emphasize people relationships. I also try to follow Hindu thought about losing the ego.

## Admissions Information On Three Local Quaker Schools

*By Karine Blemur-Chapman*

Friends Seminary and Brooklyn Friends School warmly welcome and strongly encourage children from all backgrounds to apply for admission. Our stated admissions policies give priority consideration to children of members of The Religious Society of Friends as well as to children of sibling and alumni families. In recognition of these families, an Early Notification Plan is in place specifically for Kindergarten at Friends Seminary and Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grade 1 at Brooklyn Friends School. All families interested in considering these schools for any grade (K-12 at Friends Seminary and Preschool -12 at Brooklyn Friends School) are urged to contact the respective Admissions Office as early as possible. Tuition aid is available, K-12.

### **Friends Seminary:**

Harriet Burnett, Dir. of Admissions  
222 East 16th Street  
New York, NY 10003  
212 979-5030 x 141  
hburnett@friendsseminary.org

### **Brooklyn Friends School**

Jennifer Knies, Dir. of Admissions  
Sara Soll, Dir. of Preschool Admissions  
375 Pearl Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
718 852-1029 x229 or x240  
jknies@brooklynfriends.org  
ssoll@brooklynfriends.org

Mary McDowell Center for Learning, a Friends elementary school for children with learning disabilities, similarly welcomes and strongly encourages children from all backgrounds to apply for admission. Due to the specific issues of our applicants and the rolling nature of our application procedure, we do not have an early decision policy. Our school is committed to giving priority consideration to members of The Religious Society of Friends.

### **Mary McDowell Center for Learning**

Deborah Edel, Director of Admissions  
20 Bergen Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
718 625-3939  
deborae@mmcl.net

## Opportunities for Action

### Prison Volunteers Needed

Believe it or not, attending one of our Quaker Worship Groups at Sing Sing or Otisville is a very fulfilling spiritual experience. You'll meet and get to know some unusual men (white, black and all shades of brown) who have overcome their deprived backgrounds to transform themselves into highly motivated, spiritual-seeking leaders and mentors for the younger prisoners. All this while living in a very difficult environment. Many of them are truly inspirational. And fun. But how do our worship groups benefit the inmate attenders? Prisons, for the men who live there, are a dangerous, violent and noisy environment. To survive, they must maintain a tough guy persona and learn to trust no one. Our worship groups provide a sanctuary, where in a relatively quiet, safe environment, they can let their hair down, talk about their feelings and spiritual needs and receive help and support from each other. The bond they form in these groups then carries over into their everyday lives, making prison a more bearable place. At the end of each worship session, we all stand in a circle holding hands and repeat our "mantra"—Fellowship and Community. Which pretty much sums up the reason for our being there. If you are interested in experiencing one of the worship groups before making any kind of commitment, we can arrange for permission from the authorities for a one time visit. Just contact Bill Bortree, Clerk of the Purchase Quarter Prison Ministry, Committee You just might love it!

### GI-Rights Hotline Needs Volunteers

We are a network of nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations who provide information to servicemembers about military discharges, grievance and complaint procedures, and other civil rights, including conscientious objection. <http://www.girights.org>. Contact Matt Daloisio at the War Resisters League for more info on getting trained at 212.228.0450 or [daloisio@riseup.net](mailto:daloisio@riseup.net)

## BROOKLYN MONTHLY MEETING CONTACT SHEET

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Treasurer: Helen Mullin [treasurer@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:treasurer@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Ass't. Treasurer: John Loza, [asst-treasurer@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:asst-treasurer@brooklynmeeting.org)  
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Co-Recorder: Iris Stoler, [asst-recorder@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:asst-recorder@brooklynmeeting.org)  
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or Randy Frankel, Peace & Social Action: Loren Weybright, [peace-social-action-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:peace-social-action-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Welcoming: Glen Bibler, [welcoming-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:welcoming-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Social Hour Co-Clerk: Siobhan Glynn, [social-hour-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:social-hour-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
or Mary Rusnak  
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Luncheon-Supper: Teresa Calabrese, [luncheon-supper-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:luncheon-supper-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Nominating: Ted Ehrhardt, [nominating-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:nominating-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Ministry & Counsel: Patricia Glynn, [ministry-counsel-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:ministry-counsel-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
First Day School: Julie Glynn & Miriam Eusebio, [first-day-school-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:first-day-school-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Child Care: Susan Laughter, [child-care-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:child-care-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Book Table: Mara Komoska, [book-table-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:book-table-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Library: Bill Parrott, [library-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:library-clerk@brooklynmeeting.org)  
LBGTQ Concerns, Mary Pagurelias [lgbtq-concerns@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:lgbtq-concerns@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Friends Schools, Mary Pagurelias [schools@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:schools@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Meeting Web Calendar: Seta Toroyan [bmmcalendar@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:bmmcalendar@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Environment Working Group: Rob Creuderoff [environment@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:environment@brooklynmeeting.org)  
Database: Lucy Sikes [database@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:database@brooklynmeeting.org)

*Note:* Finance no longer exists. See Collections and Finance above.

*Please contact [newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org) if there are any changes or corrections to the above.*

**Note from the Editor.** This list is a list of Official Meeting Contacts. I would like to supplement this with a periodic list of Friends (members and attenders) who are active in particular Quaker and non-Quaker concerns that other Friends might have questions about, interest in, desire to get involved in, etc. This would be a list of informal contacts of people who could serve as contact points for others. For instance, I know that there are Friends who are active in campaigns against torture, issues regarding housing and the homeless, conscientious objection, youth concerns, etc. Please send those lists also to [newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org](mailto:newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org) and I will include them periodically. More people doing more things and making more people aware of them = more community.

*Brooklyn Monthly Meeting wishes Friends and attenders a blessed Christmas and joyous holiday season.*



“For four years I lived under a constant sense of seeking and receiving inner guidance. It is difficult to put into accurate words what one means by that, for words mean different things to different people and even different things to the same people at different times. One of the “Queries” that Friends meetings put to themselves regularly once a year, not for the sake of the answer but for the searching effect of the Query itself is, “Are your meetings for worship and business held in expectant waiting for divine guidance?” We do not define exactly what we mean by divine guidance. It does not imply what Rufus Jones called “visits from sociable angels”; it is not a simple directive to be taken down with a pencil on a piece of paper. I think for my own part I might say that it means putting myself deliberately in the stream of light from the Beyond that is within, by meditation in the meeting for worship and alone, in one’s room, by opening the deep self to the light though an expressed willingness to obey, by carrying out what appears to be the best insight one has in a given situation.”

**NYYM Letter on Peace**

This is a letter to Friends everywhere from New York Yearly Meeting Fall Sessions, held November 9-11, 2007

O God, with You all things are possible.  
 Make us instruments of Your peace.  
 Help us to remember that we are  
 Your Word in the world.  
 To Friends Everywhere.

Greetings to Friends around the world, from Friends meeting for Fall Sessions of New York Yearly Meeting, November 9-11, 2007, at Purchase Meetinghouse, Purchase, New York.

We gathered under God’s presence seeking way forward as we live in a world that has become more complex through acts of aggression and violence. As people of faith we refuse to be paralyzed and silenced by the politics of our government and others. As people of faith we must pray, we must love, and we must hold hope high--bringing healing to the forefront.

During our Fall Sessions those present approved a minute that we ask you to consider as an act of faith, humbly seeking with courage to be God’s instruments of peace:

*We call on Friends within New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends and everywhere--whoever is able--to designate times for worship with an urgent concern to act for peace. In an environment of increasing threats against Iran and the possibility of national emergency being declared over perceived or contrived international crises, we call on Friends to speak out now. We will not be silenced as we work for peace. May we seek divine guidance that leads toward action, working whenever possible with other communities of faith. Let us endeavor to foster relationships with the people of all nations, including those opposed by our own governments. May we rise above our doubts and fears through God’s love and care.*

Love, peace and blessings,  
 Ernestine Buscemi, clerk,  
 New York Yearly Meeting

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**Erratum** The newsletter published a photograph to accompany Barbara Von Salis’ article, and identified this as Barbara. It wasn’t. The newsletter regrets the error. If anyone knows who the mystery woman is, please tell us!

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BROOKLYN MEETING EVENTS

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**Seeking the Spirit: An Exploration in  
Quaker Faith and Practice**

Our faith and practice “emphasizes that seeking the Spirit remains the firm basis for our life together and for the testimonies and social concerns by which we try to make manifest God’s purpose in the world.” NYYM *Faith and Practice*, 1998

Using our New York Yearly Meeting’s *Faith and Practice* as the means to investigate and explore Quaker spiritual practices, we will develop and strengthen our methods for seeking the Spirit and deepen our experience of that Spirit. All are invited to attend. For more information contact Joe Garren.

Dates: The **third Sunday** of every month at 1:00 PM

*The Meeting Newsletter is printed on recycled paper.*

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**150th  
Anniversary  
Dance**  
**Saturday, January 12, 2008**  
**8 - 11 PM**

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**Regular Events**

**Community Dinners:** every last Sunday of the month. Prep at 12:45 PM, Meal at 3:00 PM, Clean up at 4:30 PM usually. **Volunteers needed.** Come for all or part.

**Bible Discussion,** Every 2nd First Day, 9:45 –10:45 AM

**Midweek Meeting for Worship,** Tuesday, 6:30 PM.

**LGBQ Friends** are meeting regularly. For more information contact Helen Mullins.

**Additional Meetings for  
Worship and Quaker Events:**

Thursdays, 6:30 PM, 15<sup>th</sup> Street Meetinghouse, Room 1, meet at 6 to eat together (bring your own food).

Fridays, 7:00 PM, Meeting for Worship in the Name of Jesus, 15<sup>th</sup> Street Meetinghouse. Contact Richard Accetta-Evans for more information.

First and Third Sundays of the Month, 9:30 AM, Manhattan Monthly Meeting, Programmed Meeting for Worship, 15<sup>th</sup> Street Meetinghouse, Room 1.

First Sunday of the Month, 1-2 PM, Silent Vigil for Peace, Washington Square Arch.

Friends in Unity with Nature: contact Janet Soderberg or Tom Goodridge, for information on the next meeting.

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**BROOKLYN MONTHLY MEETING  
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS**

110 Schermerhorn Street  
P.O. Box 026123  
Brooklyn, NY 11202

**Celebration**

**of the 150th Anniversary of  
Friends in Brooklyn**

**SUN, JAN 13, 2008**

Worship - 11AM followed by a  
Musical Celebration culminating  
in a Reception and gathering

**Brooklyn  
Monthly  
Meeting  
Newsletter**

**D E C E M B E R 2 0 0 7**