



Brooklyn Monthly Meeting Newsletter

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

I ask for strength, but not for power,
lest I despise the meek.

— Inazo Nitobe, 1909

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SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING FOR BUSINESS 4/3/05

Meeting for business begins with a reading of Advice #10:

Friends are advised to observe integrity in their living and to inspect frequently the state of their temporal affairs. In their dealings with everyone they should endeavor to maintain a truly Christian character, ever bearing in mind the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

The clerk reports on the receipt of a draft of a chapter on Brooklyn Monthly Meeting for the book "Meetings of Vitality" being written by Jay Marshall of the Earlham School of Religion. Copies are made available to interested Friends; some additional material is available by e-mail. Jay Marshall has advised that he is interested in receiving comments and suggestions, but has a deadline, since the intention is to finish the book by the end of his sabbatical which is later this month.. The clerk will forward comments which are provided by e-mail.

The following nominations are approved:

Child Care Committee: Sarah Anderson

Book Table Committee: Mara Komoska

Luncheon and Supper Committee: Jennifer Barr

New York Quarterly Audit and Budget Committee:
Jim Morgan

Nominating Committee: Elizabeth Gilmore

The annual report of the Library Committee is read and accepted.

Mary Pasurelias is released from service from the Library Committee.

The following are read:

Query #2: *Do we make opportunity in our daily lives for communion with God and the opening of our hearts to an awareness of the Christ Within? Are we thankful for each day as an opportunity for a new adventure of life with God?*

A Passage from Goatwalking by Jim Corbett:

To think of one's life as time to be invested or to sacrifice the present to an uncertain future is foolishness for man-in-nature; it is obvious that life is a gift rather than a reward as it is obvious to man-in-time, who labors for future fulfillment in an ever-dying present, that life can be supported only by work, investment, the accumulation of wealth- above all, that the past is dead and the present moment in which one's life is trapped is just the point where the future dies. Man-in-time labors in an empty present that is death; he grasps for a future that must die when he touches it.

Discussions Group Meetings

The Discussions Group will be facilitating 9:45 meetings for worship in the Meeting room on all Sundays except the first Sunday as follows:

June Topic Facilitator

2nd Sunday Quaker Witness: Mary Pags

3rd Sunday Ethics: DK Holland

4th Sunday Bible: Joe Garren

July/August To be determined

September Topic Facilitator

2nd Sunday Quaker Witness Mary Pags

3rd Sunday Ethics: DK Holland

4th Sunday Bible: Joe Garren

September Afternoon Discussion: *Honesty and Truth*

On the 3rd Sunday of September at 1:00, Discussions Group will host a Meeting on Honesty and Truth for adults and children. The meaning of honesty, the importance and meaning of truth in our day to day lives will be discussed and will include Quaker quotes and queries. DK Holland and Mary Pags will facilitate.

Committee on Conflict Transformation of New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends

Friday, June 10 and Saturday, June 11, 2005

*A one evening and full day workshop at the
Brooklyn Meeting House*

Outline of Topics:

Friday Evening:

6:30: Pot Luck Dinner

7:30-9:00: Gathering, introductions, consideration of conflict styles, overview

Saturday:

8:30: Morning refreshments

9:00-5:30 Introduction to Conflict Resolution Skills,
such as

1) *Active listening*

2) *Impartiality, reframing*

3) *Triangling, de-triangling*

4) *Positions and "interests"*

5) *A typical intervention in a conflict*

Brown-Bag Lunch

The Committee's Vision

Committee Roster for Interventions and How to Participate:

Break/ refreshments

Worship sharing on relevant topics

Conflict style evaluation for the group and its implications

Closing Worship

For Further Information, contact:

Tom Rothschild, tomr@tnrmediate.com

Joanna Komoska, jkomoska@optonline.net

A Note About the Newsletter

The Communications Committee welcomes all submissions for the newsletter at newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org. Submissions may be edited for length, clarity of prose, or grammar with the consent of the writer. Nothing will be printed without attribution. Deadlines are quarterly on the 15th of the month (September, November, February,

and May). As in much of life, mistakes may be made: submissions misplaced, strewn about or otherwise lost. The Committee asks for the forbearance of the readership. We continue to grow through learning.

If you would like to update your mailing address or directory listing, please contact database@brooklynmeeting.org

Regularly Scheduled Activities

Regularly Scheduled Activities for Brooklyn Monthly Meeting are as follows:

Tuesdays: a Silent Vigil for Peace, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Borough Hall, on the Joralemon Street side.

Tuesdays: mid-week Meeting for Worship at 6:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room.

Sundays [except the first Sunday of the month]: A spirit-led discussion from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. in the Meeting Room.

The first Sunday of the month: Singing at 9:45 a.m. in the Meeting Room.

The first Sunday of the month: Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business beginning at 1:00 p.m.

The third Sunday of the month: Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Healing beginning at 12:45 p.m.

The last Sunday of the month: the Community Dinner for all who are in need of a hot meal, beginning at 1:00 p.m.

Everyone is welcome to participate in all activities.

PDF Newsletter Available At Meeting Website

The Brooklyn Meeting Monthly Newsletters are available in Portable Document Format ("PDF") at the Meeting internet web site.

To access it, go to <http://www.brooklynmeeting.org>, click on "Newsletters" on the bar at the left of the page, and click on the month for the issue you would like to access.

You will need the Adobe Acrobat application to read, download, and/or print the file. For this reason, Paul, of the Yearly Meeting, has provided a handy link to the Adobe site which will enable you to download the Adobe Acrobat Reader application.

THE MEMORIAL MEETING OF A BFS STUDENT

As a member of Brooklyn Meeting and a member of the School Committee, I am moved to thank and commend Brooklyn Friends School for having a Memorial Meeting in the manner of Friends following the tragic death of a young senior student. And also for the delicate manner in which all aspects of this sad event were handled.

Indeed, Jacob's family sent an e-mail to BFS following the Memorial Meeting. In part, it said: "We are really so glad we went to the memorial today. It was so moving and

uplifting to hear his friends and teachers speak, and did create a kind of resolution. BFS is a wonderful community, and we're glad Jacob was part of it."

I am grateful and feel blessed for the opportunity to be a part, however small, of the BFS community. I have come to know it as a Quaker Community that lives its daily life, just as we all attempt to do, in the manner of Friends - guided by Quaker values.

Mary Pags

AN OPEN LETTER TO BROOKLYN MONTHLY MEETING

Last month over spring break, a 12th grader from Brooklyn Friends School died tragically as a result of drug-related accident. As one would expect in such a close-knit community, the returning students and faculty, particularly in our high school, were in a state of shock and emotional distress. All the resources the school had were brought into play.

In the course of that first week, I was struck once again by the vitality and importance of the Quaker dimension of BFS, and in particular the practice of worshipful silence and Meeting for Worship. That our students and faculty regularly convene to reflect on their spiritual and inner truths facilitated the processing of the grief and guilt, and enabled the celebrating of the student for the outstanding artist and musician he was. One of these Meetings for Worship was a Memorial Service at the Schermerhorn Meeting House. Some parents, faculty, and students, as well as the parents of the student in question, spent an hour in silence, broken only by messages that were touching and meaningful to the attendees. The family experienced it as a "kind of resolution."

Although all the distress and guilt can't be worked through in one week, our students and faculty were at much peace. I have never witnessed in any school such a transformation in so little time, and I do believe that that could only have happened because of having Quaker Meeting for Worship as a resource. I am so thankful for this, and for the Meeting House at Schermerhorn.

*Michael Nill, Head
Brooklyn Friends School*

POETRY

Sitting on Our Country Home Deck

I'm sitting on our country home deck.
Looking—out across the meadow.
A sublimely peaceful view-
I want to hold onto it forever.
To photograph it.
Yes, art can hold onto eternity's moments;
But, I decide to let go-
And, I discover that I am forever held in the
Eternal.

*Aaron Cohen, 2003
Written for Anna, my daughter*

My Autumn Daughter

You came to me in the Autumn of my life,
Autumn my favorite season-
The coolness of the breeze,
And the warmth of the sun.
The rich color of the leaves-
A harvest time of abundance.
You added your compassion to the coolness of the
breeze and the warmth of
the sun.
You added your laughter to the rich color of the
leaves.
You added your love to the harvest time of
abundance.
You have enriched my world beyond measure.

*Aaron Cohen 2004
Written for Anna, my daughter, for her ninth birthday*

Not Time

Our lives are not measured in time—but in eternal
moments.
Moments of mystery—wonder—peace—oneness.
Meeting another—unique ground of Being.
Ineffability—never captured.
Music washes through our being.
Country road—all is connected.
In nakedness—we quake—free of time.

*Aaron Cohen, 2004
Written for Anna, my daughter, after I became a
member of this meeting and I started to quake.*

A LETTER TO BROOKLYN MONTHLY MEETING

Dear Friends,

Like many people, sometimes I feel uncomfortable or even distressed by what happens during Meeting for Worship. An unusually heated Meeting in April, when there were some sharp exchanges, raised voices, and friends leaving in anger, stayed with me in an unexpectedly uplifting way. I found myself feeling deeply exhilarated and grateful to be part of a community that every week opens itself up to such worshipful RISK. We are tied to each other enough, touched by each other enough, that feeling our hearts break is a real and sacred possibility. Our hurt can witness to how much of ourselves we invest in this collective enterprise. This risk is, I believe, the opening we make for God's light during our Meeting. Occasionally we stumble very humanly into the space we intended to leave for God. Occasionally we stumble or push into each other's path. I've been on both sides of that, and repeatedly.

But above all else, what I felt following that Sunday was how alive, organic, available we are together; our hearts were open and we bore being troubled by each other. I asked myself, where else could I share in a worship experience so real that collective failure is even possible? Our moments of limitation reassure me: we truly need each other, we truly need God, we share a deep wish to strive. "Expectant waiting" implies not only hopefulness but, to me even more deeply, awareness of this dependence and need.

I don't belong to a religion that talks to me from the distance of a pulpit, or that puts pre-approved words in my mouth. Nor do I want the "peace" of people so "safe" from each other that no one can ever be hurt or disturbed. I prefer to stumble along in the close company of all of you. The many hugs and earnest conversations I saw on the ground floor that day, and all the many deeply gathered Meetings for Worship we've shared since then, are a testament to what I know: Light is among us reliably and palpably. Perhaps this is especially vivid when we jostle and crack and thereby make even more room for God.

*In friendship,
Sarah Nazimova-Baum*

BROOKLYN MONTHLY MEETING CONTACT SHEET

Committee Clerks or Key Contact

<i>position</i>	<i>name</i>	<i>e-mail alias</i>
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Please contact newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org if there are any changes or corrections to the above

Brooklyn Meeting Retreat at Powell House
Save this Weekend: Friday, November 11, 2005 through Sunday, November 13, 2005

The Planning Committee for Brooklyn Meeting Retreat at Powell invites you to Powell House for an Autumn Weekend of Simplicity and Friendship. Check your 2005 calendar and block the weekend beginning Friday, November 11 and ending Sunday, November 13, 2005.

Preliminary registration and information
Cost: \$170 Adults \$80 Children between 2 & 17 \$40 Under 2 years
Some scholarships may be available

Please cut or tear neatly on the dotted line and put in the Powell House Retreat box located in the Social Hour Room.
Or mail to: BMM Retreat 2005 Brooklyn Monthly Meeting PO Box 026123 Brooklyn, NY 11202

____ Yes, I am attending the Autumn Weekend of Simplicity and Friendship at Powell House
____ Do you anticipate needing some scholarship assistance? _____
____ No, I cannot attend the Powell House Retreat Winter Weekend but will contribute \$ _____ to the Weekend Retreat Scholarship Fund
____ Yes, I am attending the Retreat and will contribute \$ _____ to the Weekend Retreat Scholarship Fund

Name(s) of Attending Adults: _____
Telephone Number: _____ E-mail Address: _____

How many will be attending? Adults _____ Children between ages: infant - 4 _____ 5 -11 _____ 12 and older _____

Food Allergies? _____ I am allergic to: _____

Vegetarian? _____ Please Note: Vegetarian options often include eggs or other dairy products. If you are on a more limited diet, please consider bringing your own food supplements.

Will you need transportation? Yes _____ No _____

If you are driving, will you be able to take passengers? Yes _____ How many _____

Other special needs or concerns: _____

