

CANADIAN  
FRIENDS  
HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION

# THE

# MEETINGHOUSE

Meeting in  
Print

Volume: 2010– 2

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**CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE:**

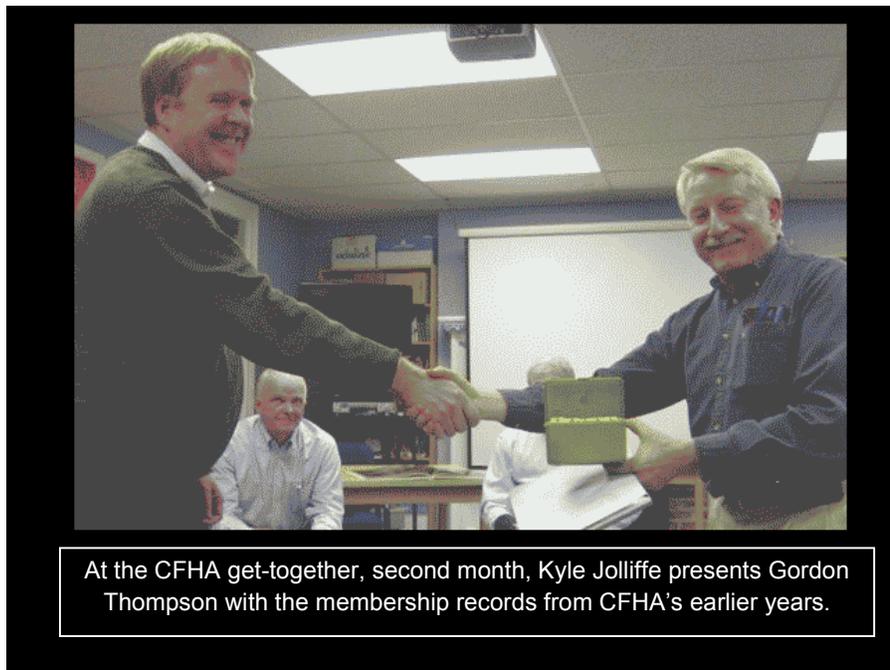
Dear Members of CFHA:

I trust this message finds you well and looking forward to the advancing spring and summer seasons. This seems to be a good time to report on recent CFHA activities and plans going forward.

A group of us staffed a CFHA booth at the second annual Newmarket Heritage Day organized by the Elman Campbell Museum. There remains much to be said for meeting and greeting the individuals and families who attend such events. The Heritage Day marked the first appearance of our updated CFHA display, thanks to Andrew, We were also pleasantly surprised to sell a number of back issues of the Journal--printed and CD versions-- and to engage in interesting conversations. We will look for further opportunities for such public participation.

We were pleased to spend some time with Robynne Rogers-Healey, editor of the Canadian Quaker History Journal, while she was visiting Ontario in Second month. Robynne's visit included time at the CYM archives at Pickering College (thanks to Jane Zavitz-Bond) and also at a get-together with a number of past and present contributors to CFHA. The evening proved to be an enjoyable and productive opportunity to meet face-to-face and share ideas for future Journal articles, discuss our upcoming AGM in Norwich, and update other activities, such as Ian Woods' detailed survey of the historical legacy of the Town of Uxbridge, with numerous Quaker-built heritage sites.

.....See Chairman's Message, page 2



At the CFHA get-together, second month, Kyle Jolliffe presents Gordon Thompson with the membership records from CFHA's earlier years.

Editor: **Barbara Horvath**  
[www.cfha.info](http://www.cfha.info)

### Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) Quaker Archives

The Quaker Archives Working Group is meeting May 15, from 12:30 to 4:00 at Yonge Street Meeting House, Newmarket.

The Working Group is responding to recommendations to Canadian Yearly Meeting for changes in the governance and structure of Records Committee, but will also discuss our Vision for the future of the Archives and Quaker Collection and the action needed to make that vision a reality.

The Working Group will report to CYM in August 2010. Interested persons can contact Barbara Horvath at [barbara.horvath@sympatico.ca](mailto:barbara.horvath@sympatico.ca)

### Get to know CFHA Executive Members

#### M. Ruth Jeffery-MacLean, Secretary for Membership and CFHA Executive

I have a Bachelors of Arts degree majoring in history and have spent my professional life as a Life Skills Counsellor and as an Employment Adviser in Human Resource Development.

Now retired, I have returned to my original passion for history and have sought out ways to be involved with that and to further others' interest and education in the past and how it shapes us.

I have been a long term volunteer and a member of the Board of Directors with the Sharon Temple National Historic Site, in Sharon, Ontario and the Hilary House National Historic Site, in Aurora, Ontario. I have been on the Records Committee of Canadian Yearly Meeting, which is charged with the responsibility of overseeing the care of the Canadian Quaker Archives, and I have also acted as a friend of the Archives in a volunteer capacity. I have been associated with the Canadian Friends Historical Association since 1997 and have held the position of treasurer, membership secretary and secretary on the Executive Committee.

Canadian Friends Historical Association was founded in 1972 with the aim of preserving and making known the religious, cultural, social and pioneer heritage of Quakers from their first settlement in Canada until today. CFHA is open to all who share an interest in Canadian Quaker History. Membership fees support the activities of CFHA and help maintain CFHA's website.

### .....Chairman's message, continued

I also need to say a few words concerning fundraising. At present CFHA's funding consists entirely of members' dues, donations and limited amounts obtained through the sale of publications. The recent economic downturn has brought a corresponding reduction in the amount of donations. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to CFHA if circumstances permit.

An innovative fundraising initiative has been developed by our Treasurer, Andrew Cresswell, in cooperation with various publishers of Quaker and Quaker-related texts. Please make a point of reviewing details of this initiative, described in the CFHA Storefront. We think you will be pleased to discover how we have utilized our newly acquired corporate status to the benefit of CFHA and its members alike.

While it is nice for some of us to be able to meet in person occasionally, it is also our hope that CFHA members, wherever they are located, feel themselves to be part of something almost living and organic in nature, part of a family defined by the shared joy and appreciation of all aspects—physical and spiritual—of our Canadian Quaker legacy. Enjoy this issue of The Meetinghouse, and please write or e-mail us details of your personal interests and discoveries!

Sincerely, Gordon Thompson, Chair, CFHA

### CFHA Membership

A sincere "Thank you!" to the many individuals who have renewed their membership in CFHA for the coming year. The group which compiles the Canadian Quaker History Journal and The Meetinghouse looks forward to producing publications that will bring pleasure and enjoyment to our readers. We sincerely hope that no CFHA members miss out on our current 'works in progress' due to a lapsed membership. A personal reminder will be sent out shortly to those we have not yet heard from. Please take a few moments to renew your membership. For those whose renewal is already enroute, our sincere appreciation

The membership form is available at CFHA's website: <http://www.cfha.info/membership.html>

**Renew at a rate of \$25 per year, \$20 for seniors or students. Or, receive a life membership for \$500.00.**

**Mail to: CFHA Membership Secretary, CFHA,  
PO Box 21527, 17600 Yonge St,  
Newmarket, ON L3Y 4Z0**



## The CFHA Storefront Expands!

George Fox warned early Friends “of printing anything more than ye are required of the Lord God. Nor none stop writing or speaking when ye are moved with the Spirit of the Lord God.”

We are very pleased to announce three new additions to the Storefront.

Copies of each publication have been graciously donated by the publishers to CFHA. We would like to thank them for their support of CFHA and for helping us to achieve our mission of preserving and communicating the history and faith of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada and its contribution to the Canadian Experience.

A purchase of one of these titles is considered a donation to CFHA and entitles purchasers to a tax receipt (excluding the cost of shipping).

**A Community of Friends: The Quakers at Borden** by Betty Ward (published by Hagios Press - \$15.00). Of the story of prairie lives, Sharon Butala says that “the text has the simple charm of these Quakers themselves, not thinking too much of itself, not over-reaching, and in its very deceptive straightforwardness, reveals a steady wisdom and the touching beauty of these lives.”

**Union is Strength: W.L. McKenzie, The Children of Peace and the Emergence of Joint Stock Democracy in Upper Canada** by Albert Schrauwers (published by University of Toronto Press - \$ 70.00). “Examining a small, utopian socialist group named the Children of Peace, Albert Schrauwers traces the emergence of a vibrant democratic culture in the province from the decade before the Rebellions of 1837. Schrauwers shows how the overlapping boards of unincorporated joint stock companies managed by both Toronto reformers and the Children of Peace produced a culture of deliberative democracy in competition with the “gentlemanly capitalism” of chartered corporations.” (U of T Press)

**From Quaker to Upper Canadian: Faith and Community among Yonge Street Friends, 1801-1850** by Robynne Rogers Healey (published by McGill-Queen’s University Press - \$ 95.00). Chris Railble wrote in *Ontario History* that “the significance of Healey’s thesis is almost universal, for she asks the compelling question: how can a community insulate itself from the perceived evils of a larger society without isolating itself from responsible participation in that society?”

To purchase one of these publications, or anything from the CFHA Storefront, contact Ruth Jeffery-MacLean at 905-898-8119 or via email at [secretary@cfha.info](mailto:secretary@cfha.info)

## Book Review – A Community of Friends, The Quakers at Borden by Betty Ward

Betty and Norman Ward became acquainted with Quakers through attendance at the Toronto Monthly Meeting of The Religious Society of Friends. In 1947 they moved to Saskatchewan. After becoming established in their new community, they enquired about the nearest Friends Meeting. Their search led them to Borden and the Fritchley Meeting.

The community of Borden was settled by a group of Quakers who emigrated from Birmingham, England in 1903 to settle free land in western Canada. Nothing could have prepared the new settlers for a life on the prairies. Summer months were as harsh as the winters,

the wind never stopped blowing, and the landscape went on forever. Their forbearance and ability to thrive under the conditions so aptly described in this volume, speaks to the faith which grounded them in trust, hope, love and courage.

A Community of Friends, The Quakers at Borden embodies a delightful description of character, a collection of stories and a cache of memories from the people Dorothy Ward and her husband spent time with at Fritchley Meeting. The Meeting was named for the home meeting the Friends had left behind in England. Historians may raise their eyebrow in the reading, but this book was never meant to be a history of the prairie community. The author and her husband recognized something special in .....continued on page 5

## Family Memories of Norwich Quakerism

In his history of Canadian Quakerism, Arthur Dorland identifies Mary Ann Treffry (1817-1908) as an influential elder in the Norwich, Ontario Meeting. She was certainly a highly regarded person at the time of her death, judging from a local newspaper obituary about her. By a twist of fate I know a lot about her, as she was a much loved great-aunt of my maternal grandmother Alice Lossing Estabrook Simpson (1883-1983).

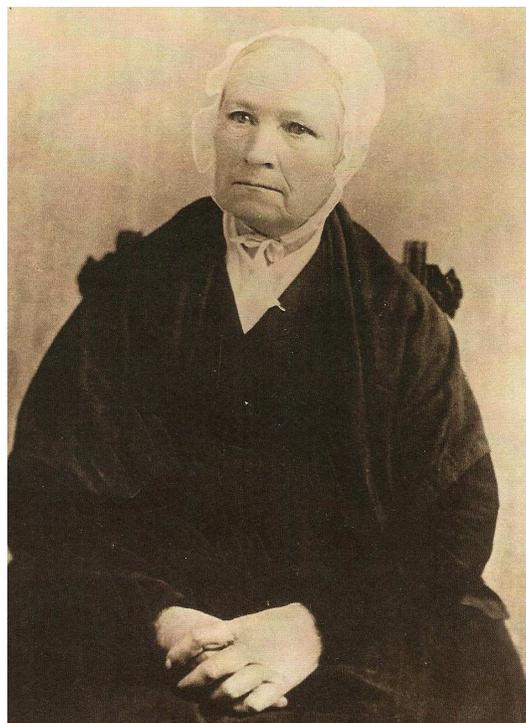
In a letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> month 10<sup>th</sup>, 1898 to her niece, Mary Ann reveals herself to be an articulate and generous-hearted person, steeped in the traditional faith and culture of the Conservative Friends Meeting to which she belonged. I offer it here, exactly as it was written, as an informative window on the now all but vanished Norwich Quaker settlement founded in 1810 by her grandfather Peter Lossing and his brother-in-law Peter De Long.

Norwich 6<sup>th</sup> month 10<sup>th</sup> 1898

*Dear Niece. I received thy good letter a few days ago. I was pleased to hear thy little Sister was so much better, hope she may continue to improve until sound & well. I had a card from thy Grandmother lately. I like to hear her tell what is pleasant to her eyes as her plants & flowers. Such things are a delight to my mind and eyes. All plants are growing here about, trees & shrubs, the foliage seems thick. I love to watch the tree tops nod & bow to each other in a gentle breeze. well, all nature is beautiful, I think we can look from nature up to Him who is the maker of all and to Him we, poor mortals owe all our being, and all we have even our faculties of mind & strength every way. and feeling this to be true we should try to be obedient to all this great good and wise Creator asks of us. which we read in the bible, that we should love the Lord with a willing heart and keep his commandments. by reading the new testament carefully and prayerfully we will learn all that is written for us to follow and there we will see that the Spirit of the Lord often directs us what to do, and what to leave undone, the Spirit speaks to our Spirit, giving us understanding of what is His will concerning us poor mortals, whom he designed to praise and glorify Him while we are here in this life.*

*Second day morning, feelings of weakness are my companions this morning. tho I am knitting a garter it is light to hold. Yesterday and the day before was quarterly meeting. Alice & Jane attended. Edwin Schooley came to tea he lives in Brantford. the only Friend in that City. there has been several thunder showers the past week lightning & very heavy thunder indeed it seemed like war, in the Elements the artillery of Electricity roared heavily. a chimney was strick by a sharp dart of lightning across the Street from us Mary Kingsmills. It was so close to us that it cost serious feelings J. H. T. had some fine tomatoes all cut to pieces he has replaced them. Tell Miriam we hope to see both thee and She. please excuse my clumsy expressions & ill arraignment, a little ground sparrow is singing hard as he can. the rain is falling fast.*

*First day 19<sup>th</sup> another week has roled away most of the time I have felt heavy and dull. Last evening we had a lively storm with thunder, all vegetation is looking beautiful and green, with clear blue Skye above, roses are about gone, snapdragons & lillies are out. Dandelion and the dear old meadow lillies, which I remember from Childhood, & I do love the native flowers of Canada, they are my relations; the high cranberry & the woodbine. Alice has gone to meeting. I am thinking of the friends at Pickering & do desire for them to turn their minds in waiting upon the only One who is able to break the Bread of life to the refreshing and growth of every Soul. Oh Joy, beyond all Joy, when the Soul can taste the sweetness of the Bread of Life that comes down from Him who reigns above. This is worth waiting for.*



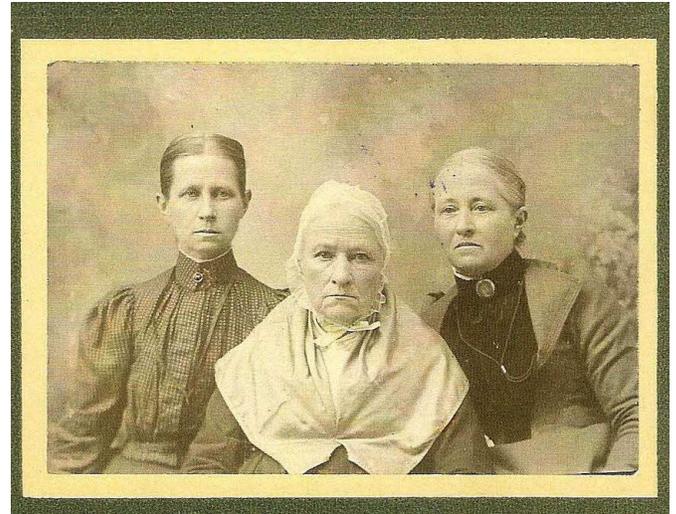
Mary Ann Treffry, one of the last pioneer residents of Norwich

Here, then, is a fine example of the godly and convinced life so highly valued by Conservative Friends. Historians have called this Quietism. Alas this model of faith, which had underpinned Quakerism since its emergence in England in the 1650s, was a fragile flower. In Norwich, the Meeting lost many members during the 1800s to other churches such as the Methodist church. Then in the 1870s the Meeting was deeply split between those who favoured Quietism and those attracted by the revival movement. Gradually after 1900 both the Quietist “slow” Friends and the revivalist “fast” Friends completely died out in Norwich. Quakerism in Canada now mostly exists in an urban environment.

Yet in my own family, and no doubt in others, many precious Norwich memories and connections lingered well into the twentieth century. In August of 1907 my grandmother and her mother attended “Friends’ Service” at the Stover Street Meetinghouse, where Mary Ann Treffry sat on the high bench.

In August of 1936 my grandmother again attended Meeting at the Stover Street Meeting House, sitting beside her completely blind cousin Alice Treffry (Mary Ann Treffry’s daughter). Alice Treffry was then in her 89<sup>th</sup> year and being cared for by Maurice and Mary Pollard, of whom my grandmother said they were “very kind.” She also recorded that Harvey Haight, who sat on the high seat among other men at the Meetinghouse, was moved to “lead audibly in a powerful prayer.”

Later that same day, Stella Mott, keeper of the records at the Norwich Museum, drove my grandmother out to the



Mary Ann Treffry and daughters, Alice Treffry and Marianne Harris (left), wife of John Richard Harris of Rockwood

North Norwich Pioneer Quaker Cemetery on Quaker Street, where she copied the gravestone inscriptions of Peter Lossing and his second wife Catherine Hulet, of Solomon Lossing, and of Mary Ann Treffry and her husband John Treffry. She also noted that buried there were her great-grandmother Paulina Lossing Southwick and her husband George Southwick, and Emily Marshall, her mother’s baby sister.

I treasure these family memories passed down to me. They very much bring alive my Quaker heritage.

**Submitted by Kyle Jolliffe**

**A Community of Friends, The Quakers at Borden Review – ..continued from page 3**

the community which welcomed them and yet asked them not to apply for membership.

This book is a work of love, accomplished over time. The writing started in the 1970s as a project by the author and her husband. As time passed, Norman died and the book lay fallow for a period. Donald Ward describes the intervening time in the forward, “It was not that my mother couldn’t finish it; she just had a conviction that the timing wasn’t right. The Quakers would have understood, without question.”

A Community of Friends has been seasoned to go forth as a tender picture of a time and place. You will be charmed in the reading of it.

.....submitted by Ruth Jeffery MacLean

**www.cfha.info**  
**517**

That may be an odd way to start a paragraph, but it is the number of ‘Unique Visitors’ on our website as of April 30. That is an encouraging number.

We are continually adding new content to the website and now have all posted back issues of the CFHA Newsletter. We are also looking at ways to use the website to develop dialogue and information sharing. Watch for more changes, and please forward your ideas and comments via the website.

**www.cfha.info**  
**Many thanks to webmaster, Randy Saylor!**

## Early Chapters: Vignettes from a Quaker Childhood

Submitted by Christopher Starr

### A CLOSE CALL WITH MANIC SIKHS

In 1947 my father, Francis Starr (1916-2000), was riding a motorcycle through Punjab in northwestern India. In the center of one town he found himself surrounded by Sikhs. They were armed and not at all pleased to see him. The cause, as he presently learned, was his beard. It was naturally red, but the Sikhs interpreted it as that of a Muslim, dyed red to show that he had made the hajj to Mecca. In those days a hajji riding through sikh territory was considered a grave provocation, and the question wasn't whether they were going to do him in but how, and who would have the honour. The problem was greatly compounded by the fact that they had no language in common.

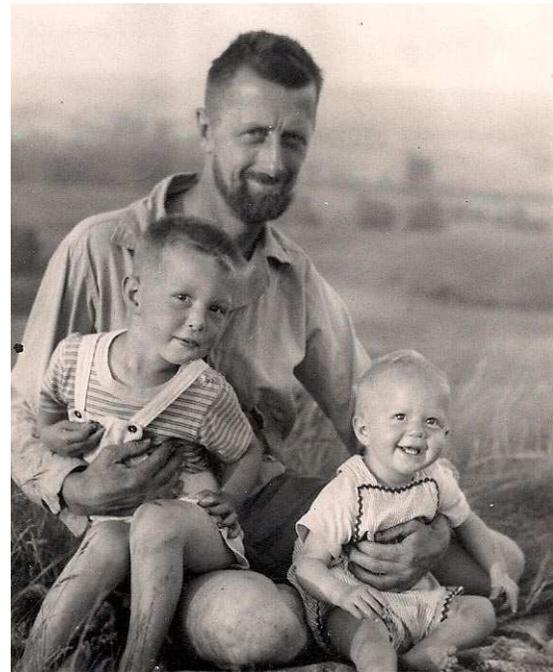
Just then a schoolboy came along who could sort of speak English. My daddy got him to explain to the Sikhs that he was a British Christian, not a Muslim at all, with the result that they let him go, he lived to tell the tale, and here I am. I regret that I never learned the name of the town. I would love to go there to look for that schoolboy, who must now be about 70 years old. What fun to show him pictures of me and my siblings and our families, so that he could see for himself what a big difference he made one day long ago.

### HOW THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS CRAMPED MY STYLE

Although I was born in Canada, lived almost a third of my life there, in total, and am a lifelong citizen, I never really felt at home there.

At the time I was conceived in what is now Pakistan, my parents were supposed to be transferred to southern China. However, just at that time the Communists were victorious in the south and sealed the border, so that my parents' organization sent them to Canada instead. Accordingly, in August 1949 I was born in the public hospital in Newmarket, Ontario.

I didn't learn about this until I was past 30. I was telling my daddy one day that, even though I spent many years in Canada, I never felt like I belonged there. His astonishing reply was "Thee was almost born in China." And after he had told the story of how it came about, my silent, enraged reaction was "Well, goddamn those Communists." I have always considered the Chinese Revolution a good thing, but their timing really ate it on a stick. I was supposed to be Starr of Sichuan, and instead I am Starr of Newmarket, Ontario. It has really put a kink in my legend, and I do not forgive.



Francis Starr with his two oldest children, Christopher Kenneth (b. 1949) and Margaret Sushila (b. 1951)

### "CHRISTOPHER, WOULD THEE LIKE TO GO BUG COLLECTING?"

I got my start in entomology in the summer of 1954. One day on the ancestral farm north of Toronto my grandmother, Elma McGrew Starr (1890-1985), came to me with a question that I still hear clearly after more than 50 years. "Christopher, would thee like to go bug collecting?" I had no idea what that meant, but I knew my grandmother had good ideas, so I said "Yes." It was the smartest thing I ever said.

I have no idea what possessed my grandmother to go bug collecting that day and the next couple of days, as I am not aware that she ever did so before or later. Our methods were of the very simplest. We would wander about, pick up whatever bugs could be safely caught and drop them into a jar of methyl alcohol. (Ethyl alcohol, being an instrument of the Devil, was not present on the farm.) We kept our collecting on a shelf in the bathroom, and I would go in there every now and then and just stare at these creatures, with my eyes hanging out. They had these faceted, staring eyes, these delicate little antennae reaching out from their heads, and jointed legs. They were positively from the moon. My life in science can fairly be regarded as a series of footnotes to that "Yes".

## CAST OUT OF PARADISE

The happiest of my early years were spent on the ancestral farm north of Toronto. Starr Elms was the home of my grandparents, Elmer & Elma Starr, and it had a row of elm trees where the long driveway met the road. For a time we lived in a house just next door, so that I had only to go up a hill to be in Starr Elms. There were a barn and livestock pens and 100 acres of fields and woods to explore, and I can hardly remember anything from time in our house. The spirit of that early life is wonderfully captured in Dylan Thomas's "Fern Hill".

This all came to an end just after my seventh birthday. My family and that of Gordon and Betty McClure had agreed to move to Ottawa in order to establish a meeting of the Society of Friends (Quakers). I had very little idea what was in store for me, but I quickly came to

consider that I had been cast out of paradise. I won't say that people in Ottawa treated me rudely or that I had to contend with any special tortures, but the city seemed like a place of horror in comparison with what I had known. It was many years before I was able to view urban life as in any way legitimate, and I still prefer to take city life in very small doses.

Many decades later, Christopher K. Starr is a professor at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad & Tobago. These passages are reprinted with permission from his reminiscences, *Like a Magpie*, <http://ckstarr.net/cks/ANECDOTE%20REV.pdf>. The memoirs of his grandmother, Elma M. Starr, appeared in the most recent issue of the *Canadian Quaker History Journal*. Christopher Starr is now editing the memoirs of his father, Francis Starr, for submission to the Journal. See Susan Reid's article on Edwin Abbott and Francis Starr in China in the 2007 issue of the Journal.

## “Bearing Witness”: Irving Stowe and Greenpeace

Born Irving Strasmich in Providence, Rhode Island in 1915, and having read Law at Brown and Yale, Irving moved to Vancouver, via New Zealand in 1966. Having joined the Religious Society of Friends and changing his last name to Stowe, in homage to abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowe, Irving became a full-time activist.

As a columnist for the underground newspaper *Georgia Straight*, Irving became passionate about stopping nuclear testing. In 1969, with other like-minded individuals, he formed the *Don't Make a Wave Committee*, the fore runner of Greenpeace. The committee was formed to protest and hopefully halt any future underground nuclear testing by the United States on Amchitka Island in the Aleutian Islands of Alaska.

Planning to sail a boat to the islands in the hope of stopping an upcoming test and in dire need of funds, Irving organized the Amchitka Concert in 1970. With performances by Chilliwack, Phil Ochs, James Taylor and Joni Mitchell, the concert raised enough funds to outfit a small ship to sail for the test site.

Delayed by growing protests in Canada and the United States, the crew of the ship Greenpeace was arrested by the U.S. Coastguard in the fall of 1971. Undeterred, Irving arranged for another ship, the Edgewater Fountain, to head to Amchitka Island. On November 6, 1971 after a tight Supreme Court decision in favour of the testing, President Nixon approved the detonation; the bomb exploded before the Edgewater Fountain could reach the area.

Exhausted and feeling defeated, Irving stepped down from the leadership of the *Don't Make a Wave Committee*.

However, in February 1972, three months after the two ships returned to Vancouver, the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission cancelled the remaining tests “for political and other reasons.” Irving Stowe died of pancreatic cancer in 1974 at the age of fifty-nine.

Barbara Stowe, Irving's daughter notes that “as members of the Religious Society of Friends, a pacifist sect with a long tradition of intense social activism, they progressed from dreaming to action.” Irving “believed in the Quaker practice of ‘bearing witness’ to wrongdoing.”

For more information about Greenpeace visit [www.greenpeace.org](http://www.greenpeace.org) or the Amchitka Concert visit [www.amchitka-concert.com](http://www.amchitka-concert.com)

Submitted by Andrew Cresswell



## Coming Events:

**May 15, 12:30: CYM Archives Working Group** at Yonge Street Meeting House, Newmarket.

**June 13, 2:30: Uxbridge Meetinghouse annual service.** See their website for details: [www.uxbridgequakermeetinghouse.com](http://www.uxbridgequakermeetinghouse.com)

### June 25—27, 2010 Conference of Quaker Historians and Archivists

This 18th biennial conference will be held at Wilmington College, Ohio. This is an accessible and rewarding opportunity to learn about a broad variety of Quakers, their meetings, and the influence they had on broader history. The program and registration information, are now available on line: <http://tiny.cc/4bLJL>

A number of CFHA members will be present, including Robynne Rogers Healey, who will preside over Session 7, The Rise of 20th Century American Quaker Evangelicalism.

**September 25: CFHA Annual General Meeting and Conference:** Woodlawn Place, South Norwich

The Meetinghouse is published three times annually  
 Submissions to The Meetinghouse should be submitted  
 By Email: [newsletter@cfha.info](mailto:newsletter@cfha.info)  
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 Ph: 905-471-9528 Website: [www.cfha.info](http://www.cfha.info)

## Jane's Corner:

An enquiry recently received by Jane:

*I am preparing a paper on Thomas Hodgkin, of Hodgkin's Disease fame, who was a Quaker and strong advocate for Canadian Indians, particularly in the Hudson's Bay Territory. The period he was most active in this work was 1830-1850. I have searched the archives in London, Wellcome Library and Friend's House Euston Road, and the Hudson's Bay Archives here in Winnipeg. He was a prolific letter writer both as a philanthropist and as a scientist collecting data of Aboriginal people. He was the founder of the Aborigine's Protection Society. I wondered if he had written to the Quakers in Canada and if so if any of the correspondence still exists?*

**Jane replied:** I am not aware of any letters in our archives. I have been told that the first factor of the Hudson's Bay Company was a Quaker. Are you aware that the Indian Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was in existence since the late 1600s? There may be some information available at the friend's historical library at Swarthmore College. . .Canadian Friends have an active native people's concern committee. Perhaps one of our readers will have the information you seek.

**Can anyone provide any letters from Thomas Hodgkin?**

## CFHA 2010 AGM & Conference Update

**Saturday September 25, 2010**

**Peaceable Kingdom – Unsound Friends:  
 Friends of Norwich Township**

*Exploring the concept of 'community' among Friends of various sects in Early Ontario*

**9:00am – 8:00pm**

**Woodlawn Place – South Norwich, Ontario  
 Grounds of the former Pine Street Meeting House**

**AGM, Bus Tour, Local Catering & Overnight Camping**

