

9th Month

MIDCOAST MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
Damariscotta, Maine
NEWSLETTER

Sept. 2006



The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:22,23

September

Sunday	September 3	10 a.m.	Food Pantry Day *Annual Worship/Picnic at Small Point
Fri.-Sun.	September 8-10		Fall Gather, Friends Camp, South China (See July/Aug. newsletter for details.)
Friday	September 15	6 p.m./7 p.m.	Potluck/Monthly Meeting for Business

October

Sunday	October 1		Food Pantry Day
Sunday	October 15	After Worship	Meeting for Business

*Look inside for more information regarding these items.

~Calendar events are held at the meetinghouse, unless otherwise noted.~

Sunday Meeting for Worship is held at the meetinghouse, 77 Belvedere Rd., Damariscotta, 10:00 a.m.
Meetinghouse phone: 207-563-3757. Directions: Take US Route 1 to Damariscotta and turn onto Belvedere Rd.
(left if coming from the south, right if coming from the north--Miles Home Health Care building on the corner).
The meetinghouse is the second building on the right, .2 mile from the corner.

Moving? Changing your e-mail address? Don't forget to let us know. Please remember that when you receive the newsletter by e-mail, you save the Meeting money and you lighten our workload. To receive the newsletter by e-mail, kindly send a request to Diane Kirkman at diane_kirkman@hotmail.com. Thanks!

For newsletters, important links, & a current calendar, visit our website: www.midcoastfriendsmeeting.org.

The Entirely Unofficial **MONTHLY MEETING NOTES**, 7th month of 2006

I know you're used to seeing minutes from meetings for worship for business here, but due to the influence of gremlins, the July minutes are unavailable (although you can get some details and a flavor of that meeting by taking a look at this issue's "Clerk's Corner" below). Should the July minutes become available, they will be published in a later issue of the newsletter. There is no business meeting in August, so there are no minutes for the eighth month. --Ed.



CLERK'S CORNER

July 2006

I wish all of you could have been at the July Monthly Meeting. After the potluck dinner, we settled into worship for a few minutes, and after a reading from George Fox's journal, we began our work.

There is always a flurry of what one might call "housekeeping," little details such as reading and approving the minutes of the previous meeting, etc. We got through that part and then addressed the real center of our work.

It was a three-pronged effort, all sections of which seemed to seamlessly mesh with the work and the aims of the others. It was a body of work such as I have seldom seen in business meetings, and I came away excited and refreshed about the way Midcoast Meeting is trending. Maybe we are getting nearer to where we want to be!

The first section was from **Jean Crawford**, who is putting her efforts into publicity for our Meeting, crafting an all-purpose paragraph about who we are, what we value, and how we go about our business, inviting people to join us and see for themselves. This paragraph will be appended to specific announcements of programs Ministry & Counsel is planning for the fall, and perhaps beyond. We need to be out there telling people about ourselves, making ourselves more visible. So that is underway.

Linda Cote-Small reported that Ministry & Counsel is planning programs, as I mentioned, such as interesting speakers and films that have a peace or spiritual theme that will involve the public, panel discussions and gatherings of different sorts that will involve the public as well as our people. We will hear more about these things as plans progress. And as always, everyone's view are welcomed and sought.

The third section is the outcome of the two meetings we have held about doing more deep work around the subject of Peace. The central idea which came out of these meetings was to set ourselves up as a Peace Center, though we don't quite know yet what that will look like. **Karen Cadbury** will be putting together a steering committee, drawing on the ideas which came from those two meetings, and creating something like a loose timeline for accomplishing what we want to do. You will hear more about this as time goes on. Please contact Karen if you want to be a part of this committee or if you have particular skills you think would be of help.

There is a new feeling centered on these developments that recognizes what these efforts can do for the Meeting. With new people becoming acquainted with us, we will bring more people into the processes we envision. They will bring children with them, we hope, and First Day School might have more activity and life. There will be more people to help with the work we do, committee-wise or otherwise. This thrust will result in more bonding and cohesiveness within the Meeting. I could go on and on.

I know that, with God's help, we can do this work, and I felt a sense of corporate leading among the people who were present that Friday, in spite of the risks of failure and the costs to us all. But I am an optimist, and I hope you understand that these are only my own personal reactions to what went on. I am eagerly awaiting further developments as they occur, and I am fully engaged with the work involved.

QUERY: Meeting Business

Are meetings for business held in a spirit of worship and prayerful search for the way of Truth? Are all members encouraged to use their talents in the service of the meeting? Do you undertake your proper share of the work and financial support of the meeting?

~MEMORIAL MINUTE~
NATALIE WRIGGINS
6/27/35-1/3/06

Natalie arrived at Midcoast Meeting in 1989, when we were meeting in the space available at Miles Hospital. She caused no ruffle in our midst, and we began to know her at a leisurely pace, until after a while it was unthinkable that she had not been a part of our community since the beginning. She slipped right in and got to know us one by one, making good friends of us as she went.

She was with us all the way from then on, through all the other venues we occupied until we finally had our own meetinghouse, and she actively participated in the fundraising and decision-making that went into that major move

Over the years, she served on Ministry & Counsel, Finance, Hospitality, Meetinghouse & Grounds, and other committees that oversaw the workings of the Meeting and its obligations. She also served as Treasurer for a few years, a job which she liked about as much as she liked weeding her mother's asparagus! Her voice was one which was always listened to, for although she spoke out quietly and seldom, her wisdom came through clearly and we recognized its worth.

Her greatest gift to the Meeting, though, was not on committee work but with one-to-one interactions with others. She had an intuitive way of seeing who in a crowded room was in need of an ear, and she provided it. She was always present to those around her in a way that said, "I'm here for you, to listen, to share and be together. I am your friend." She made particular friends of many of us, and as was said at her memorial service, "I thought I was her best friend!" Many of us felt that way; that was her gift to us. She loved the people around her, and was nonjudgmental, accepting people as they were and appreciating the traits they had that showed their humanity. She remembered people's stories, and families, and always was on tap with an ear when needed.

Natalie's ministry went beyond the Meeting and its offices. She also went into the community to spread warmth and understanding. An accomplished and sensitive artist, for years she volunteered every Sunday afternoon to sit at the reception table at Round Top Center of the Arts, welcoming people and directing them to the exhibits on the walls.

Natalie was also well known at Cove's Edge Nursing Home, where her mother lived. She would go and visit her mother every day, and often brought one of her three greyhound dogs, who brought their dog joy with them. Everyone loved the dogs, including the patients, staff, visitors, and volunteers. The dogs were calm and nurturing to all who approached them, and they loved the attention. Natalie had become involved with greyhounds when she set up a shelter for dogs who had run their last race and were about to be put down. She took the dogs in and found good homes for them. She was living in Massachusetts at the time, and when she moved to Maine, she found others to take over the shelter for her.

In Maine she often shared her home with others, having long-term boarders and guests with never a hesitation. She shared her art with anyone who would listen, encouraged budding artists, was generous with materials and advice, and never ever stood as a professional above those who were just beginning. Natalie was the perfect teacher, for she showed, encouraged, and then stood back.

These traits entered into her relations with others. Her habit of opening her arms wide as she approached you and saying loudly, "Honey!!" and then giving you a big hug made you think you were the only one she wanted to see at that moment. We all need that kind of a welcome frequently. She was a one-person Ministry & Counsel at its best. We will miss her.

ADVICE: Meeting Business

In meeting for business, and in all duties connected with them, seek again the leadings of the Light; let our utterances be brief and without repetition. Let us keep from obstinacy and from harshness of tone or manner and admit the possibility of being in error. In all the affairs of the meeting community, let us proceed in a peaceable spirit, with forbearance and warm affection for each other.



Our Friend Charlotte Is Gone

As many of you know, Charlotte Ritter passed away on Sunday, August 13, in the company of friends and much love. There will be an official minute prepared and a memorial for her at Midcoast Friends in the near future. There was a memorial service in her honor on August 18th at the United Christian Church in Lincolnville, which Jean Crawford attended, after which she provided these comments:

What can I say about the service for Charlotte in Lincolnville Center? . . . [It] was well attended by Charlotte's wide circle of friends and many participated. Some spoke of Native American wisdom. There was a Buddhist reading, Tibetan Buddhist chanting and the sounds of a Buddhist prayer bowl. There was poetry, singing, and a period of memory sharing. This included several mentions of ecstatic dancing, as well as Charlotte's amazing openness to life in all its colors and to death. The service ended with a period of silence.

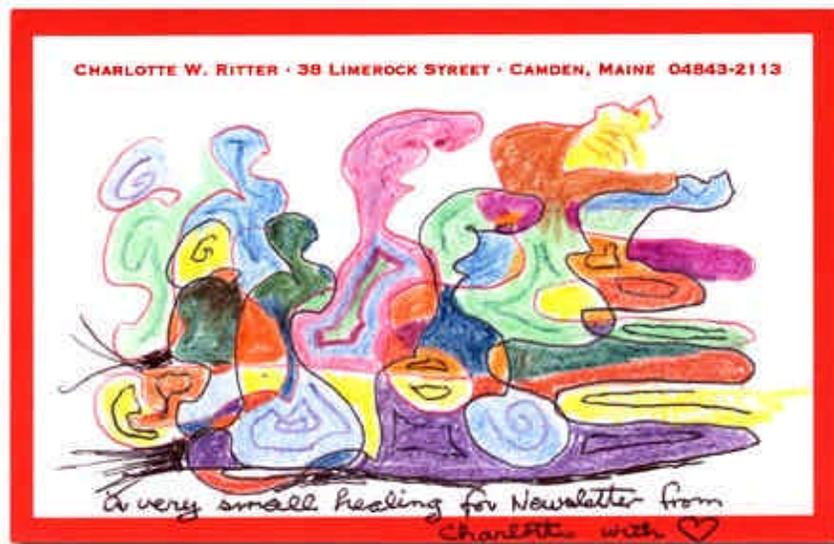
In her sermon of Sunday, August 20, this is what the Rev. Susan Stonestreet of the Lincolnville church said about Charlotte:

Charlotte was a woman of deep faith, although she was not a Christian. . . . [In her 86 years, she] made the most of her time by continually being in relation with others--of all ages. She danced ecstatically with women and men. She grew flowers and shared them with others. She visited with people of many origins and drew wonderful pictures of them. She respected others, no matter their age or their station in life, and drew strength from them.

Her great niece and nephew said of her, "Having Aunt Charlotte take care of us is as much fun as having a friend over." Just six weeks before her death, Charlotte had an hour discussion with yet one more medical doctor concerning her terminal cancer diagnosis. They decided together there would be no more treatments. She said to him after an hour, "Can I ask you a question?" He said, "Yes." And she inquired, "Have you ever considered dancing?" They spent the next half hour talking about the doctor's life, not Charlotte's.

. . . . Let us ask questions of one another, like Charlotte did, living with intent and attention. Let us listen and be in awe of the Spirit of God that is all around us.

Charlotte also left us something else of herself, something she wished to have shared through this newsletter:



New Addition to the Library--and a Word of Thanks



In July, I gave a copy of my recently published novel, *Tunnell's Boys* to the Meeting library, and Deb Haviland suggested I write an article about it for the Meeting newsletter--what it's about and how I came to write it--so here are some thoughts.

I wanted to give a copy to the library for two reasons. First, *Tunnell's Boys* contains a lot of Quaker history and lore which should be of interest to Midcoast Friends. The back cover holds endorsements from two Quakers whom Meeting members may recognize, author-historian Margaret Bacon and author-peace activist George Lakey. The book has been selling well among Friends, especially through the FGC catalog. My second reason for giving the book was that I wanted to express appreciation on behalf of my wife Lee and myself for the Meeting's hospitality. We attend worship as often as we can when we are at our home on Westport Island, and we are grateful for the deep quality of your worship and the open hand of friendship you extend to us.

Tunnell's Boys is built around four personal interests and loves of mine: the sea, Quakerism, history, and issues of nonviolence and peace. The novel is set primarily among the deepwater pilots of Delaware River and Bay in the closing days of sail. I was attracted to write about pilots because, being a Quaker, I wasn't about to write a traditional "blood and guts" sea novel focused on war, at least not in the glorifying sense. Piloting is an exciting and dangerous craft, particularly in the era of *Tunnell's Boys*, but it also is a service profession. Unlike sea-focused novels dealing with military themes, the battles in *Tunnell's Boys* are with nature mostly, and within the characters themselves.

The novel tells the story of two rival apprentice pilots, Peter Long and Eben Soule, who also are in competition for the love of Rachel Powel, the daughter of a Quaker ship owner. The book jacket summarizes the plot as follows:

In 1898, during the Spanish-American War, pilot Peter Long receives a mysterious request to guide a three-masted coasting schooner to the ocean's mouth. The ship's master is none other than Eben Soule, Long's old rival from apprentice days aboard the pilot schooner *Tunnell*. A pacifist sympathizer, Soule is ousted from the pilot service for his activist ways. Despite past rivalries, including competition for the love of the daughter of a wealthy Quaker ship owner, Soule secretly remains a hero for Long. The crew suspects Soule is involved with aiding the enemy, and the ship's true landfall to be Cuba. When Spanish voices are heard in a locked part of the hold, mutiny is imminent. Long must look past old feelings and decide where his loyalties lie.

I hope Friends at Midcoast Meeting will read and enjoy *Tunnell's Boys*. For anyone interested, more about the novel can be learned from my website, www.tonyjunker.com. I would look forward to talking with any members about it after any First Day meeting when I am able to join you, or to hearing from you via email at lcjunker@aol.com. In the meantime, thanks again for being there for Lee and me, and for receiving us so warmly.

--Tony Junker

ANNUAL WORSHIP AT MORSE MT.

by Carmen Lavertu

Susan St. John again welcomes Midcoast Friends for worship at Morse Mt., this year on Sunday, September 3. The schedule: arriving at Small Point around 10. Worship at 10:30 followed by potluck lunch (Susan will provide beverages), ending with walk on the beach. High tide that day is 1:17 p.m. Friends who cannot walk to the beach house (a good hike) should assemble at the Meetinghouse or Morse Mt. parking lot to drive down in as few cars as possible. Directions: From Bath--209-S to Phippsburg and Popham Beach (about ten miles). When road takes a 90-degree left turn to the beach, GO STRAIGHT, this is Rte. 216. One mile to Morse Mt. parking lot on the left.

QUIT (QUAKER INITIATIVE TO END TORTURE)
Minute was accepted at New England Yearly Meeting sessions on August 9
by Carmen Lavertu

New England Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends finds torture immoral, illegal, and abhorrent. Torture--in wars, in prisons, and in homes--steals the humanity of the tortured and the torturer and those who have knowledge of it.

We believe in the sanctity of life, a faith that arises from our experience that there is that of God in everyone. This Light helps us to see our face in the stranger's face. Fear and denial cause us to forget our deep connections with one another. Only when we are willing to surrender to the Light, individually and corporately, can we eliminate the roots of torture.

NEYM calls upon members and monthly meetings to seek Light and act to end torture.

Clerk Christopher McCandless will ask all monthly meetings to begin a study and seasoning process. Vassalboro Quarterly took up the concern at the last meeting in May, having received a minute from Farmington Monthly Meeting. Soon after, Midcoast approved its own minute. I expect the subject to be on the agenda of the Meeting for Worship to take up Business at Fall Gathering.

I'd like to hear from Midcoast Friends who would like to join me in furthering this work in our Meeting and in the Quarter.