



ESR Reports
Vol. XIII, Number 1

In This Issue:

Theme Articles

- 1 Traveling in Ministry to Cuba
Stephen Angell
- 1 Retracing the Travels of Thomas Kelly
Carole Spencer
- 7 Opportunity to Travel Abroad
- 8 My Adventures at the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
Pat DeWitt-Thomas
- 12 Dean's Word
Jay Marshall

Features

- 7 On the Horizon
- 8 Recent Alum Publications
- 9 Lauramoore Guest House and Retreat Center
- 9 What We're Reading
- 10 Nowadays: Alumni/ae News
- 10 People & Places: Faculty News
- 11 Looking Back
- 11 Coming Up @ ESR

ESR Reports is published in the fall and spring for alumni/ae and friends of Earlham School of Religion

Tim Seid, Editor
Susanna Combs, Art Director

Traveling in Ministry to Cuba

By Stephen Angell

Meredios Santos, long-time pastor in Cuba Yearly Meeting, first mentioned the possibility of my going to Cuba in 2001. In 2008, there was an important informal meeting of Friends interested in Cuba at the meeting of the Section of the Americas of FWCC in Jackson County, Indiana. I was among those present. Maria Yi Reyna, pastor of the church in Holguin, Cuba, mentioned that the great need of the Cuba Yearly Meeting from Friends in the Americas was for resources to bolster their Quaker identity. A number of us sitting around the table were excited by this. Led by Kristen Richardson, the American Friends Service Committee sent a "Traveling Seminary" to Cuba Yearly Meeting in February of this year, with their Brazil rep, Jorge Lafitte, offering valuable workshops to Cuban Friends on non-violent conflict resolution and social change theory. (As of the fall of 2011, Kristen is currently in Cuba helping Cuban Quakers establish a curriculum for their new Center for Peace and Quaker Studies.)

Continued on page 2



Stephen Angell at Cuba Yearly Meeting annual sessions

Retracing the Travels of Thomas Kelly

By Carole Spencer

Chance, providence, luck, good fortune, opportunity, destiny, divine intervention. These are some of the words that came to mind when I found myself in lush, colorful, exotic Honolulu in early April, in the middle of a busy spring semester. The Midwest was still recovering from an unusually bitter and icy winter. Finding myself unexpectedly in Hawaii connected the dots on my spiritual journey in a most intriguing way, beginning with my introduction to Quaker spirituality through the writer, Thomas Kelly, many years ago.

Those of you familiar with the Quaker landscape will know the name Thomas Kelly. He was an educator, philosopher, and Christian mystic who became legendary in the Quaker world after his early death in 1941 when occasional writings from the last three years of his life were collected and published posthumously as *A Testament of Devotion*.

I first met Kelly through this slim, little book when, like many spiritual seekers of the radical counter-cultural 60s and 70s, I had left my childhood faith far behind and was looking for something

Continued on page 5



Fall 2011

*A scene on the street
in Gibara, Cuba*



CUBA continued from page 1

Meanwhile, Jay Marshall was in contact with the Clerk of Cuba Yearly Meeting, Ramon Gonzalez Longoria Escalona, and had arranged a visit to the Yearly Meeting for me during February and March of 2011. I was invited to give a series of lectures during the Yearly Meeting sessions, and after the sessions, I gave a lecture at the Young Adult Friends Retreat. I also offered three workshops at the newer monthly meetings in Cuba.

FRIENDS' MINISTRY IN CUBA

On February 21, 2011, I arrived in one of the larger cities in Cuba, Holguin, at the eastern end of the island. The following day, along with three representatives of New England Yearly Meeting (Benigno Sanchez-Eppler, Victoria Rhoden, and Noah Baker-Merrill), I traveled the 13 kilometers to Gibara, where the Yearly Meeting was to be held. Gibara is a small town of about 30,000 people on the coast. In 2008, Hurricane Ike had caused major damage, destroying much of the seawall, which has not been repaired due to lack of funds. Friends in Gibara sheltered dozens of people in their church during the hurricane. Fortunately, there was very

little damage to the church itself, and they lost only a small portion of their roof, and even more fortuitously, Cubans were well prepared for the hurricane, and on the whole island, only two people lost their lives.

In the day before the Yearly Meeting sessions started, Benigno, a native of Cuba who emigrated to the United States at age 13, tried to orient us to the realities we would see around us. He let us know that the orientation he offered was shared through his own particular lens. The Cuban Revolution has emphasized human equality, but unfortunately, it has produced equal immiseration; that is, everyone has become equally poor. The Cuban government is the single employer and all property, including church property, belongs to the Cuban government. The Cuban government allows churches to use certain property, families to live in certain houses, and so forth, but all land belongs to the government. Industry and wages are at a very low level. Monthly wages of \$15 to \$25 are fairly common for Cubans. It is not a living wage.

The Cuban revolution, Benigno said, was built on five pillars: Schools; Medical Centers; the Military; Prisons; and

Emigration. This means that Cuba has a relatively high degree of educational attainment as well as an extraordinarily high percentage of doctors per capita. However, there are few jobs for those who finish school. Doctors earn very low salaries. Medical consultations are free, but medicines are very difficult--if not impossible--to obtain, and even over-the-counter medicines such as pain relievers are hard to get. In stores, there is virtually nothing for sale. There are, for example, no cars for sale; the few cars on the road are 1950s American vehicles, often lovingly and painstakingly maintained, or later era Soviet cars, but no recent models. The Cuban monetary system is very difficult to figure out; the Yearly Meeting treasurers keeps accounts in three currencies: the regular Cuban peso, the convertible Cuban peso, and the United States dollar. International travelers can carry the convertible peso, but they are not allowed to carry regular pesos. (The informal exchange rates for those two currencies are remarkably different.)

A high degree of state control is exercised with the military and prisons, and there is virtually no place for open expression of political dissent.

“In the day before the Yearly Meeting sessions started, Benigno, a native of Cuba who emigrated to the United States at age 13, tried to orient us to the realities we would see around us. ...The Cuban Revolution has emphasized human equality, but unfortunately, it has produced equal immiseration; that is, everyone has become equally poor.”

If you would prefer only to receive an electronic form of this newsletter, please email Mandy Ford (fordma@earlham.edu) with your email address to opt out of the printed newsletter.



Yearly Meeting sessions at Gibara. Candido Gonzales, pastor of Banes Meeting (left)

One of the complicating factors involved in gathering people for the Yearly Meeting sessions was that in the city where Banes Friends Church is located, Mothers in White, a group of mothers for political prisoners, was gathering for a protest. So the Yearly Meeting bus (the Wawa) had to make its way through the intense security presence to bring Friends from Banes to the Yearly Meeting sessions.

It is hard to walk very far on the streets of Gibara without having someone approach you to ask for money, often quite desperately. During my time there, I talked with two men, one younger and one older, who had received permission to emigrate to the United States. If a resident of Gibara receives remittances from someone working in the United States, they will be much better off than the ordinary Gibaran. One day, the three New England Friends, a Cuban Friend, and myself were walking through the streets of Gibara. The Cuban Friend explained how every house we saw with a fresh coat of paint was someone who had a spouse living abroad who sent remittances. Remittances are the second most important source of income for the island of Cuba; the most important source is tourism,

as evidenced by all the happy Canadian tourists I joined on my flight to Cuba and back).

Getting news in Cuba is a challenge. There is no Internet, and only very limited television and newspaper news coverage is available. In Gibara, Ramon had to work hard to have a periodical delivered to him, and finally settled on a weekly (the Juventud). The big city Friends' Church (Holguin) was able to have a daily delivered, the Granma. Unlike Iran, there is no English language news service; all the news is in Spanish.

YEARLY MEETING SESSIONS

It was a wonderful group of Cubans who gathered for Yearly Meeting. My lectures

covered different areas of Quaker doctrine: the true nature of Quaker Community; Quakers and holiness; The Holy Spirit and revelation; the Light of Christ; and Quakers and the testimonies. For the first two lectures, I read from a manuscript; I spoke the last three from the silence. I spoke in English, and Benigno translated for me.

The Yearly Meeting sessions were very lively and completed an extraordinary amount of business. The list of the Action Minutes from the Yearly Meeting totalled 57 Minutes, and when printed out, the minutes cover four single-spaced pages. The clerk does a lot of talking there, but Yearly Meeting members are not shy and express them-

selves when the Spirit leads.

The items that led to the most extensive discussion were the Nominating Committee Report and the proposal to build a meeting house for the Programmed Meeting in Havana. In Havana, the programmed Friends meet in a space they rent from the Episcopal Church, which has not always been hospitable. The Havana Friends proposed to throw a slab on top of the house of an existing member, but there were various problems with that, most notably, that Cuban law would not allow any deeding of the nascent meeting house to Friends until the slab is actually completed, at the cost of \$10,000. After considerable discussion, the Yearly Meeting



Singing the closing hymn, "Siempre Amigos" (Always Friends!), at Yearly Meeting Sessions

“When the most severe repression ceased in Cuba, Cuban Quakers had less than 100 members. Anyone can tell you who were the faithful ones, the handful in each meeting, who kept the Cuban Quakers going in the years when the Cuban Communists were officially atheist and trying to put religion out of business.”

CUBA continued from page 3

approved a very diplomatically worded minute postponing any further consideration of the Havana Friends proposal until after the change of the property laws expected from the Government in April. The Clerk, Ramon, tells me that he thinks the problem with the Episcopal Church is mostly at the local level, and that involving the Episcopal Bishop for Cuba may help resolve the problems between Havana Friends and the local Episcopal Church.

Another issue involved starting a Center for Quaker and Peace Studies to supplement the theological education available elsewhere in Cuba.

The Friends' Church in Puerto Padre desperately needs repair work. The school was confiscated at the time of the Cuban Revolution and is now in great disrepair, missing a considerable portion of its roof. Cuban Friends are trying to reclaim the school, and they also need to find their title (or their claim of title; legalities in respect to property questions are very complex) to the Church property in order for the repair work to continue.

My first three lectures went well, but when my fourth lecture was scheduled, for Saturday night, I was suffering from severe intestinal distress. I felt that I could attend and also that I could say something, but I did not feel up to speaking for the entire hour. I did speak for five minutes at the beginning out of the silence, but then I sat down and ceded the



floor. The Holy Spirit was in charge, and it worked out well; several Friends, Cuban and North American, spoke out of the silence. Noah Baker-Merrill, a gifted minister from Vermont, spoke movingly about his experience with the Light. By the time of my concluding lecture on the Testimonies the next day, I had recovered and that also went well. That afternoon, busload after busload of Friends left the Yearly Meeting compound in Gibara. New England Friend Victoria Rhoden commented that, “Four days ago, I did not even know these dear Friends, but now I find myself crying as they are leaving.” It was indeed a very poignant moment.

WORKSHOPS AT YEARLY MEETING SESSIONS

The next day, Monday, was the occasion for an outing on the beach, with the clerk of the Yearly Meeting and his family, and all four of us from the United States. The following day, I bid adieu to the New England Friends. My first workshop was in a smaller church in Holguin, by the name of Vista Alegre. I presented a session on the Testimony of Simplicity, and then my full presentation on the Light of Christ, contrasting the views of George Fox, J. J. Gurney, and Rufus Jones.

Then it was back to Gibara. That weekend the Young Adult Friends were gathering

for a retreat. In many ways the Young Adult Friends are the backbone of the Yearly Meeting. There are nine monthly meetings in Cuba. The Clerk (Presidente) of Cuba Yearly Meeting, Ramon Longoria, is the pastor of the monthly meeting in Gibara. Most of the other monthly meetings are pastored either by a Young Adult Friend, or by someone who is only a few years removed from Young Adult Friends status (the upper age limit, there as here, is 35 years old). So, when I talked to the Young Adult Friends at their first session on the next Friday night, I realized that I was talking to the emerging leadership of the Yearly Meeting. One thing Cuba Yearly Meeting is asking for when they say they need help with issues of Quaker identity is help with the spiritual formation of these Young Adult Friends who have stepped up into greatly needed positions of leadership in the Monthly Meetings.

I had been told that Young Adult Friends were very much concerned about issues of the Second Coming, so my talk on “the essentials of Quakerism” focused somewhat on the realized eschatology of early Quakerism, and how that connected to issues like early Quakers' views of the sacraments. The next day had four sessions. One was a panel with three speakers addressing the three controversial issues among Young Adult Friends:



Benigno Sanchez-Eppler driving the bicicleta (bicycle taxi) with Steve Angell as the passenger

what do Quakers think about the second coming; what do Quakers think about Satan; and should Quakers adopt a position of more latitude about the church music allowed into Friends' churches.

This all plays into the Quaker identity issue in one way or another. Take church music: Quakers in Cuba are clear that they are not Pentecostal. They are concerned about the waves of Pentecostalism in Cuban culture that threaten to overtake various forms of Cuban Christianity. One evening, while I was riding on the microbus, we passed a Pentecostal church service that was just ending. There were hundreds of people walking away from the church service. It was clearly very popular. Cuban Quakers like individual Cuban Pentecostals and even invite Cuban Pentecostal groups to rent their church complex; the "Orthodox" who rented the Gibara complex while I was there were Pentecostals. But the views of the groups are much different; Cuban Quakers are not about to adopt a premillennialist position on Second Coming, for example.

One of the further workshops was offered by Lazaro, pastor of the Friends' Church at Velasco, on the topic of "evangelization." He asked me briefly to speak about evangelization in the United States, and I mentioned that evangelization by way of crusade seems on the decline here, but that the Internet (both websites and blogs) were becoming more important in the U.S. I have a sense that evangelization in Cuba is quite different, especially since they have no Internet.

On the Horizon

by Mandy Ford

On November 4 and 5, ESR will host the 20th annual Ministry of Writing Colloquium. The keynote speaker will be published poet and author Scott Cairns, who is the Professor of English at University of Missouri. Cairns has been published in *Poetry*, *Image*, *Paris Review*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, and *The New Republic*, and his work has been anthologized in multiple editions of *Best American Spiritual Writing*. His published works include *Compass of Affection*, *Short Trip to the Edge*, *Love's Immensity*, and *The End of Suffering*. In addition to the keynote address, the Colloquium will offer workshops from published authors on topics including *Putting Sacred Spaces in a Poem*, *What Did You Mean to Say?*, *Momentary Revelation*, and *Soul Work: Creativity and Spirituality*. Attendees will also have the opportunity to have a book proposal reviewed by an experienced publishing professional. As always, this event will include a reading on Friday night from the workshop presenters, and an open mic on Saturday night for all attendees to share their own writing. It is a wonderful time for published and aspiring authors to come together and share their work.

The last week I was in Cuba, I presented two more workshops. I visited the eastern end of the Yearly Meeting, in the neighborhood of Banes, the headquarters for the United Fruit Company prior to the Cuban revolution. The Banes church is beautiful, thanks in part to the effort of three FUM work teams who worked to restore it. There is a beautiful garden in the Banes complex. Hurricane Ike had occasioned great damage there as well. Cuban Friends spent 15 full days just removing the fallen trees and debris from the Banes church grounds after the hurricane. But the garden has made a great recovery, albeit with many fewer trees.

This workshop was held in El Retrete, a church

mission that was just given Monthly Meeting status. I was privileged to see the ceremony at which El Retrete received Monthly Meeting status. Within the space of a couple of hours, a Nominating Committee was appointed, met, made its report, and the new Monthly Meeting, with help from many wise elders throughout the yearly meeting, composed its first minute. I then conducted a workshop, which included my Light of Christ talk, and a session on Quaker Spirituality focusing on John Woolman. My last workshop, at Bocas meeting, incorporated just the Light of Christ talk.

Cuba Yearly Meeting is a wonderful place

Looking ahead to 2012, we have two notable speakers coming to campus. Phil Gully, published author and pastor of Fairfield Friends Meeting near Indianapolis, will be our keynote for the 2012 Spirituality Gathering (March 3), speaking on the topic of *The Evolution of Faith: A Changing Faith in a Changing World*.

Rosemary Radford Reuther will be the featured lecturer for the spring 2012 Willson Lectures. Reuther is the Carpenter Emerita Professor of Feminist Theology at Pacific School of Religion, as well as the Georgia Harkness Emerita Professor of Applied Theology at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary. She has enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a scholar, teacher, and activist in the Roman Catholic Church, and is well known as a groundbreaking figure in Christian feminist theology. She will speak on the topic *Human Creation, Fall and Redemption: The Quaker Paradigm Shift and its Importance in the History of Christian Theology* on March 30 and 31 in the ESR Center. We hope you can join us at ESR this year for one or more of these events!

that in just two short decades has accomplished much under daunting odds. When the most severe repression ceased in Cuba, Cuban Quakers had less than 100 members. Anyone can tell you who were the faithful ones, the handful in each meeting, who kept the Cuban Quakers going in the years when the Cuban Communists were officially atheist and trying to put religion out of business. They are now up to about 500 members. Will they be able to keep their church growing?



Stephen Angell is the Geraldine Leatherock Professor of Quaker Studies at Earlham School of Religion.

*Clockwise from right:
Honolulu Friends Meeting House;
Carole and Renie; Carole with Friends in
Residence, David and Virginia Wood*

KELLY continued from page 1

deeper and less “traditional” to fill the spiritual vacuum. Ironically, in discovering Kelly’s book I found not only Quakerism, but a more ancient mystical Christian tradition that I had never known. Kelly’s little book rocked my world and inspired me to join with Friends, and go to seminary, and it even played a significant part in my becoming a seminary professor. But little did I know then that I would follow Kelly back to his Quaker home—literally!

When in the fall of 2010 a door unexpectedly opened to teach at Earlham School of Religion, I felt a strange nudge to book a flight to Richmond, Indiana and interview for the position. This nudge came even though I could not possibly imagine uprooting myself from my family and friends, the ocean and mountains of the great Pacific Northwest which had been home for 30 years, or George Fox Evangelical Seminary where I had taught for the past 15. Yet I felt a strong, distinct sense of call to ESR and Richmond. I could not explain the compelling leading, but it was unmistakable, and when the position was offered to me, I accepted with a sense of surprise and elation.

And through a most amazing experience of divine synchronicity I am now comfortably and joyfully settled into the house of my spiritual mentor, Thomas Kelly, which



he had built in the 1920s when he taught philosophy at Earlham College.

It is not hard to sense the spirit of Kelly as I prepare for my courses in the same office where Kelly prepared, and pray in the same places where Kelly prayed. And it appears that the spirit of Thomas Kelly is so strong in my life that it drew me to Hawaii. So here is rest of the story.

In the middle of spring semester, in the wintry doldrums of February, an inquiry came to ESR from Honolulu Friends Meeting, which as “fortune” would have it, Mandy Ford, Director of External Relations, forwarded to me:

*Carole,
“I received a Traveling Ministries request from Honolulu Friends Meeting. They are looking for someone to provide a program on “Building a Spiritual Community”, and I wanted to see if you would be interested. Of course this requires distant travel, although I’m sure you wouldn’t mind a trip to Hawaii.”*

Mandy



Guessing that traveling ministry requests from exotic far-away places in the South Pacific are not usual occurrences at ESR, I enthusiastically responded to the request. Thus began a delightful email correspondence with the woman planning the program, Renie Wong. Renie and I had what I can only describe as instant rapport; we seemed to be kindred souls. And only much later, after spending a day with Renie on a “magical mystery tour” of the North Shore of Oahu, did I learn how both our stories connected with Thomas Kelly, but in very different ways. It was only after accepting the call to visit Honolulu Friends Meeting that I realized that Kelly had gone to Hawaii from Richmond 75 years before me, and I was following in his footsteps!

Kelly, who was never happy living in Indiana, had an opportunity to escape the

Midwest when he was offered a position at the Univ. of Hawaii. In his new role, he could fulfill his deep desire to study Eastern philosophy and religion and engage in interfaith dialogue in the crossroads of East and West.

After one year, his plan of Eastern Studies in Hawaii was cut short when he was invited to join the faculty at Haverford College, which was his most cherished vocational dream. But in the short time he lived in Honolulu, Kelly left an indelible legacy.

My new soul friend Renie Wong, who organized the Quaker Gathering and invited me to speak, had a strong Earlham connection. Her father, Sam Lindley, had been a student of Kelly’s at Earlham and had followed him to Hawaii, working his way across the Pacific Ocean on a tramp steamer. Thomas Kelly and Sam Lindley were part of a small group of Quakers who organized the first meeting for worship of Honolulu Friends and helped to found the meeting where I was now privileged to lead a weekend retreat on “building a spiritual community.” Sam Lindley, like his mentor Thomas Kelly, became a professor of philoso-

Opportunity for Travel Abroad

Jim Higginbotham, Associate Professor of Pastoral Care, Earlham School of Religion, will be co-leading a two-week study tour with a professor from Wesley Theological Seminary in late May 2012 (probable dates are May 22 - June 4). Both leaders have lived and worked in China.

The group will travel to popular destinations including the Great Wall, attend cultural events, and visit churches and church development projects. There will be conversations with Chinese Christians about being faithful in another culture and political system and discussions about the Chinese government's treatment of religion.

The estimated total cost is \$3500, which includes: comfortable hotel accommodations; international and domestic travel; meals; admissions and excursions; and all fees. For information contact: Jim Higginbotham, 765-983-1522 or higgija@earlham.edu

phy, but unlike Kelly, chose to make his home permanently in Honolulu. A few years before Sam Lindley died, his daughter Renie returned to Honolulu and now lives in her father's house. Following Thomas Kelly and her father's legacy, she is continuing to build a strong Quaker spiritual community in Hawaii where interfaith dialogue and multiculturalism is always a part of the spiritual environment.

When I first accepted the invitation to visit Honolulu Friends, I did not make any connections between Kelly and Hawaii. Not until I arrived did I learn I would be speaking to the very meeting he had helped establish in 1936. Only after the gathering ended did I learn that the Earlham student who admired and emulated Kelly so much he followed him across the ocean was the father of the Friend who had invited me to Honolulu. Divine synchronicity!

The Honolulu Friends Meeting began in 1935 and joined with Pacific Coast Association of Friends (now Pacific Yearly Meeting) in 1947. They currently have about 100 members.

The theme of the retreat at Honolulu Friends Meeting was on spirituality and community. After some conversation with them they decided to call it "In Search of a Spiritual Community." The retreat began Friday evening

with a potluck, and a time of music and line dancing, and opportunity to interact informally with the attendees. My keynote on Saturday morning was on "How to understand spiritual diversity within communities." We explored how understanding spiritual diversity can assist community growth. I introduced a tool that helped them identify their own spiritual style or type, and their community's spiritual style. Knowing their personal style and that of the community, and how they are alike or different, helps to identify unmet spiritual needs as well as strengths and weaknesses of the community. We had a lively Q & A after the presentation.

For a small group time on Saturday I introduced them to sharing using Parker Palmer's "Circle of Trust" for building community. They also requested a Saturday evening talk and had expressed interest on the topic of "spiritual guides," so I spoke about "The Mystics as Spiritual Guides" and shared about my own story of how Thomas Kelly's *Testament of Devotion* had impacted my life as well as what I have learned from my reading of other Christian mystics.

Based on feedback from Renie, as well David and Virginia Wood, Quakers from Day-

ton, Ohio, who are currently their "Friends in Residence," the retreat was a mutually enriching and bridge-building experience. Although many Friends pass through their meeting on their travels (the meetinghouse serves as a kind of "bed and breakfast" for travelers), Honolulu Friends feel spiritually isolated as few traveling ministers stay and interact with the meeting at the community-making level of this type of visitation.

On the long flight back from Honolulu and for several weeks after, I felt spiritually energized by my visit and I began to wonder where the spirit of Thomas Kelly might lead me next. I decided to read the biography of Kelly by his son, Richard, and learned another interesting fact I did not know. Richard, writing about his parents, states, "One spot on the earth had gradually come to mean home in their minds. This was a small summer colony on the southern coast of Maine known as Brightwater." In 1940 Kelly purchased a cabin there on the rugged Maine seacoast. Hmm...I

wonder where the Spirit of Thomas Kelly will lead me next...?



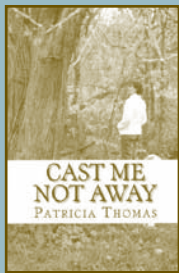
Carole Spencer,
Associate Professor of
Christian Spirituality

Recent Alum Publications

Patricia Thomas '90

has written the first book in a series she is calling the "Pastor and the Professor Mysteries."

The title is *Cast Me Not Away* and is available from Amazon.com as well as from Lighthouse Christian Publishing. You can check out her website, www.pastorandprofessor.com. Patricia is hard at work on the second book.



Elizabeth

Raid '02 has published a biography of her father Howard D. Raid. Elizabeth

was a Patrick Henry Writing Scholar at ESR

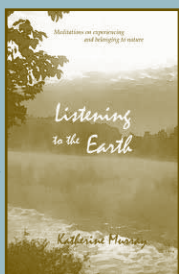
in 2001 during which time she began writing this biography. In this book, *Howard Raid: Man of Faith and Vision*, Elizabeth "draws on her late father's extensive memoirs and, with filial glow, binds the parts together into an absorbing narrative."



Katherine

Murray '08 has written a book of earth care meditations called, *Listening to the Earth: Meditations on*

Experiencing and Belonging to Nature, which was published by Lorian Press this summer. The book is available from Amazon and from Lorian Press. Katherine is currently writing a new book about earth care and spirituality, called *A Simple Guide to Eco-Spirituality*, which will be published by Luminis Books later this fall. This title is also available on Amazon.com.



My Adventures at the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting

by Pat DeWitt-Thomas

When Mandy asked me to lead a Bible Study at the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting in the summer of 2010, I laughed and asked, "Are you serious?" She obviously had not read the evaluations from my OT professor who said I "exegetically horrified her" or my NT professor who said, "Pat will continue to interpret the Bible the way Pat wants to." (I am pretty "old school" in my Bible study; not quite taking to all this new information being dug up.) Mandy assured me that she was serious, and I said yes.

I showed up at the event wondering how I would be received. I love to share the Scriptures but don't like arguing about them, and I was preparing myself for that possibility.

When I saw that the Bible Study started at 6:30 AM, I figured I was safe. Who gets up that early, pre-coffee, for a group study? Well, I was delighted to see that I would not be there talking to myself when about 24 faithful people came ready to go.

I do a process I call Midrash Journaling, a spin off of Ignatius' exercise of getting right into the Scriptures and feeling what those people felt. I read a portion of Scripture and asked participants to choose a character in the story and respond by writing what they thought that character's journal entry for

the event would be. Then we all read them to the group.

For three mornings we met at 6:30 AM and had a blast. Reading the Bible was fun and we were all amazed by the variety of responses to the same scripture. In three short mornings, I bonded with this group of people at a deep level.

I am not a business meeting person so I figured I could do something else with my free time while in Bluffton. I had to attend the first Meeting so I could be introduced. What I experienced during that Meeting was a sense of the Spirit's Presence that was palpable, and it made me humble and hungry for more. I ended up going to all the Meetings and they touched my very soul. I left that Yearly Meeting truly blessed, fully spiritually nurtured, and sad to leave my new friends.

Thankfully they must have felt the same, because they asked me back to do the same thing this year. I looked forward to going to meet with this special group of people. When I got to the campus, I was greeted as a long lost friend. They asked me if we were going to do the same process and some explained that they had taken the study back to their monthly meetings and found it to be suc-



Pat DeWitt-Thomas

cessful. This faithful group gathered again at 6:30 AM, and we had a delightful time sharing together.

Once again I attended all the business meetings and found them to be true worship times. I experienced a silence that moved my soul and again I left spiritually nurtured and uplifted. They asked whether I would come next year and I am already looking forward to it.

Thank you, *ESR Traveling Ministries*, for allowing me to be a part of this ministry. I am very grateful for the awesome privilege to worship with and enjoy the company of this very special group of people. We truly became one in the Spirit.

Pat DeWitt-Thomas is an M.Div. student in the Writing for Ministry Program

Lauramoore Guest House and Retreat Center

by Tracy Crowe

In the fall of 2010, Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting generously donated Lauramoore House to ESR. After significant improvements and repairs, our first guests arrived for the January, 2011 two-week Intensive classes. Since then we've hosted many prospective and current students, Earlham College reunion attendees, and the ESR Board of Advisors.

Lauramoore, located at 504 NW 5th Street, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Mary Birdsall House. Next spring the Colonial Dames of the 17th Century will place a stone marker on the grounds in her honor.

In September, ESR's Board of Advisors were given a tour of Lauramoore House and the grounds. Overall, they were delighted that we now have such a great place for hospitality, tempered with concern for the cost and time it will take to maintain and run it.

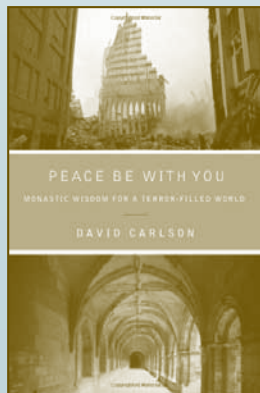
We anticipate that rental income will be sufficient to cover normal operating expenses each year, but we do need help with the cost of capital improvements, such as renovated bathrooms, roof and gutter repair, new carpeting and furniture replacement. Our "What's in a Name?" fundraising project allows donors of \$5,000 or more to name a room at Lauramoore in honor of or in memory of a loved one or other special person.

You can find more infor-

mation about Lauramoore, discover how to make a reservation, or find out how to provide financial support at <http://esr.earlham.edu/about/lauramoore>.



WHAT WE'RE reading



As I read David Carlson's new book, *Peace Be with You: Monastic Wisdom For A Terror-Filled World* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2011), I found myself taken back to September 11, 2001 in a new way. Throughout interviews with many monks and nuns, David Carlson recounts that a feeling emerged that there were other ways, deeper ways, to respond to evil and suffering in this world. Though there was no hagiography about these individuals, I found that they were working in realms of how to see and live in this pained world differently.

One of the threads throughout the book is that those outside monastic communities often see

these communities in ways that let us dismiss them as irrelevant to the "real world." As Carlson says, "A persistent stereotype of monks and nuns is that they are persons living in such isolation as to be out of touch with the realities of this world." Instead, those living

the monastic life are dedicated to holding the world in prayer, friends and enemies alike. In reading the accounts, the connection of prayer to the "real world" becomes more clear and profound. On his journey, David is sometimes joined by his son Leif, ESR MA graduate of 2005.

This book's style flows nicely, and it might be compared to a travel adventure, though the traveling repeatedly connects the inward and the outward. Carlson talks of his impressions of the physical settings for the monasteries he visits, the feel of the place, and so the connection of inner prayer and the outer world is made more clear. He also reflects on his own impressions and those of his son who traveled with him to a number of the communities. So, the book takes us on a spiritual adventure that seems deceptively easy to enjoy. However, as one reads, the depth of the adventure slowly and steadily catches up. As Carlson says of his own deepening exploration, his adventure was "a

call to a new way of living." Thus, the "terror filled world" is also recognized as full of prayer, compassion, and a reality not overcome by horrid violence and fear.

Carlson closes the book with a quote from Rumi, the Sufi seer and poet: "Not Christian or Jew or Muslim, not Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi, or Zen. Not any religion or cultural system. I am not from the East or the West, not out of the ocean or up from the ground...My place is placeless, a trace of the traceless. I belong to the beloved, have seen the two worlds as one and that one call to and know, first, last, outer, inner, only that breath breathing human being." Carlson wonders what difference it might have made had Osama bin Laden hearkened to such a vision. I wonder what difference it would make if Christians were able to more deeply understand Jesus' parables about the Kingdom of God, such as Matthew 18: 1-5: "At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' he called a child, whom he put among them, and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.'"

—Lonnie Valentine
Professor of Peace and Justice Studies

Nowadays

ALUMNI/AE NEWS

P.V. and Mary Chandy (1970-73)

This summer has been a busy and productive time. Mary retired after teaching high school math for 25 years in the Chicago City school system. Mary and I participated in the International Pastoral Care and Counseling Congress in Rotorua, New Zealand in August and I have conducted two workshops during the conference. After the conference, we spent time in Auckland, NZ and Sydney, Australia. We stayed at the Friends Centers in both places.

Patricia Thomas '90

I am still working as a staff chaplain on cardiac floors at Advocate Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn, IL. I am thinking about retiring and moving to Kerala, India for extended vacation. I continue to adjunct at Wilmington College, and have 35 students in Introduction to the Bible this term.

Gary and Faith Cummings

Gary Cummings, (M.Div.,1983) and Faith Cummings (attended 1979-1982, M.A.Rel from ETSS,1985) are host parents again for CIEE. Our student Chanmi Oh is from Daejeon, Republic of Korea. Her dad is a Baptist pastor. We are attenders of Linden Heights Baptist Church of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The CBF has a strong witness for social justice and women in ministry. Our future with them is an open question.

Julie-Ann Silberman-Bunn

Julie-Ann concluded her ministry to the UU church of Greater

Bridgeport in Stratford CT and is now serving as the consulting minister for religious education and Pastoral Care at the UU Church in Cherry Hill, NJ. She is spending much of her time in NJ, although because her younger son is a senior in high school, her son and husband have remained at their home in CT. Visits or contacts from former classmates would be very welcome!

Jeff Crim

I am currently the Director of Pastoral Care and Bereavement Services at North Star Hospice in Calhoun, Georgia and, as of last week, I am serving as the interim pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ascension in East Ridge, Tennessee.

Ingrid Fabianson

I have now been "retired" for 8 months, caring for my 99-year-old mountaineer father-in-law, volunteering in the community, and using the long quiet hours to read, garden, see my kids, and to envision my next journey. I am still interested in creative writing and in finishing the rough draft that I started at Earlham as the recipient of the Mullen scholarship. Hello to all my friends.

Sue Axtell

The flesh is weak, but the spirit just keeps on going. I am spending time traveling (just got back from Vermont immediately after the hurricane) and hope to get to see the Panama Canal in late October. Home time is spent working to preserve the West Richmond Friend's Minute on Welcoming and Affirming in the conflict with Indiana Yearly Meeting. I was the

WRF representative at the special called meeting with IYM on October 1st. Doing a bit of music and hosting lots of people who come through Richmond.

Summer Cushman

I've started a business and am now working, working, working. Sometimes I feel like I'm the pastor of Community Yoga! I offer group asana classes, spiritual direction, private instruction, retreats, and a six-week Yoga for Transformation course. The Greater Lafayette Area of Indiana has clearly been hungry for this

type of ministry because in the past eight months, we've been steadily growing. Please visit www.communityyogalafayette.com and www.summercushman.com.

ESR *People & Places* FACULTY NEWS

In July, **Jim Higginbotham** attended the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at Nashville, Tennessee, where he facilitated a discussion on the history of the peace movement in his denomination. This workshop was part of a new program, called Faithful Conversations, which he helped initiate through his work with the Disciples Peace Fellowship. The program is designed to help groups examine controversial issues. At the Assembly, hundreds of participants discussed questions of war and peace in relationship to Christian unity.

In September, Jim led a workshop at the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, Midwest Region at Fort Wayne, Indiana, titled, "Beyond Axis II: More Compassionate Views of Personal Distress."

This seminar was designed to help pastoral counselors understand psychological distress from a different theological and clinical perspective than traditional psychology.

Jay Marshall visited and worked with Friends in Bolivia during his sabbatical. After returning to work in June, he led the faculty development trip to Kenya and Rwanda. In July, he delivered a plenary message at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in July on the theme "Powerful Beyond Measure: Trusting the Call to Leadership." He also attended the FUM Triennial, Indiana Yearly Meeting, and Western Yearly Meeting. In August, he presented a plenary address, "Leadership: Can it Be Taught?" at ESR's Leadership Conference.

LOOKING BACK on *ESR* Events

by Mandy Ford

Fall 2011 at ESR has been rich with a variety of campus events, which have brought people from all over the country to our little corner of Richmond, Indiana. Quaker leadership, preaching, and poetry writing were all a part of our fall event topics. For the second year in a row, we hosted a conference on Quaker leadership. *Seeking the Core of Quaker Leadership* was held the weekend of August 12, and included presentations from Joe Volk, retired executive secretary of FCNL; Bonalyn Mosteller, with Friends Services for the Aging; Alan Kolp and Peter Rea, who teach businesspeople about the integration of virtues and business; a panel presentation by Quaker businesspersons, as well as some leadership with Earlham connections, including ESR Dean Jay Marshall.

This year's event was rich and diverse in terms of experience. The attendance roster included leaders from the corporate and the non-profit world, religious and secular organizations, academics and practitioners. Attendees and presenters together contributed much weight to the learning experience.

"I made more new acquaintances at this event than any I can remember in the recent past, many of whom have skills and talents that I do not have, but about which I would like to learn more," stated ESR Dean Jay Mar-



Leadership Conference

shall. "Many of us have experienced the power and good results that emerge from the synergies of Friends who value implementation as highly as conversation. I hope that time will prove this to be one of those occasions."

About two thirds of the attendees for *Seeking the Core of Quaker Leadership* were from outside of Richmond, Indiana, with the majority living outside of the state of Indiana. This indicates that the topic appeals to a wide range of individuals, many of whom are willing to travel in order to participate. The success of this year's leadership conference is exciting and gives us much energy to plans for next year.

On Monday, September 26, ESR hosted *Preaching, Testimony and Living in the Word*, featuring Rev. Anna Carter Florence, Associate Professor of Preaching at Columbia Theological Seminary. During her energetic

and inspiring keynote sessions, Rev. Florence explored the topics of *Preaching and Testimony*, *Living the Script in Scripture*, and *Preaching the Verbs, Telling the Truth*. The plenary sessions were interactive, with attendees reading scripture, breaking down passages, and relating pieces of the text to their own experience. In the final plenary session, individuals were asked how a Bible passage spoke to them, and how they would transform that message into a sermon. Those in attendance would all agree it was a powerful and transformative experience.



Pastors Conference

Up
Coming @ ESR

Ministry of Writing Colloquium

November 5, 2011
Keynote Speaker: Scott Cairns

Spirituality Gathering

March 3, 2012
Keynote Speaker: Phil Gulley
"The Evolution of Faith: A Changing Faith in a Changing World"

Willson Lectures

March 30-31, 2012
Keynote Speaker:
Rosemary Radford Reuther
"Human Creation, Fall and Redemption: The Quaker Paradigm Shift and its Importance in the History of Christian Theology"



In this issue:
Out & About



THE
DEAN'S
word

ESR's Role in the Global Quaker Community

Much of ESR's work happens on the corner of College Avenue and National Road. Students who enroll, enter the doorway of the ESR Center, perhaps as residential students or as *ESR Access* students, and participate in a community of learning. This is valuable effort—after all, graduate education is the core of our work. Even so, I believe it would be mistaken to assume that ESR can keep its lamp hidden under a bushel. So much of our work depends on being available to and being known by Friends. For such reasons, we started the *Traveling Ministries* program a few years ago. (If you are not familiar with it, please read more about it on our website.) This effort has taken us around the country, including all the way to Hawaii!

As I think of casting off the bushel basket, a question increasingly on my mind these days is “what is ESR's role in the global Quaker community?” More Friends

reside outside of the U.S. than within its border. The global reach of Friends is not a new thing, but it is a fresh moment with regard to the possibilities available to ESR.

Three movements intersect to create this threshold of new possibility. First is technology. I still recall when the very first application we received for our distance learning program arrived from Sweden. Means of communicating and teaching exist now that were not available when ESR was founded, or even 20 years ago. Initiatives by Friends in some international locations to strengthen their educational initiatives are a second fresh movement. In recent months, we have responded to workshop requests in Nicaragua and Guatemala to help Friends learn to write their own curricula. We provided a series of presentations to Cuba Yearly Meeting. The creation of a new peace center or progress toward new accreditation standards are examples of work being done by

others that led to invitations to ESR. Most importantly, there is the movement of the Spirit. Many of us find ourselves intrigued by and drawn toward these emerging possibilities.

As we consider our outward reach among Friends, we intentionally wrestle with questions about how we balance our work internally and externally, and among North American Friends with these more distant locations. We consider limitations of the resources of time, energy, and money. We attempt to pay attention to differences of context and culture in an effort to eliminate blind spots and improve communication of those things we hold to be true. We trust that this work is not wasted effort, but in a reciprocal way strengthens the communities to which we venture as well as ESR. This issue of *ESR Reports* shines a bit of light on our efforts to share our gifts of teaching with the wider world of Friends (and others) who request them.

