

# Worcester Friends Meeting

Religious Society of Friends (Quaker)

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January - February 2010

## QUERIES

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

NEYM Faith and Practice 1986

## Clerk's Corner

by Clarence Burley

This newly called clerk went on an ecumenical binge the weekend of January 22-24. In the early part of Friday evening Worcester's Union Station was filled with people gathered under the theme of Worcester Cares (for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti.) A Caribbean band rocked the vast hall; the restaurant complimented hot and cold hors d'oeuvre; a number of tables around the hall appealed to the generosity of all the attenders, and a cash bar appealed to some. The big three were along one wall: United Way; Catholic Relief Services (featuring Bishop McManus;) and American Red Cross (with our often attender, Lisa Piehler.) Along the other side were the tables of several communities of faith, all with a Latin flavor, making their own appeals. I was most pleased to see representatives of the Dominican Republic community; this after the Haitian government in its distress declined assistance from its neighbor.

Later that evening Assumption College sponsored an Ecumenical Prayer Service for Christian Unity. This was honchoed by three bishops: McManus, Scruton and Methodios in their regalia. A modest Quaker clerk in a black blazer sat in a back row along with our neighbor Warren Hicks, rector of St. Luke's, in a Red Sox jacket. A parade of vested clergy proceeded and receded the service. Representatives of various denominations led prayers, offered readings, gave a reflection, took up a collection for Haitian relief

and brought symbolic artifacts to a front table. After the conventional cross, bible, and lamp, one participant presented a question mark. Go figure. I was pleased to renew my acquaintance with Henry Donahue, a senior priest at Blessed Sacrament (also a Pleasant Street faith group.) I knew Henry as a young curate at St. Peter's Church where he facilitated reciprocal week-end sleepovers for the kids of Temple Emanuel and the Catholic youth. Henry said he might drop in for worship with us sometime.

Warren gave me a heads-up about the next day's annual meeting of the Massachusetts Council of Churches right there at Assumption. By this time I was hooked, so I went on Saturday. The first person I saw as I parked was Virginia Swain, whom I had met at the Interreligious Forum. Virginia is founder and Director of the Institute for Global Leadership and the Center for Global Community and World Law, and a member of Friends Meeting at Cambridge. So I figured I was in the right place. After a period of worship, and a collection for Haiti, three moving presentations on the need for Christian unity (if not in thought and word, then in deed) led to breakout sessions on various topics. I joined the group interested in interreligious (beyond ecumenical) action. It was the largest group. Virginia was in it too. After we had finished introducing ourselves, we had only time to indicate our willingness to be further contacted before we were called back for the wrap up, and a very nice luncheon.

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On Sunday I visited the most ecumenical group of all, our small Quaker Meeting. I had told the breakout group that I was interested in interreligious dialogue because I see Friends as a microcosm of the interreligious world. We don't concern ourselves with one another's theology, only with the way that we express it in carrying out God's will as the Spirit leads us. We are an example, a pattern, for interreligious action. The words that came to me after my lost weekend among various faiths startled me and may startle you:

"Why, we're a bunch of Pentecostal Anarchists." We believe the Spirit speaks to and acts on each of us directly, and we reject all forms of coercive control and authority in our religious lives.

## Lucretia Mott



Lucretia Mott 1793-1880

Lucretia Coffin Mott, women's rights activist, abolitionist, and religious reformer, was born on January 3, 1793 in Nantucket, Massachusetts. Her parents were Quakers, and Lucretia Mott became a leading social reformer. She attended Nine Partners Quaker Boarding School in

New York State, and following graduation, she worked there as a teaching assistant. At Nine Partners, she met her husband James Mott, who also taught there. Her interest in women's rights began when she discovered that male teachers at the school were paid three times as much as the female staff.

Lucretia and James Mott lived in Philadelphia. They had six children. By 1821, Lucretia Mott became a Quaker minister, noted for her speaking abilities. The Motts were both supporters of William Lloyd Garrison and his American Anti-Slavery Society.

Lucretia Mott and her husband attended the famous World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840. There were six women delegates, all of whom were refused full participation. Following this, Lucretia Mott joined with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, also a delegate, to call the famous Seneca Falls Convention in New York in 1848 (at which, ironically, James Mott was asked to preside).

In 1850 Lucretia Mott wrote *Discourse on Woman*, a book about restrictions on women in the United States. In 1865, she began to advocate giving black Americans the right to vote.

Mott parted with the mainstream women's movement in one area, that of divorce. At that time it was very difficult to obtain divorce, and fathers were given custody of children. Stanton sought to make divorce easier to obtain and to safeguard women's access to and control of their children. The more conservative Mott opposed any significant legal change in divorce laws.

While keeping up her commitment to women's rights, she also maintained the full routine of a mother and housewife. She helped to found Swarthmore College in 1864, and continued to attend women's rights conventions.

*In a true marriage relation  
the independence of the hus-  
band and the wife is equal,  
their dependence mutual, and  
their obligations reciprocal.*

1879.  
*Lucretia Mott.*

Lucretia Mott maintained that "the kingdom of God is within man". She was part of the group of religious liberals who formed the Free Religious Association in 1807 with Ralph Waldo Emerson and others.

The Motts were active Hicksite Quakers. Lucretia served as clerk of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and traveled in the ministry. James Mott died in 1869, and Lucretia died on November 11, 1880.

*I have no idea of submitting tamely to injustice  
inflicted either on me or on the slave. I will oppose it  
with all the moral powers with which I am endowed.  
I am no advocate of passivity." - Lucretia Mott*

Mark your calendars and save the following Saturday evenings for the *Friends Spoken Word Series*: February 6, March 6, April 10, and May 8. The spoken word events we have held in the past were so successful, that the Peace, Social Concerns and Outreach Committee decided to give you more! Bring yourself, your friends, someone from your work, a neighbor... But do definitely join us for this exciting spoken word series.

Our Spoken Word Series will open on **Saturday, February 6** with an evening of Friends and friends of Friends sharing poems and prose that speaks to them of Love, Peace and Justice. This event will be a benefit for Haiti. All proceeds will go to the American Friends Service Committee's Haitian Relief Fund.

All Friends Spoken Word Series events will begin at 7:30 PM. Each of these monthly events will have refreshments, and a requested donation of \$5 (or more, if you are able and so inclined).



#### Saturday, March 6, at 7:30 PM

Stephen Collins will bring us the poet Walt Whitman in his one man show, *Unlaunch'd Voices: An Evening with Walt Whitman*. The program begins with Walt Whitman getting ready to celebrate his 70th birthday. Stephen Collins has traveled throughout New England and beyond presenting his carefully researched and excellently presented historical characters. Read more about him at his web site: [www.unlaunchedvoices.com](http://www.unlaunchedvoices.com)



#### Saturday, April 10 at 7:30 PM

Diane Edgecomb will perform *A Fire in My Heart: A Storyteller's Journey Among the Kurds*. This entertaining and insightful performance with award-winning storyteller Diane Edgecomb charts her years collecting the vanishing folkloric tales of the Kurdish people. This seven-year quest brought Diane to remote mountain villages in Turkey, places usually forbidden to outsiders. A master teller, Edgecomb will share legends from her new book, *A Fire In My Heart: Kurdish Tales* along with anecdotes of her travels up sheer mountain roads to record the last Kurdish storytellers. Diane's web site is [www.livingmyth.com](http://www.livingmyth.com)



#### Saturday, May 8 at 7:30 PM

Elisa Pearmaine will join us to share her program, *Tales of Wisdom and Wit for the Spiritual Journey*. Elisa is the author of two award winning books: *Doorways to the Soul: 52 Wisdom Tales from around the World*, (1998), and *Once Upon a Time: Storytelling to Teach Character and Prevent Bullying* (2006). She is a licensed mental health counselor specializing in teaching forgiveness and mindfulness through story.

You can learn more about Elisa Pearmaine's work by visiting her web site [www.wisdomtales.com](http://www.wisdomtales.com)



#### Stonyfield Farm Yogurt Containers

Save your Stonyfield Farm yogurt containers to contribute to both environmental and social efforts. Place empty, well washed containers (quart and 6 oz size) in the Stonyfield collection box in our kitchen pantry.

Every so often, Sandy Kocher will send a batch of containers to Stonyfield Yogurt in Londonderry, New Hampshire for recycling by another company that will transform them into toothbrush handles and other products. The containers are of polypropylene, #5 plastic, generally not accepted for local recycling, so this is an opportunity.

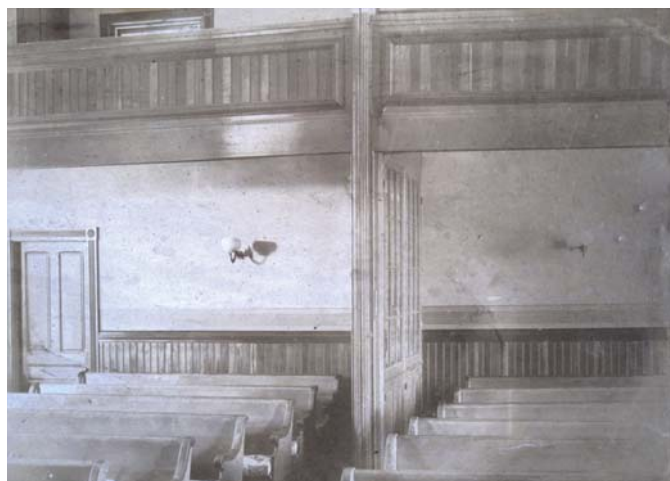
In return for the empty containers, Stonyfield will mail a group of coupons to Sandy for Stonyfield products. She sends most of these coupons to Abby's House, Worcester's fine facility for women and children who have suffered abuse and need a safe shelter.



While Friend Ellen Perry sorted and catalogued records from our meeting, Betty Jones repeatedly said, "There's more than that. I know there's more somewhere in the building."

Betty Jones was Clerk of the Worcester Friends Meeting during the uncomfortable time when the meeting split into two meetings. Now the records of those times and minutes from meetings held at the initial Oxford Street building have been recovered. There are books and more books of carefully maintained minutes and business transactions dating back into the early 1900's and before.

Hopefully, these records will be archived during the next year.



These photographs, found in a closet on the second floor of our present meetinghouse, are of the building that was the Worcester Friends Meeting on Oxford Street before the brick building that now stands there was built.

Here are a few of Friend Betty Jones' recollections about the brick Worcester Friends Meetinghouse that took the place of the wooden structure pictured above. These are excerpts from Betty Jones' oral history, recorded in 2007.



"...I think it was more ostentatious than Quaker Meetings usually are. ...There was stained glass, and there was a round back, and the seats were built into the wall, and I think it was gold leaf. I think it was gold leaf on the wall but yet later I think... that it turned out not to be gold leaf - but it looked like gold - it was ornate anyway, a little ornate.

"But the facing benches were in this circular form and they were made out of beautiful wood, you know, to match the wood of the pews and everything. ...I probably wouldn't remember, um, having elders sit up there. The minister sat there - and any body else who was going to participate in the service.

"...Back in those days we had monthly meeting suppers every month on a Wednesday, we had a church supper followed by monthly meeting. Women prepared it in the kitchen at Oxford Street and we loved it, and ah, my recollection is that we had it until it got waaaay, late. But in my growing up years that was just kinda a nice social occasion."

*Editor's note: If you are interested in reading more of Betty Jones' oral history, you can find it in the library along with Hermann Patt's.*

## QUAKER CHUCKLES

- from a book found in our library -

One time at Yearly Meeting, Rufus Jones, to impress upon Friends the importance of being cordial to strangers, said, "The members of a certain Meeting died or moved away until there was only one man left. Faithfully every First Day morning he went to open the doors and arrange everything about the house. At meeting time he sat in his usual place until time to close.

"One morning a stranger went in and sat down. When the preparations were all made, the Friend turned about facing the stranger and said, 'Friend, thee has my seat.'"



**Woolman Hill  
Quaker Retreat Center**  
[www.woolmanhill.org](http://www.woolmanhill.org)

**February 12-14**  
Food for The Long Haul  
A Singing Retreat  
Elisabeth Dearborn &  
Jesse Palidofsky

**February 19-21**  
Clerking: It's More Than Just  
Meeting for Business  
Jan Hoffman & Susan Loucks

**February 19-21**  
Minute by Minute: Capturing  
the Sense of the Meeting  
Melissa Foster & Carl Williams

**March 5 - 7**  
Radical Simplicity  
Jim Merkel

**March 26-28**  
Sharing Our Stories  
Intergenerational  
Women's Retreat  
Karin Sprague & Friends

### Where are we?

Friends by geographical  
distribution in the U.S.

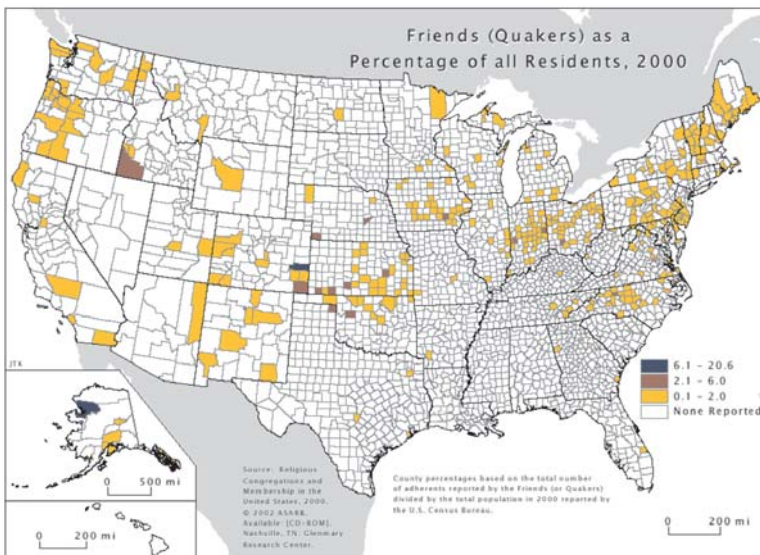
## Cemetery Policy Question

In the early 18th century the Leicester Meeting wrote to the Smithfield Quarterly Meeting to request permission to build a meeting house "near the burying ground". This is the cemetery that our Worcester Friends Meeting now owns.

We currently have no written policy regarding burials in our cemetery. To remedy that oversight the Cemetery Committee is proposing a policy, which will be brought to the Meeting for Business in March.

Because of the length of the policy we hope that all who are interested can read the policy before the business meeting, and print out their own copy and bring it with them.

We will have a few copies available for those who need them, but it will be a great help in expediting the meeting if those present have already read the policy.



A year ago, 12/08/08, there was a press conference outside the mayor's office in city hall to protest a hate crime that had recently been committed. Today, 12/21/09, there was another press conference at the same location. This conference mentioned with some satisfaction the conviction and sentencing of the perpetrator of the year-old crime, but its main thrust was to deplore the several recent anti-Semitic vandalisms on our west side and at the Hebrew Cemetery and to show civic support for the Jewish community suffering these outrages. Has chopping off one hydra head sprouted more?

The usual cast of political characters had their usual say. In addition the spectators were energized by Councilor Haller cheerleading "Worcester, no place for hate", by the sadness of Rabbi Berger of Temple Emanuel, which suffered vandalism, and by a perfectly charming young Latina minister, representing a coalition of Latino ministries, who pledged support for the Jewish community with her cries of, "Shalom."

My prayer is that this year's press conference may yield better results than did last year's.

One glimmer of light, of energy, that this prayer may be answered lies in the conference that Mayor Lukes had already called in her office the previous Tuesday morning. Rabbis Berger and Bernstein, Bishop Reilly, Pastor Tom McKibbens of First Baptist, Jeff Bailey of the Inter-religious Forum, Pastor Richard Wright of Emmanuel Baptist, the Mayor, Tom Gorman her Special Assistant, and this shy Quaker were there at the Mayor's behest to see if a new interreligious group could be activated with a mission that would include education and outreach in dealing with what the Mayor saw as a civic problem with religious overtones.

The first step appears to be the formation of a roster, a census, of religious organizations interested in participating. Rabbi Bernstein, who is the usual work-horse, offered to prepare a grant proposal to approach charitable foundations for funding such a roster. Tom Gorman agreed to work with him, looking forward to a next meeting after 1/30/10. I hope Friends will support my enthusiasm for this Worcester-wide alliance.

## **Fifth Sunday Discussion on January 31**

Frank Kartheiser, Executive Director of Worcester Interfaith (WI) and Mary Ann Kristan of Blessed Sacrament were our guests and featured speakers on Fifth Sunday, January 31 at 9:30 AM. This Fifth Sunday discussion was part of the Meeting's outreach to strengthen our ties to the community.

Founded in 1993, Worcester Interfaith is a multi-issue, multi-racial broad based community organization, comprised of 25 dues-paying institutions that reflect the religious, racial, ethnic and geographic diversity of the city. WI has built bridges between congregational and community leaders and across religious, socio-economic, racial and ethnic boundaries to accomplish much in the areas of jobs, neighborhood improvements, public safety, education and youth, and to draw attention to the disproportionate ways in which these issues affect low-income and minority populations.

Friends who attended this discussion were deeply impressed with the work that WI has done. We were especially pleased to learn about their focus on the Worcester Public Schools. WI has worked to create jobs

for inner city youth and to keep swimming pools open in the summer. The focus is to "reweave the fabric of life" by building relationships, hearing others' stories, finding common ground and working together. WI asks what challenges do families face. They ask: where do these challenges come together in a way that will lead us to work together? The aim is to come together to the table, find common ground in order to keep democracy alive.

While WI recognizes that broader national political problems and the federal budget may cause neighborhood problems, this group works locally. People have said to Frank Kartheiser, "How can I think about Biafra when I can't get my street cleaned?" WI wants to develop a sense of power - a sense of people working together to feel empowered together in order to eliminate the feelings of powerlessness.

Friends present were enthusiastic and inspired by the presence of Frank Kartheiser and Mary Ann Kristan. We hope to see a strong alliance build between Friends and WI in the future.

## Worcester Friends' Peace and Social Concerns Committee Co-sponsors a Film Event:

Join filmmaker Craig Saddlemire for a screening of his recent documentary film, *Neighbor by Neighbor: Mobilizing an Invisible Community in Lewiston, Maine*.

**Monday, February 8 - Worcester, MA**

**Time: 6 to 8 pm (film to follow pot luck supper)**

**Location: 5 Pleasant St., 2nd Floor, Downtown Worcester**

The film screening will be accompanied by a multi-lingual discussion with several groups in Worcester organizing for people power. It will be a chance to be inspired and to see how our struggles are linked, as well as begin a conversation about how we can be more connected.

Our Peace and Social Concerns committee joins an impressive list of Co-sponsors of this event: Stone Soup; Worcester Roots Project and the Toxic Soil Busters Co-op; Ex-prisoners and Prisoners Organizing for Community Advancement (EPOCA); Neighbor to Neighbor, Worcester chapter; and many more.

### About the Film:

This story of ordinary people becoming community organizers and agents of their own destiny is not to be missed. In 2004, the city of Lewiston announced plans to flatten part of a downtown residential neighborhood to make way for a new four-lane boulevard -- an urban renewal scheme that would have displaced 850 people, most of them low income, from their homes. Film maker Saddlemire followed residents of the targeted area as they worked together to defeat those plans, and in turn developed and pursued their own vision of neighborhood improvement. <http://www.roundpointmovies.org/roundpointmovies/neighbor.html>

Contact [StoneSoupWorcester@gmail.com](mailto:StoneSoupWorcester@gmail.com); 508-335-7783 and let them know you'll be there. <http://stonesoupworcester.org/>



## American Friends Service Committee's South Eastern New England's Annual Dinner

by Phil Stone

On January 24th, Katie and I traveled to Providence for AFSC's South Eastern New England's Annual Dinner. After a wonderful dinner, we heard guest speakers Joseph Gerson, Coordinator of the Peace and Economic Security Program for AFSC's New England Regional Office, and Peter Lems, the Program Director for Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran at the American Friends Service Committee.

Joseph Gerson looked at the historical and current context of this "endless war" that seems to enthrall our policy leaders. Covering 1,500 years of history in 15 minutes, he said that Afghanistan's history has been shaped by its neighbors. At different times it was within the spheres of influence of the Mongols, the Persians,

and the Arabs. In more recent years it has been subject to British, Russian, American and Iranian influence and control.

Gerson said that the boundaries of modern Afghanistan were the product of a political treaty between the British and the Russians. The boundaries drawn up by the Europeans ignored the realities of the geographic areas actually occupied by the various ethnic groups, such as the Pashtun (42%), Tajik (27%), Hazara (9%), and Uzbek (9%). He noted that the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan created by the British divided the Pashtun area, which is the focus of current military actions by the U.S.. He reminded us that Pakistan's borders were

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## American Friends Service Committee's South Eastern New England's Annual Dinner (cont.)

by Phil Stone

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another legacy of the British Colonial era, and that the tensions that exist between Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India play a major role in the current conflicts in the region.

Peter Lems, AFSC National Program Director for Education and Advocacy on Iraq and Afghanistan shared photographs of his recent trip to Afghanistan, where he visited with AFSC staff, contributed to a conflict assessment, and helped design the organization's program work for the coming year.

He spoke movingly of the Afghan people who are working to build the civil societies we hear so little about, but that are at the heart of efforts to build peace in the region. Peter noted the important role played by women, who are using programs such as maternal health as vehicles to promote womens' literacy and higher education.

Peter also spoke of the imperial desire of the United States to gain access to the oil and gas reserves of Central Asia, formerly part of the Soviet Union. He showed



a map with the proposed pipeline route that would move gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan and Pakistan, and that would provide an alternative route to pipelines through Russia or Iran, which are not considered to be reliable allies of the United States.

The Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline (TAP or TAPI) will run from the Dauletabad gas field to Afghanistan. From there TAPI will be constructed alongside the highway running from Herat to Kandahar, and then via Quetta and Multan in Pakistan. The final destination of the pipeline will be the Indian town of Fazilka, near the border between Pakistan and India.

## Dismas House and Worcester Friends



Dismas House is a supportive community that provides transitional housing and services to former prisoners and real-life educational opportunities to students from area colleges,

and from throughout the US and the world! The men and women of Dismas House live and work as a family, helping each other grow towards the goal of reintegration into society. Dismas provides a consensus-based, sober alternative to a return to the streets, and a return to incarceration.

The key to Dismas House is the phrase "Dismas is family". The success of the house is its collaborative effort. People living in the house pay part of the oper-

ating expenses. Students are given opportunities for internships in non-profit management and/or live-in positions in the Dismas community. There are simple rules, such as no violence, drugs or alcohol; and there are expectations, such as attendance at dinners, curfews, chores and participating in house meetings and activities.

For several years Worcester Friends have been bringing dinner each second Wednesday of the month to the Dismas House on Richards Street. Those Worcester Friends have come to know and appreciate the residents. One of our cars sports the bumper sticker that says "Dismas is Family". Each month that we share dinner with the "guys" at Dismas, the more like family they become.

The newest Dismas House project is the Dismas Family Farm in Oakham. The 12 acre farm is a new, organic residential farm project for homeless former prisoners and their families. We have been enjoying monthly

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## Dismas House and Worcester Friends (cont.)

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reports from our Dismas friends who work on the farm, and find it to be personally healing and spiritually rewarding.

Recent budget cuts have seriously hurt some of the Dismas House programs. We were sad to learn that the Almost Home Program on the grounds of the Worcester County Jail was closed last July because of deep state budget cuts. It seems only yesterday that we celebrated the opening of this house.

There is a way you can help. Do you have a bank account with TD Bank? If you do, you can ask to become an affinity member for Dismas. The code is A1122. At the end of the year, the Bank will add up the value of all participating accounts and make a donation to Dismas. Dismas needs 50 TD Bank members to join up, and it costs nothing to join. ALSO - if you sign up for a new account with TD Bank, TD Bank will deposit \$25 into your new account for joining affinity.

## Grace Blaber

*Worcester Friends were sad to learn about Grace Blaber's passing. Grace was a mainstay at our meeting for many years. After she moved into Eddy Pond, she was joyfully able to come to Meeting for Worship a few times. We hold Grace and her family in the Light as we remember her. -Editor*

### **Grace (Riordan) Blaber from the Worcester Telegram**

Grace (Riordan) Blaber, 83, formerly of Worcester, died Sunday, January 17, 2010, at her home at The Lodge at Eddy Pond, Auburn.

Born in 1926 in New York City, she was the daughter of John Riordan and Helen Braasch. After graduating from Hunter High School at age 16, she attended Hunter College of the City of New York, from which she received her B.A. degree summa cum laude. During and after college, she worked in the French Consulate's Overseas Press Office in New York City.

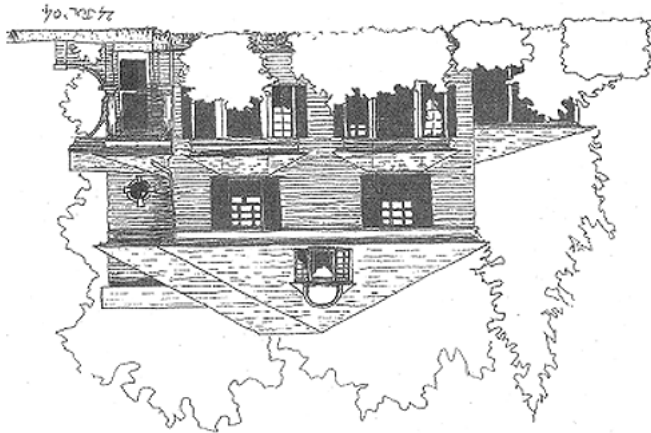
In 1950, she married Joseph Blaber of New York City, and together they had seven children. After living in upstate New York for many years, Grace and her family moved to the Worcester area in 1972. When her children were grown, she completed two master's degree programs at Assumption College.

She worked as a media specialist in the Worcester and Shrewsbury public school systems for almost 20 years. After retirement, she served as a volunteer at Memorial Hospital's library for patients and families.

Grace was an active member of the Worcester meeting of the Society of Friends, and greatly appreciated the companionship of her fellow Quakers. Passionate about issues of social justice and curious about other cultures, Grace enjoyed traveling -- especially to Paris -- reading, quilting, and the company of her family and friends.

She leaves six children: Michael, of Wellesley, Mass.; Maura, of Worcester; Gina, of Sebastopol, California; Joseph O., of New York City; Christine, of Medford, Mass.; and John, of San Francisco; as well as nine grandchildren. She was predeceased by her son David, who died in 2004.

Burial will be private. A memorial service with the Worcester Society of Friends will be scheduled soon. The Athy Memorial Home, Worcester, is assisting with arrangements.



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# Worcester Friends Meeting Religious Society of Friends (Quaker)

## Scheduled Meetings

Monthly Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business meets on each 2nd Sunday at 9 AM

Clerk: Karen Sargent

Recording Clerk: Barbara Sullivan

Recorder: Phil Stone

Treasurer: Mark Sullivan

Committees meet at 9:30 AM

Trustees meet on 1st Sunday. Clerk: Phil Stone

Peace and Social Concerns/Outreach meet 1st Sunday: Mary Chenaille

Ministry and Counsel meets on the 4th Sunday. Clerk: Brian Poynton

Library: Clerk: Clarence Burley

Building and Grounds: Clerk: Paul Gallagher

First Day School: Clerk: Katie Green

**Editor's note:** There will not be a *Friends Newsletter* in March or April, 2010 unless someone else is able to put it together. The minutes for January's Meeting for Business and the names of the new committee clerks are not available as this goes to "press". This month's newsletter has been difficult for me, and I have been unable to put the time I need into my own work, developing the show, *Meet Mary Rowlandson*. When we work on our Meeting's business at the expense of our own, it can create resentment. I want to create our newsletter from a place of love, and I need a break. I should be able to do the newsletter in May. Should anyone wish to put the next newsletter together, I will be happy to talk with them. -ktg