

Dear Friend,

Since coming to the Continent five years ago (I am an American), my perceptions of war and peace have changed considerably. As opposed to the situation in my home country, the soil upon which I walk and work is stained with blood. So, too, have people here known what it is like to live under the power of a cruel oppressor.

What I now propose is to write a book including the experiences of Friends who lived through the Second World War years on the Continent. My basic question is as follows. I begin from the premise that members of the Society of Friends represent one of the most decent groups of people which exists. From our teaching that there is that of God in every person, it follows naturally that there must be a core of good in anyone attracted to our Society. How then do such people react to Hitlerian oppression?

Because of the sensitivity of the subject, a number of aspects of this work need to be clarified. First, the work is intended to be entirely non-judgemental. The oppressor here was cruel. Human beings are just that, and not super-human gods. We fail; we realize much later what we should have done; we are frightened. These feelings and actions are also part of the human experience.

Second, complete confidentiality will be maintained. In the final work, it is my intention to change all names and details which would make a person identifiable. During the editing process, interviews will be designated by number rather than by name.

I would therefore like to interview anyone who was older than 15 in 1945 (i.e., who is now older than 52 or 53), who lived on the Continent during any period between 1935 and 1945, and who was a Friend then or who is a Friend now. It is NOT necessary that one have been a Friend at the time of the war. I would be interested in speaking to the children of people who lived through this period if their parents are no longer alive.

After hearing from you, I will contact you regarding a mutually convenient time to conduct a 1-2 hour personal interview. If a personal interview is not possible, other arrangements will be made.

Thank you for your cooperation with this project.

Yours in Peace and Love,  
Charles D. Tauber  
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9663 TC Nieuwe Pekela  
The Netherlands  
telephone: 31-5978-46775



### Abington Friends School

Abington Friends School is a coeducational day school, Four-year-old Kindergarten through Grade 12. For more information about admissions, or about employment opportunities, call or write:

James E. Achterberg  
Headmaster  
575 Washington Lane  
Jenkintown, Pennsylvania 19046  
(215) 886-4350

### CREMATION

*Friends are reminded that the Anna T. Jeanes Fund will reimburse cremation costs. (Applicable to members of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting only.)*

For information write or telephone  
HENRY BECK  
6300 Greene Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19144 — V1 3-7472

## DYNAMIC MEETINGS . . .

1983

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# The Growth of Brooklyn Friends Meeting

by Leonard S. Kenworthy

Several years ago the Brooklyn (N.Y.) Friends Meeting was composed largely of a group of older Quakers with an attendance of about 25 people on most First-days. The meeting was so small that in the early 1970s it considered closing the Brooklyn Friends School for various reasons, including the lack of Quakers to serve on the Joint Schools Committee with the Friends Seminary in Manhattan.

Today Brooklyn Meeting is often attended by 90 to 100 people. Both the First-day school and a meeting for discussion are lively, and the meeting is concerned with a wide range of social issues. And several years ago Brooklyn Friends School was relocated nearby in the former premises of the Brooklyn Law School; it now has an enrollment of 570 students.

*Leonard Kenworthy, prolific writer on Quaker topics and oldest regular attendee at Brooklyn (N.Y.) Meeting, kindly responded to FRIENDS JOURNAL's request to write about his dynamic group.*



Virginia Owens

One of the outstanding features of the Brooklyn Meeting today is its youthfulness. The oldest regular attendee is in his early 70s, and there are only a few Friends in their 50s and 60s. Most attendees are in their late 20s and 30s.

Individuals explain this encouraging increase in numbers and vitality in different ways. Extrinsic factors include the high rent in Manhattan which has drawn many young people to Brooklyn and the rise of the "brownstone movement," with young couples purchasing and renovating old houses.

But those two factors do not explain the gradual growth of the meeting over a period of several years. Perhaps it is best explained by the meeting's ability to involve attendees and members in a wide variety of ways.

Certainly meeting for worship is the central core of the life of this growing fellowship. Often there are "gathered meetings." A few Friends speak frequently, but during the course of a year 40 to 50 members and attendees contribute to the vocal ministry. Vocal prayer, however, is infrequent.

Last year the First-day school met at

10 a.m. so that the teachers did not need to miss meeting for worship. But the time has been moved back to 11, and the children come to the meeting for the last 15 minutes. The older boys and girls, in particular, like that arrangement as there is likely to be more speaking in that part of the meeting for worship.

After meeting, coffee hour is in the social room. Members, attenders, and visitors mingle, and many of them stay for a long time. That practice seems to fill a particular need in a metropolitan area with its tendency to be impersonal.

For several years there were one-day retreats, usually on the premises of some other Friends meeting, with speakers such as Charles Perera, Ed and Marian Sanders, Elizabeth Watson, and John Yungblut, followed by worship-sharing groups. Almost every year the Committee on Ministry and Oversight arranges at least one special meeting, particularly for attenders, that is usually on the subject of meeting for worship. Ordinarily that consists of a panel followed by

questions and comments from several other persons.

The meeting for discussion is held on First-days at 10 a.m. and draws from 15 to 30 persons. On the first First-day of the month an intergenerational group sings hymns during that period. On other days there is usually an introductory talk followed by general discussion. Often there is a theme for the month, such as the reading together of Kenneth Boulding's *Nayler Sonnets*; talks on "My Journey to Quakerism"; a review of current events in Central America, South Africa, and the Middle East; or readings by several individuals of their favorite devotional materials.

Nor are social concerns neglected. For many months the meeting had as its major concern the Newgate project, caring for the children whose mothers were visiting their husbands in the nearby house of detention. Fortunately that project ended when the house of detention finally permitted children into that building. Friends now are active in the

nuclear freeze campaign, in work of the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Committee on National Legislation, and other social projects. Potluck lunches and dinners often raise money for such projects as the new meetinghouse in Soweto, South Africa.

Other factors which help account for the renaissance of Brooklyn Meeting are: a lively newsletter; a book table and a library; a meeting directory; active Ministry and Oversight and Peace and Social Concerns committees (as well as others); rotation of members on committees; and the use of the meetinghouse by several groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, the Adult Literacy Program, and a group of Haitian refugees.

Represented in the meeting fellowship are persons of different races, professions or vocations, lifestyles, and theological beliefs. But for the most part individuals of varying backgrounds respect each other and help to create a caring community—a religious society of friends. □

*Fritz Eichenberg*



**AND A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM** is a wood engraving done on Swiss Pear 9" x 12" horizontal in an edition of 100 signed and numbered prints. Price is \$150 (unframed) subject to prior sale and price subject to change. Fritz Eichenberg, a Quaker, became well known for his prints and illustrations for the new editions of "Wuthering Heights", "Jane Eyre" and the works of Dylan Thomas. He has been awarded four honorary degrees of Doctor of Fine Arts.

His prints are a part of the permanent collections of the Library of Congress, the National Gallery, the Metropolitan Museum, Yale University Library, the Hermitage, the Vatican and the Bibliotheque Nationale.

This engraving is only available from the Quaker Hill Bookstore, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond, Indiana 47374.

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