

Abington Quarterly Meeting for Business

Held at Richland Monthly Meeting

Second Month, 4th, 2018

Abington MM – 5 : Byberry MM – 0 : Foulkeways WG – 0 : Gwynedd MM - 8 :
Horsham MM -2 : Norristown MM – 1 : Plymouth MM – 5 : Pottstown WG -1 :
Richland MM -15 : Upper Dublin -3: Unami MM – 5 : Guests from Franconia
Mennonite Conf. – 2

Friends approved the agenda.

Richland welcomed everyone to the meeting. Jack Schick made Friends aware that Richland has applied through the historical society to get a historical marker for the most important Underground Railroad station in Upper Bucks County. The approval should come at the beginning of March. Richland also updated Friends about other recent happenings in their community.

Friends approved the minutes of Tenth Month.

Friends approved Paige Menton as recording clerk and minuted their appreciation for the recording work of Judy Inskeep.

Art D'Adamo was approved as AQ Representative from Gwynedd. Tom Peterson was approved as AQ Representative from Unami, and Friends minuted their appreciation for Bob Leber's service as the previous Unami Representative.

Dan Hazelton was approved as Trustee from Unami, and Bob Taylor was approved for a second term on Trustees from Abington.

Loretta Fox of Abington presented a minute regarding Benjamin Lay, a former member of Abington, who was a passionate abolitionist. The minute was approved at Abington in November. The Quarter endorsed the minute (attached). London Monthly Meeting is writing a similar minute because Benjamin Lay was born in England.

Representatives from Friends schools in the Quarter spoke about what has been

going on in their schools. The representatives included: Alex Brosowsky, Quaker School at Horsham; Nancy Donnelly, United Friends School; Mason Barnett, Gwynedd Friends School; and Fran Blackstone and Sarah Sweeney-Denham, Plymouth Meeting Friends School.

The Quaker School at Horsham is celebrating its 35th year and is just over capacity at 77 students in the building they moved into ten years ago.

United Friends School focuses on one testimony each year; this year's focus is stewardship. They are also focusing on immigration. After Hurricane Maria, the school studied Puerto Rico and collected relief materials. There are 110 students.

Gwynedd Friends School has 109 students, ages 2-5. The school recently received licensure from the state to serve its youngest students. In their reorganization, the preschool committee was disbanded, and an independent board of directors was formed. The school then sought accreditation from the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools and has been involved in a year of thorough self-study. The meeting has worked with the school to make renovations to shared spaces.

Plymouth Meeting Friends School has 124 students, 3 years old to 6th grade. They continue to draw inspiration from their mission to prepare children to share their voices in the world and to listen to the voices of others. The Mexican exchange is in its 48th year, and the students from Cuernavaca just left last week. PMFS students will go to Mexico next month. Sarah observed that school parents have recently been saying that they are looking for a community not only for their children, but for themselves.

Business resumed after meeting for worship with Richland.

Henry Beck reported on two projects at Pottstown Worship Group: supporting Quaker House and supporting the Peace Tax resolution put forth regularly in Congress by John Lewis. They are looking for members of other meetings to sign their petition supporting the Peace Tax (attached). The executive director of the Peace Tax Fund, Malachy Kilbride, would like to have a meeting locally if members of peace churches are interested. Friends are asked to contact Henry or Malachy if interested. Pottstown Worship Group asks that each meeting consider supporting their minute about the Peace Tax Fund.

Pam Yaller of Upper Dublin discussed the details of this year's Interfaith Peace Walk, which will take place on April 29, 2018, and will coincide with other peace walks around the country. It will begin at Arch Street Meeting and end at Al Aqsa Mosque. Buses will be available for Plymouth, Upper Dublin, Gwynedd, and Richland area participants to take to Center City. More information will be forthcoming.

The organizers of the Interfaith Peace Walk are requesting a grant from AQM Fund to cover the costs of the buses. Friends approved going forward with this grant request.

Gary Delp and Carolyn Marinko spoke about the Worm Project, a project of the Franconia Mennonite Conference. The aim is to raise money to purchase deworming tablets from pharmaceutical companies at a greatly reduced rate. Nine million tablets were distributed last year to people in thirty countries. The project focuses on children ages 1-5.

It was suggested that the Quarter give \$1,500 from the AQM Fund. Friends approved the proposal to request that amount from the fund.

Rebecca Cratin from Plymouth reported that Plymouth Monthly Meeting is in agreement with the minute brought forward by Multnomah Monthly Meeting in North Pacific Yearly Meeting concerning the new United Nations General Assembly's Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Amelia Diamond announced that JFC/MSFC will be held June 17-22 at George School. Invitations will be sent soon.

Respectfully submitted,

Paige Menton
Amelia Diamond

Recording Clerk
AQ Clerk

Minute regarding former Abington Meeting member, Benjamin Lay

Approved by Abington Monthly Meeting

November 12, 2017

Abington Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends recognizes Benjamin Lay's dedication to equality, and his willingness to repeatedly speak his messages of Truth to a society that was in denial about the evils of slavery. We acknowledge that Benjamin Lay used radical activism in his attempts to teach his peers to recognize the equality before God of all people, regardless of race or gender. He lived his life with integrity according to his Quaker beliefs, and he called others, especially slave-owners, to accountability.

Benjamin Lay was written out of membership at Abington Monthly Meeting on the thirtieth day, eleventh month, 1737 (which by the Quaker calendar, while the Julian calendar was in use, would have been January 30, 1738), because his zealous actions were considered disruptive. It is now known that at least two of the Friends who led the discernment about writing Benjamin Lay out of membership in the Society of Friends were slave-owners and were likely targeted by Benjamin Lay's anti-slavery activism. Benjamin Lay was disowned decades before Quakers were disowned for being slave-owners.

We now recognize the truth behind Benjamin Lay's abolitionist efforts. Although we may not reinstate membership for someone who is deceased, we recognize Benjamin Lay as a Friend of the Truth and as being in unity with the spirit of our Abington Monthly Meeting.

Pottstown Worship Group
C/o Henry Beck, henrywb@gmail.com
First Month, 15th.

Friends

Members of the Pottstown Worship Group, (under the care of Gwynedd Meeting), along with others from traditional Peace Churches, recently met with the executive director of the Peace Tax Fund, Malachy Kilbride at the Akron Mennonite Church. . We have committed to action to assist passage of this bill.,

The members of the Pottstown Worship Group, have been under the weight of a concern for the traditional Quaker Peace Testimony. Friends deeply held religious convictions have led many to declare themselves to be conscientious objectors and to refuse to participate in wars. Many others have refused to pay their taxes, as a way of avoiding paying for wars. Currently the United States is engaged in multiple wars in multiple continents. Many of us have become quiet in our opposition to these actions.

Our worship group has discerned that one way to work for peace and religious liberty is to work in support of “The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act of 2017,” House Resolution 1947, which has been introduced into the Ways and Means Committee by John Lewis. This bill, if enacted, would permit those who are conscientious objectors to war to pay their taxes without paying for war.

If you share our convictions, please sign the petition for the Peace Tax Fund. <http://peacetaxfund.org/petition/> We also are asking the Quarter to pass this request on to Yearly Meeting encouraging those who have similar convictions to sign the petition.

Members of our worship group will be attempting to meet again with our representative, Ryan Costello. If others live in his district and would like to join us, that would be most welcome, please contact Henry Beck at henrywb@gmail.com. We are also interested in identifying Friends who live in the 7th district, represented by Patrick Meehan. Pat Meehan is a Republican member of the Ways and Means Committee, getting him to co-sponsor this bill would be very helpful to its eventual passage.

We look forward to hearing your positive response to these requests, and appreciate other suggestions to help this bill move forward.

Henry Beck and other members
Pottstown Worship Group.