



BROOKLYN MEETING NEWS

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

brooklynmeeting.org

June 2014

MAY 14 MEETING FOR BUSINESS CONSIDERS FINANCE AND COLLECTIONS, CHILD CARE AND BOOK TABLE REPORTS

Finance and Collections Committee Adjusts to Change in Financial Year

Since Brooklyn Meeting has decided to change from an April to a January fiscal year, the Committee's report was for a nine month period. It is also important to note that collections in Brooklyn only pay for committees and a contribution to New York Yearly Meeting—approximately half is allocated to each. The cost of maintaining the Meetinghouse is paid for by rents and by New York Quarterly Meeting. The Finance and Collections Committee sent out three fundraising mailings and made nineteen deposits totaling \$90,581 (\$75,664 in donations, \$3,026 from investments and the remainder consisting of unspent money from committees). A total of 248 members and 186 attenders donated. Four Friends accounted for approximately one third of the total donations.

More Volunteers and a New Teacher for the Childcare Committee

Each First Day our Teachers are now joined by three volunteers and, because of scheduling changes, the Committee has added a third rotating teacher — a male presence in the classroom. The Committee has spent \$3,728 of a \$4,350 budget on teacher salaries, new furniture and supplies for our youngest Friends.

Book Table Committee Provides Books for Sale Every First Day

Book Table Committee Members take turns selling Quaker books in the corner of the Social Hour room, which include interviews of long time members as well as pamphlets. A perennial favorite is the essential *New York Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice*. The Committee also undertakes

two used book sales every year—the most recent of which concluded on May 1. This past year 61 books were sold and the proceeds were donated: \$200 to New York Yearly Meeting and \$50 for new books for First Day School. The unsold books were donated to a charity, Housing Works.

-- Molly Rusnak

Brooklyn Meetinghouse Tenants Serve Children

Friends may wonder what happens to Brooklyn Meetinghouse during the six days when it is not used by Brooklyn Meeting. Except for

Saturdays, it does not stand empty. The Quarterly Meeting shares our space with an organization called New York Explorers which provides an array of services for young children and their families. They do not pay what we usually consider as rent; instead, they pay



a share of the costs of maintaining the building.

New York Explorers is led by one of its founders, Kisha Edwards Ganzy, who was herself an abandoned infant raised by adoptive parents. She says that this background shaped her “concern for the youngest and neediest among us.” New York Explorers is a collective of four companies: Explorers Academy (located in Brooklyn Meetinghouse), The Learning Garden, Backpacks and Binoculars Summer Camps and Bag of Tricks (a home babysitting service).

The Explorers Academy is an accredited preschool, sharing two classrooms and occupying one on the ground floor of the Meetinghouse. They do not share the Childcare space. They do share the Social Room with play equipment and small tables and chairs, the playground, kitchens and third floor space for a library. Friends are free to come in and out of the Meetinghouse during the week and a custodian is always present. The third floor room next to 112 Schermerhorn Street, the library and the Meeting room are exclusively available to Friends on weekdays and the entire Meetinghouse is open from 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

-- *Molly Rusnak*

Friends Consider the Advices and Queries in New York Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice

In an afternoon session on May 19, a panel of four Friends led a session on the Advices and Queries we regularly share at Meeting for Business once a month. These queries appear in our book of discipline, provided by New York Yearly Meeting, titled *Faith and Practice*. The Friends leading the session were Nancy Black and Martin Norregaard from Brooklyn Meeting, Ed Elder from New York Quarterly Meeting and Joe Garren, formerly of Brooklyn Meeting and now at Pendle Hill, a Quaker educational center.

The program was organized around three presentations, small group sessions and a final whole group gathering.

The first section followed the history of the “Advices from the Elders at Balby”, which were contained in an “epistle” in 1656 and form the basis of our present “advices”. They were constructed midway in the career of George Fox, the founder of the Quakers, and directly responded to a need for structure and procedures (later referred to as “gospel order”). We note that they reflect a hierarchical attitude characteristic of that time, which was reflected in slavery and the subordinate position of women. Our present Advices are changed from these, and will continue to change based on our beliefs being in continuing revelation.

The central location of the Advices and Queries in “Faith and Practice” emphasizes their place as a bridge between those two parts of Quaker discipline. We are reminded that the root meaning of the word “discipline” is “instruction.” The Advices are the “inner teacher” instructing, guiding and comforting us, and are accompanied by prayer. The structural role of the Advices is particularly helpful in Advice 16, which perfectly describes in a few sentences the whole unique process of Quaker Meeting for Business.

The Queries, on the other hand, are more open-ended. They challenge us to look at and think about our behavior and beliefs. Query 13, about the Peace Testimony, for example, directs us to our own actions in our own Meeting -- do we “live in the virtue of that life and power which takes away the occasion of all wars”? It asks us to exert our influence to settle decisions by nonviolent methods in the here and now. It is a practical question that we cannot avoid thinking about every day. The practice of our Clerk, encouraging us to respond to the rereading of Advices and Queries each Meeting for Business, keeps them alive and working for us.

-- *Molly Rusnak*

REMEMBERING THOMAS GLYNN



Tom Glynn, a longtime member of Brooklyn Friends Meeting, died recently from the effects of a stroke followed by seizures. He was a superb writer -- observant, witty, and literary without being pretentious. Tom published three novels: *Temporary Sanity* (1977), *The Building* (1985), and *Watching the Body Burn* (1989). Three of his short stories appeared in the *Paris Review* as well as one in the *New Yorker*, "Uncles", which is available on the magazine's website. He also wrote a book, *Hammer. Nail. Wood.* which detailed his building and construction experiences, especially on his and Patricia's farm near Canada.

For those wishing to get an introduction to Tom's writing, *Watching the Body Burn* might be the best place to start. Patricia tells me that Tom considered this book

to be fiction, although the reader may feel that he or she is channeling Tom's strange childhood in Chicago. His story "Christmas" is particularly amazing for its sequence of bizarre and picaresque episodes, including the seeming crucifixion of one of his death-obsessed friends. It starts with four boys throwing snowballs at passing cars and ends with the narrator driving his drunken uncle home after Christmas dinner, skidding his way along the frozen streets. Another memorable story, "Nann", is about his grandmother. Tom believed she had the ability to fly -- mostly so that she could thwart all of his favorite activities and desires. Tom had a career in advertising, magazine writing and editing. His exactness of diction urged

his words toward greater truthfulness and often, greater humor. He served on the Property Committee, keeping a set of Meetinghouse keys and often rushing over to check the doors and windows when the wind set off the alarm. Tom also served on the Peace and Social Action Committee, participating in the vigil against the death penalty, and was clerk and then co-clerk of the Community Dinner Committee. Most recently he was on the Finance and Collection Committee.

About ten days before he died, my husband asked Tom how he was feeling. "I feel what I feel," Tom answered. He also spoke of how grateful he was to be home, as he had spent a lot of time in hospitals over the past year. Now he was in hospice, but at home.

-- Stephanie Rauschenbusch

Did you know?

Brooklyn Friends School was begun in 1867, a mere ten years

after our Meetinghouse was built. At the start, there were twenty-two pupils (only eleven of whom were Quaker children), and there was one department

and one teacher: Mary Haviland, who earned \$400 a year.

Monthly Factoid provided by Michael Black, for the History Committee

Submission Guidelines

The Communications Committee welcomes Brooklyn Meeting News contributions from all Meeting members and attenders. Our newsletter includes a variety of content which may be of interest to our community, including but not limited to:

- Recaps of recent Meeting events
- Previews of upcoming events
- Issues pertaining to our Quaker faith and history

The newsletter is published on the first Sunday of each month, and we request that submissions for the next issue be submitted by June 23rd. General Guidelines:

- Please send an email to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org so that we may briefly discuss your contribution, as regards its timeliness, appropriateness, and length.
- Contributions should generally

be brief, between 150-450 words in length.

- Please send your newsletter submission as an attached Word document.
- Keep in mind that contributions will be copy edited, and may not appear in the newsletter in exactly the same form as how they were submitted.

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to your input!

Regularly Scheduled Activities

Meetings for Worship

9:00–9:50 AM and
11:00 AM–NOON on Sundays,
in the meeting room
6:30 PM Tuesdays,
in the meeting room

Childcare

Sundays during 11:00 AM worship, for
children of 3 months to 3 years, in the care
of an early childhood teacher and dedicated
volunteers

First Day School

10:45 AM – 11:45 AM, Sundays, September
to June. Three classes, roughly related to
age: Bodies (4-6), Minds (7-9) and Spirits
(10-12).

Social Hour

12:00 PM Sundays,
Ground-level dining room

Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business

1:00 PM, first Sundays, in the meeting
room

Hymn Singing around the Piano

10:00 AM, first Sundays, in the meeting
room

Readings of Spiritual Texts

10:00 AM, second Sundays, in the
meeting room

Worship Sharing

10:00 AM, third Sundays, on the third
floor

Community Dinner

1:00 PM-3:00 PM SET-UP
3:00 PM-4:00 PM MEAL/SERVING
4:00 PM- 5:00 PM CLEAN-UP, COME FOR
SOME OR ALL!

Last Sunday of every month, ground-
level dining room; volunteers appreciated
for this monthly dinner for anyone who
wishes a free hot meal. Children
encouraged to volunteer.

Contact: Andres Colapinto,
acolabus@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Ongoing additions to upcoming Meeting events are regularly added to the Meeting website at <http://www.brooklynmeeting.org/calendar>.

To submit an event, email calendar@brooklynmeeting.org.

Member Kate Rapoport also maintains an

email event announcement list; send a request to brooklyn.kittens@gmail.com to join.

June 2014

Sunday, June 15:

1-3pm, Meeting House

Quaker Studies topic: Leading a Quaker life
in the day-to-day world: money, family,
leisure, media, technology, and more.

July 2014

Sunday, July 20, 2014 - 3:00pm - Saturday,

July 26, 2014 – 12:00pm

Summer Sessions at Silver Bay

SAVE THE DATE!

BMM Retreat at Powell House

October 17-19

Join your Brooklyn Meeting F/friends for a
refreshing fall weekend at the beautiful
buildings and

grounds of Powell House, New York Yearly
Meeting's retreat center in Old Chatham,
New York!

For more information, or to join the retreat
committee (and help create the retreat!)

Speak to any Ministry & Counsel member or
email retreat@brooklynmeeting.org

Send additions to Regularly Scheduled Activities or Upcoming Events to calendar@brooklynmeeting.org.

Send inquiries or suggestions about the newsletter to newsletter@brooklynmeeting.org.

The Monthly Meeting Newsletter is published by the Communications Committee of Brooklyn Monthly Meeting.

Current members: Eli Gwynn (clerk), Ben Hill, Molly Rusnak, and Anna White.

Drawings by Lucy Sikes
