

# THE GAZETTE

*"a news-sheet, a periodical publication giving an account of current events"*

West Falmouth Religious Society of Friends **APR – MAY 2019**

Frances Lightsom, Clerk (508-548-9186; [fran.lightsom@gmail.com](mailto:fran.lightsom@gmail.com))

## Quaker Birthdays

### APRIL

Bobbi Bailin, 2  
Buffy Curtis, 2  
Sunny Davidson, 2  
Gina Lyman, 5  
Larry Jordon, 6  
Jay O'Hara, 9  
Albert Bradley, 14  
Sally Fritz, 19  
Jim Robb, 20  
Rich Armstrong, 25

### MAY

Maggie Saab, 3  
Dorothy Wheeler, 23  
Rudi Scheltema, 27

## Regular Events

### Adult Discussion Group,

**Sundays at 9 am** (April 7, 14, 21, 22; May 5, 12, 19, 26)

### Peace and Social Order,

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday at 12** (April 14, May 12)  
Larry Jordan, clerk (508-420-1738)

### Growth and Learning,

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 12:00** (April 21, May 19) Abigail Young, convener

### Ministry and Counsel,

**7:00 pm** (April, May tbd)  
Deborah Bradley, convener (508-564-4744)  
Marilyn Brice  
Martin Fido  
Carolyne Jordan  
Jonathan Joyal  
Cynthia Rankin

## Upcoming Events

### New England Yearly Meeting

**Monday, April 1-- 2019 Stephen G. Cary Memorial Lecture, "Turmoil, Tumult, and Truth—Vital Quaker Witness Today,"** delivered by Diane Randall, executive secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation, 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Register for seating or for livestreaming:

<https://pendlehill.org/events/stephen-g-cary-memorial-lecture-2019-tumult-turmoil-and-truth-vital-quaker-witness-today/>

**Saturday, April 6, Living Faith,** Friends Academy, North Dartmouth, MA, all day beginning at 8:45 a.m. See <https://neym.org/living-faith-gatherings>. Through worship reflecting the diversity of Quaker practice in New England, Living Faith Gatherings will nourish our spirits and strengthen our ability to live our faith through action. Paula Blumenthal and Brenda Nolan will offer an experiential introduction to the practice of restorative justice. Explore a relationship-oriented approach to harm and healing that examines how we feel and what we need when we have experienced hurt or harm as well as what we can do to make things better.

**Clerking Workshop, Saturday, April 13,** 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Beacon Hill Friends Meeting, Boston, MA. Join Friends to develop skills in Quaker decision-making processes in our meetings and committees. Two workshops, open to all, will be offered. Particularly encouraged to attend are current clerks of meetings, committees or other groups, as well as people who would like to become more active participants or leaders themselves. Workshops led by Fritz Weiss and Jacqueline Stillwell, current and past presiding clerks of New England Yearly Meeting. See <https://neym.org/events/8384>



### Empathy Practice (NVC)

Usually 1<sup>st</sup> Sat. 9:30-11:45

(no April meeting, May 4) at 24 Althea Rd. N. Falmouth, Brenda Nolan, convener (508-274-2701)

### Semi-Simulated Restorative Circle Practice

Usually 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday 1:00-3:00 pm

(no April meeting, May 4) at 24 Althea Rd., North Falmouth, Brenda Nolan, convener (508-274-2701)

### **West Falmouth Business Meeting**

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday April 28, May 26

Clerk – Frances Lightsom

Recording Clerk - Molly Cornell

Treasurer - Stephen Gates

Auditor - Nancy Holland

Ministry & Counsel

Deborah Bradley

Growth and Learning (Adult)

Abigail Young

Religious Education (Youth)

Deborah Bradley

Peace and Social Order

Larry Jordan

Archives

Carolyne Jordan

Building & Grounds

Marilyn Brice

Cemetery Overseers

Sally Fritz

Directory/e-mail List

Brenda Nolan

Library Committee

Lois Hiller

Meetinghouse Committee

Cynthia Rankin

Quaker House Trustees

Molly Cornell

**Youth Programs** See <https://neym.org/>, local contact Cynthia Rankin.

**JHYM Retreat Grades 6 - 8, Friday, April 26, 6:00 p.m. to Sunday, April 28, 12:30 p.m.**, New Haven Friends Meetinghouse, New Haven, CT. Theme: “You are living in a poem” (reference to Naomi Shihab Nye. See, for example, <https://onbeing.org/programs/naomi-shihab-nye-your-life-is-a-poem-mar2018/>).

**JYM Retreat Grades 2 - 6, Friday, May 17, 5:00 p.m. to Sunday, May 19, 12:30 p.m.** Woolman Hill, Deerfield, MA. Theme: “The more I wonder, the more I love” (quote from *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker).

**Ministry and Counsel, May 18** (all day). Location tbd.

**Exploring Prayer and Meditation, Friday, May 24, 4:30 p.m. - Monday, May 27, 2:00 p.m.** Woolman Hill, Deerfield, MA. A three-day weekend for experimenting with various approaches to prayer and meditation. Opportunities to share experiences with partners and in small groups. Led by Marcelle Martin (Swarthmore, PA, Meeting), author of *Our Life is Love: The Quaker Spiritual Journey*. See <https://neym.org/events/8335>

**Nurturing Faithfulness**, a 9-month program in spiritual deepening in community, **August, 2019-May, 2020**, Woolman Hill. Residencies **Aug 30-Sep 3, Dec 12-15; April 30-May 3, 2020**. See <https://neym.org/news/nurturing-faithfulness-program-returns-2019>

**New England Yearly Meeting Newsletter:** <https://neym.org/newsletters>

### Events in the Quarter

**Sandwich Quarterly Meeting, Saturday, April 27** (all day), in East Sandwich.

### Sandwich Monthly Meeting

**Monthly Meeting for Business, Sunday, April 7** in West Falmouth.

### West Falmouth

**Mid-Week Quaker Meeting** at Atria in Falmouth. **Wednesdays**, at 9:45 a.m., **April (3, 10, 17, 24) and May (1, 8, 15, 22, 29)**. I'll see you there. Please be on time. Contact Gina Lyman.

**Quaker Women Potluck and discussion Monday, April 22** at Quaker House. Gather at 5:30 p.m., supper at 6, sharing 7 – 8:30 p.m. The topic is “Rain.”



## Other Events at the Meetinghouse

Monday evenings, 7 pm, **Zen Meditation**. Contact Fran Lightsom

Friday evenings, 7 pm, **Narcotics Anonymous**. Contact Sally Fritz

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## Events of Interest at Falmouth Public Library

**Buddhism: History, Theory and Practice**, April 4, 11, 18 and 25, 1 - 2 p.m. This four-week series is offered by James W. Kershner, an ordained Buddhist leader who founded the Cape Sangha in 1997. He was ordained by Thich Nhat Hanh in 2002 as a member of the Order of Interbeing. The talks will include a slide show from Kershner's recent tour of major sites in the life of the Buddha in India. Registration requested at [www.falmouthpubliclibrary.org](http://www.falmouthpubliclibrary.org).

**Book Discussion Group**, Deborah E. Lipstadt's *Antisemitism: Here and Now*. Monday, April 22, 7 - 8:30 p.m. RSVP [npthfalmouth@gmail.com](mailto:npthfalmouth@gmail.com). Contact Pamela Rosenstein 508-540-0602.

**Grandmothers Against Gun Violence**, Saturday, May 4, 3 - 4 p.m., *Interactive Presentation of French artist JR's Time Magazine's Guns in America*. See <http://time.com/longform/guns-america/> Contact Nan Garrett-Logan.

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April 21 - Easter Sunday

April 22 - Earth Day

May 12 - Mother's Day

May 27 - Memorial Day



Friends are holding **Martin Fido** and his family in the light. Martin is in the hospital following a recent fall.

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## *Religious Education – Youth*

### *Regenerative Gardening*

*Steve Gates, Fran Lightsom, Marilyn Brice, John Gates*

The youth in our meeting have just started a new set of lessons on regenerative gardening as part of their broader project on climate change. The Religious Education (Youth) committee, plus parents and teachers, recently met to discuss the details. The committee decided to have regenerative gardening as a topic every other week, with the alternate weeks consisting of other topics offered by adults in the meeting. The regenerative gardening topic is expected to continue into the fall harvest season.

So, what is regenerative gardening? It is essentially an expanded form of organic gardening, with the additional goal of increasing the amount of carbon in the soil. Broadly, regenerative agricultural techniques are seen as a possible way to capture and store large amounts of the carbon dioxide that human activities continue to put into the atmosphere, and thus as part of a possible solution to global warming.

Regenerative gardening consists of the following practices:

1. No synthetic pesticides
2. No fossil-fuel-dependent nitrogen fertilizers
3. Cover crops
4. Composting
5. Crop rotation
6. Conservation tillage / residue mulching (leave stalks/stubble in the garden as mulch)

We will be looking at how we can practice these techniques in the “children’s garden” next to Quaker House.

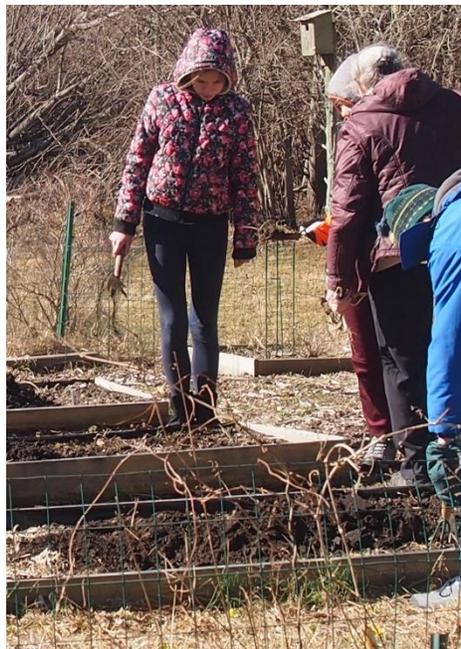
In addition, we will be discussing how the practice of regenerative gardening illustrates our Quaker Testimonies, and the “inner transition” that may help us all welcome the types of changes that are required to deal with climate change.



In our first lessons on this topic, we got the garden ready for planting, with different soil amendments added to each plot in the garden, and had an initial discussion of the principles of regenerative gardening, replete with samples of compost at various stages of composting. We also tested the soil with our soil testing kits, and sent a sample of the soil from the garden to the Extension Service at UMass Amherst for analysis. This latter test includes a measure of carbon in the soil, so we’ll be able to see how that is affected by our gardening practices.

We then started talking about what to do with the garden. The youth decided that two key foods in the garden would be kale and beets (!) and then added strawberries, tomatoes, beans and lettuce to the list. We also began discussing what we would do with the harvest (e.g., take the food home, share it with the meeting, share it with a charitable organization).

If you are a gardener and would be willing to share your enthusiasm and expertise with the youth, please let us know. And if you are simply interested in gardening, you are also very welcome!



## Readers Write

### *Flight of Faith*

*Gail Melix, East Sandwich Preparative Meeting*

What inspires the cardinal's flash  
of red, to wing delight?  
Adorns green pine and boughs of snow,  
and quickens breadth of sight.

What precedes a mid-flight dance  
that soaring leap's tumult?  
And feathers heights to me unknown,  
the promised gift of Light.

And what begets the tufted crown  
that crest of shiver's mete?  
To conjure up the brawn within,  
to greet the end of life.

Who invites the warbler's throat  
to nest beside my heart?  
To lay me down a trill, half joy  
half mournful song of want.

Who calls forth the seeded cry  
that sets my breast to swell?  
And finds a greater deed, than air  
than flight or fate untold.

And who gives rise to winged grace  
that brings the anguished cheer?  
Alights within the soul, to roost  
Four-seasoned chirp divined.

Why enlist the sparrow's pluck  
to aid when all seems lost?  
To follow wings of plainest brown,  
and songs of wanderlust.

Why engage the beaded eye  
that depth of sight's precept?  
To lead us toward Immortal Branch,  
And home beyond the nest.

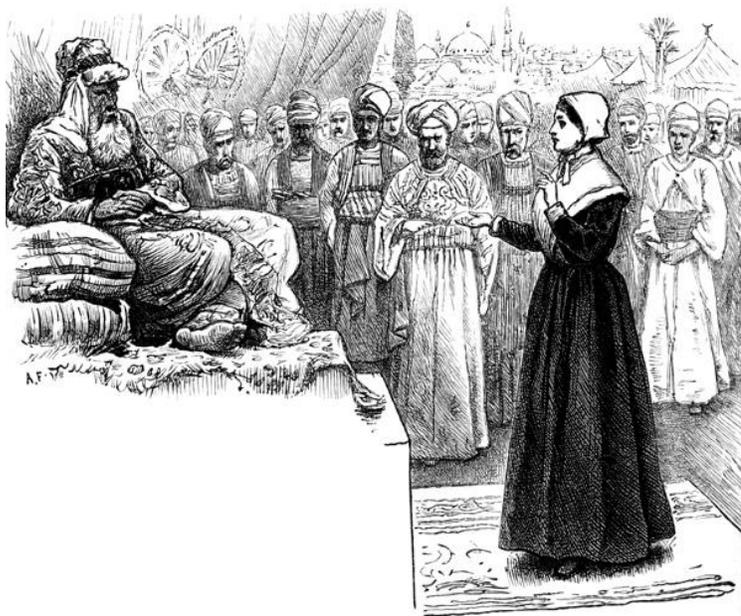
And why give hope to common folk  
for eyes that search the skies?  
For o'er the world what birds reveal:  
foretold, forgave, foreblessed.



## *West Falmouth Women Through 1850 Panel at West Falmouth Library*

*David Young*

This March 23 presentation was given by Abigail Young, Lois Hiller, and Erica H. Adams. Abigail began by covering the general situation of women among Quakers, that of near-equality with men. Women not only preached, but traveled in the ministry.



*A Popular History of the United States, Bryant & Gay, 1881  
– via ushistoryimages.com. Public Domain*

Mary Fisher, one of the first two Quaker missionaries in America, was imprisoned in and deported from Boston; a year later, she traveled to Constantinople to convert the Grand Turk (the Ottoman Emperor), who heard her out courteously but declined to convert. Abigail also pointed out that the Church of England only accepted women ministers in 1994.

But lest we congratulate ourselves too much, Abigail then related a story she'd unearthed from the minutes of Sandwich Monthly Meeting for 1722. William Gifford Sr. and William Gifford Jr. were two of the founders of West Falmouth Meeting. William Jr. was one of at least eight children by William Sr.'s first wife; when she died, he married young Mary Mills, a former Quaker missionary, with whom he had two sons and whom he made his executor. Mary Mills Gifford, sometimes called Granny Gifford, was accused by the Meeting of a "scandalous report," that when Barsheba Lewis, a single woman, was delivering a child at the home of James Gifford, Mary's younger son, and the

women assisting were encouraging her to name the father, Granny Gifford did her best to stop them. (Actually, Barsheba Lewis was not giving birth inside the house, but in a lean-to.) Then James Gifford enters and roars that the women are trying to make him out to be the father. "But we never mentioned your name." "My wife and my mother are saying so." Granny Gifford says that some things are better smothered than made public.

When we note that James Gifford's wife's maiden name is Lewis, the pieces fall into place: Barsheba Lewis is enslaved. Although abolitionism was a radical position among white Quakers in 1722, it seems the Meeting was sufficiently embarrassed by Barsheba's bondage not to record this fact.

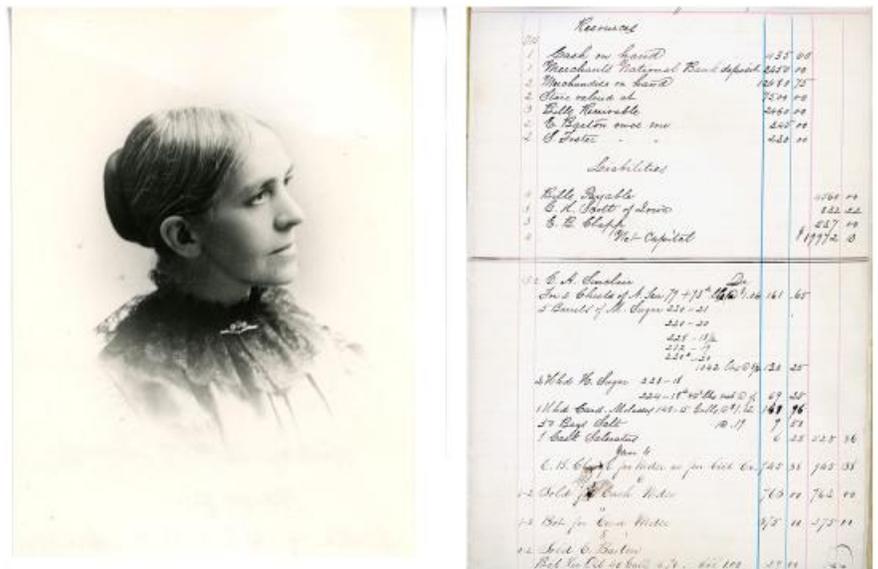
After a year and a half of being condemned to be silent in meeting, Granny finally offers the Meeting the kind of apology we are familiar with from modern politicians, essentially "I'm sorry if anyone was offended." No further mention of the topic suggests the Meeting accepted this, having rejected two previous attempts to justify herself.

Nothing more is heard of Barsheba Lewis or her child, so it is probable that both died at the birth.

Why was the Meeting incensed with Granny and not with James Gifford? Most likely, James was no longer a Quaker, even though both his parents were, and his wife and her family appear not to have been Quakers.

On a cheerier note, Lois read portions of the diary of Abby Swift Mendenhall, a Quaker born in West Falmouth in 1832. Her duties are of the farm and livestock sort, including naming the newborn calves and lambs.

Erica then gave some historical background on Falmouth and Quakers in West Falmouth and introduced us to 19th century West Falmouth Quaker women with many prominent Quaker names. Mary Abby Swift (1837-1913), was a businesswoman who ran a store. Mary's mother, Hepzibah Hoxie Swift (1801-1861) was a Hoxie from Sandwich and 1 of only 2 Clerks of Women's Monthly Meeting, from 1849-50 and 1852 -54. Original documents included: (1841) appointing Hepzibah Clerk and a "Moral and Political" world map from Mary Abby's 1833 school book, distinguishing the civilized and uncivilized, Christian and non-Christian parts of the globe.



Mary Abby Swift and her ledger for her business in Falmouth

*Photo credit: Falmouth Historical Society*

In 1718, Miss Hannah Sargent was chosen schoolmistress (for the entire Town of Falmouth) by town meeting. In 1724, town meeting set her salary as £12 “and suitable diet with use of a horse twice a year to visit friends.”

In 1755, a Women's Meeting for Business was begun in West Falmouth. It lasted for more than a century, until Men's and Women's Meetings for Business were combined owing to low attendance. As was the custom everywhere, the women's meetings concentrated on charity and family life, about which the men were considered less competent.

Erica showed us an 1811 agreement on when and where the Women's Meeting of Sandwich Monthly Meeting would be held, six months a year in Sandwich, four in Falmouth, and two in Yarmouth.

A list of West Falmouth's recorded ministers showed six men and seven women. (Eric Edwards would even up the list.) The women who were recorded ministers were: Susan Swift (1818), Huldah Gifford (1829), Elizabeth Gifford (1849), Mary Hoag (1851), Elizabeth G. Dillingham (1851), Lois B. Gifford (1867) and Charity G. Dillingham (1867).

After the presentation, those interested were invited to tour the Meetinghouse, the primary connection to the talk being the dividers. As always, the equipment for raising and lowering them was a big draw, and Clyde shared his expertise. Molly provided an equally expert discussion of the first floor. Additional tours will be offered in June, July and August (dates to be determined) when the Library's topic will be Founding Families. Thanks to all!





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The Gazette is published by West Falmouth Preparative Meeting's Peace and Social Order Committee  
*Rita O'Donnell, Editor; Brenda Nolan, Transmitter; Alta Mae Stevens, Editor Emerita; Stephen Gates, Photographer*