

Wednesday in the Quakerhood

November, 2022

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November 2nd, 2022

Leaves are falling

Camden County continues to be gorgeous, and my main exercise in my garden is raking leaves and adding them to compost piles. My neighbors rake them in piles to be taken away, which I always think is a pity. Maple and oak trees went to so much trouble to grow those leaves, to shade us during the summer, and fall gracefully: and you are giving them away?

Videos from this week, I snuck in one from Friday when I made myself a sandwich, and ate it, in the courtyard of Philadelphia City Hall, staring at the Clothespin.

Ride with PATCO from Lindenwold, NJ to Philadelphia, PA: <https://youtu.be/5XaJF-a4r1Q> Friday night at Philadelphia City Hall: <https://youtu.be/ZHgekmMfp7I>

Walking along Cooper River Park: <https://youtu.be/5xRJZDGv9-U>

Watching leaves fall on a pond: <https://youtu.be/TvnX4mwzyrU>

Hopkins Pond: <https://youtu.be/SiTYQBxQAyg>

Next Wednesday is the day after the 2022 elections: I will either be too sad to write anything, or far too happy. So I will include with WITQ the bare-bones plus a story either about the tiny Irish Dr Patience, or the equally tiny Polish artist Halina. I have not decided yet. Both stories I wrote long ago, and reread them occasionally to remind myself to be kind.

Twitter bird

According to one article I found, the Twitter bird is an extinct flightless passerine, despite protestations by Twitter in 2012 that it can fly and soar over everyone. Which is what happens when writers and graphic designers are hired for tasks that should have insisted on training in science, and at least have some idea of which birds are where, and when, and what they can do.

The previous Twitter bird, before the one we now see with \$44 billion price tag still newly attached since its hostile takeover by the son of an emerald miner and fashion entrepreneur, and members of the Saudi family whose name they slapped on the nation they control, was a different species, which was still flying around in 2011.

The discussion with the designer <https://www.creativebloq.com/logo-design/evolution-twitter-logo-31619677>:

“Twitter's third logo redesign, released on June 5 2012, saw the introduction of the simply named 'Twitter Bird' icon. Twitter designer Douglas Bowman revealed that the Twitter Bird is based on a mountain bluebird, and that the wings are made up of three overlapping circles.”

I looked at pictures of the mountain bluebird, the male is certainly blue. The twitter bird looks more like the brown-colored female.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mountain_bluebird: “This bird is an omnivore and it can live 6 to 10 years in the wild. It eats spiders, grasshoppers, flies and other insects, and small fruits.”

Extinct flightless passerine: <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/06/is-the-twitter-bird-extinct-no-really-like-the-species-of-bird/258263/>

Twitter bird in 2011: <https://featuredcreature.com/real-life-twitter-bird/>

Social media on the move

Where do we fly to, those who have followed Twitter for news from Florida, from Kyiv, from everywhere? I am currently trying out WT.Social, which is the initiative of Jimmy Wales, who started the greatest experiment in fact-based knowledge, Wikipedia.

I will let you know as I become more comfortable with WT.Social. There, we are not on the menu; no advertising, and we pay a fee every year to support it. That works for me, and probably others.

The problem is with those who cannot afford it; for whom Facebook and Twitter was a gift from heaven because as long as they could access internet at work, or in an internet cafe, or in the house of a wealthy relative with a satellite link, they could communicate with anyone at any time.

My own example of this was in 2013 and 2014 when I was trying to help the Congolese community get 20 of their members out of jail in Pretoria. I discovered eventually that some of these men were contacting me directly from solitary confinement; all they had to do was bribe a guard and they could access Facebook in jail. We wrote a book together. Not a big book, not sure anyone read it, but I know it was referenced in the trial when the first 16 were acquitted, and then the second trial when the remaining 4 were released. I have links to stories about the Congolese 20 on emeraldpademelonpress.com, and on drsusanna.org.

I understand WhatsApp is still a free way to talk by phone. For how long.

SurveyMonkey

As Arch Street Friends may know, from November 2021 until August 2022, I spent quite a few hours in the store room upstairs in Arch Street Meeting House sorting through books that had not been stolen from open shelves, and books recently donated. In August 2022 I was kicked out, apparently the knowledge that I could catalog books in a four by fifteen feet space, surrounded by excess furniture and

books, meant that the windowless space can be turned into an office. So that was the end of my cataloging; I will be doing the rest somewhere else in the Meeting House, not sure where.

As well as cataloging the books, I did what I always do with books, dip into them, see if I can learn anything, decide if the information gained is worth the effort of reading the whole thing at a later time, in a comfortable chair in Arch Street reception room.

What to do with the books and the records of the books: I have been getting responses that I would classify as uninformed, and unworkable; mostly based on demands that someone, probably me, put in many unpaid hours.

Digital books are not an even swap for print books; for a start a computer of some sort is needed, as well as a source of electricity. That is obvious; what is not obvious is whether both will always be accessible in the next few years.

I remind you that after cars replaced horse-drawn carriages for personal transport, horses continued to exist, as did carriages. We gained another reason to fight wars: oil. We lost a steady source of manure for farming, and the ability of our transporter to think independently. Horses knew when to stop, where to go even when the person transported did not.

I put together a survey two weeks ago, and have had 8 responses; you still can add your thoughts, especially if you never read a print book, or believe that print books are a terrible way of communicating information.

Please fill out this survey so the Library Committee knows what members, attenders, visitors want from the Arch Street Friends book collection: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5SS5T3Z> The book collection titles are listed on this page: <http://emeraldpademelonpress.com/archstbooks.html>

Floods

Will we all be underwater in the next few decades? Will the sea drown New York City and Atlantic City, and rush up the tidal saltwater Delaware River to cover Penn's Landing and Old City Philadelphia on the west side of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, and Rutgers's University and the Walter Rand Transportation on the east side? Predictions of severe weather and rising sea waters are becoming more frequent and more alarming, and for some, the future has already arrived.

In September a catastrophic storm landed on an area of Florida that had not expected it. I watched in real time while a person I have befriended on social media described boarding her windows, her doors, doing everything possible to prevent her house from being flooded and swept away. When the storm hit she described watching a beloved tree in her front garden lose branches, and then the entire tree was gone. The rain and wind continued, and the water crept up her front lawn; her relatives went to bed

while she watched, all believing the worst was over and they would be safe. However the water kept creeping up and up, and before they were all rescued by boat, her floors were under two feet of water.

Since then Debby (not her real name) has described her efforts at trying to get back to normal. First, throwing out everything in the house, including walls, carpets, floors, appliances, furniture. The flood waters were filled with muck, oil, dead animals: nothing was salvageable. However, everything she put outside as trash was taken; one person's trash is someone else's treasure. The search for funds to pay for recovery started immediately: friends posted a GoFundMe; and she was immediately given a check from the Federal Government, and contacted her insurers.

Help stopped at the door of the insurers. Debby lost the contents and use of her house and garden for some time, but the insurers told her that she was not covered for flood. Or asteroids. Or earthquakes. Only for other things. Not sure what other things are.

I am remembering the conference on carbon dioxide I attended which started on the day Timothy McVeigh blew up the federal building in Oklahoma, in 1995. The conference was in a gorgeous Swiss mountain town with a lake, we went on a boat ride, and I listened with open mouth to every presentation.

I came away from that conference traumatized: unless humans did something to stop the rise of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the seas, the ocean currents, and the winds would not stay where we wanted them. A message of hope came through: insurance companies would ensure that we would not destroy ourselves because it would not be in their interest: they would go broke insuring houses in flood zones, coasts, hurricane alleys.

Clearly the insurance companies were paying attention, and instead of refusing to insure houses at risk, they added riders so that homeowners keep paying massive amounts of money to them, and they would not have to pay out. Unless a homeowner did something negligent, or what I see as criminal, and not pay attention to faulty electrical sockets and appliances, or not clean out their dryer vents, or leave hearth fires and candles unattended, and the house would burn down. This happened to my neighbor across the street, who for the last 22 months has been repairing and re-repairing his house and garden since three fire-engines to put out a house fire 22 months ago.

It is as if insurance companies are saying: "See? We pay when you destroy the house, but not when God does!" Because they get away with claiming that rising sea levels, global warming hurricanes in new places are acts of God.

How are insurers able to get away with this? I am guessing Citizen's United: the Supreme Court decision that made sure the extremely wealthy can contribute to election advertising, even when the advertising is lying. Especially when the advertising is lying.

Is Citizen's United the foot in the door that will lead to the end of the Great American Experiment? We will know on Tuesday evening as the election results come in.

Amnesty International 112

The front page of amnestyinternationalusa.org says it all: Take action: vote like your human rights depend on it. I voted by mail in September, as did my son; and have two postcards telling me our votes were received. I do enjoy living in a Blue state, where the right to vote is understood, and we do not have to fight president, governors, attorneys general whose main goal is to stop pus peasants from voting. Good grief.

So, if your choice is voting, or working for elections, or writing a letter to or about a prisoner of conscience, please vote or make sure every vote is taken, and counted. Polls open early in Pennsylvania and New Jersey on Tuesday November 8th for those who have not voted.

Urgent action needed are listed on <https://www.amnestyusa.org/take-action/urgent-action-network/>. When you send an email or letter, please let Amnesty International USA know so they can keep count of what has been done and on whose behalf, by including the case number. The first one is:

Urgent Action Update: CUBA: PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE AT RISK (Cuba: UA 67.22), October 19, 2022.

José Daniel Ferrer García, leader of the unofficial political opposition group “Patriotic Union of Cuba,” who was arrested on July 11, 2021, in the context of island-wide protests and has been imprisoned ever since is once again being held with limited access to the outside world. According to his family, he intends to initiate a hunger strike as an extreme measure in demand of his rights. He is a prisoner of conscience who must be released immediately and unconditionally.

Send emails or letters to the following:

Miguel Díaz Canel**President of the Republic of Cuba**

Hidalgo, Esquina 6. Plaza de la Revolución

La Habana, CP 10400, Cuba

Email: despacho@presidencia.gob.cu

Twitter: [@DiazCanelB](https://twitter.com/DiazCanelB)

Facebook: [@PresidenciaCuba](https://www.facebook.com/PresidenciaCuba)

Ambassador Lianys Torres Rivera

Embassy of Cuba

2630 16th Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20009

Phone: 202 797 8515

Email: repcion@usadc.embacuba.cu

Twitter: [@EmbaCubaUS](#) [@Lianystr](#)

Facebook: [@EmbaCubaUS](#)

Salutation: Dear Ambassador

And here is the letter:

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing about José Daniel Ferrer García, leader of the unofficial political opposition group “Patriotic Union of Cuba,” who according to his family has been held in solitary confinement since August 14, 2021, with segregation from other prisoners and very limited access to the outside world.

José Daniel Ferrer García was last able to communicate with his family by telephone on June 4, 2022, and was last permitted only a 10-minute visit with his wife on October 11, 2022, according to his family. Additionally, his family told Amnesty International he has been held in a cell separated from other prisoners since August 2021.

Prolonged solitary confinement, segregation from other prisoners, may violate the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment, particularly when combined with isolation from the outside world, and facilitates torture or other ill-treatment. In some circumstances, including this one, it can itself constitute torture or other ill-treatment.

Detained on July 11, 2021, before he reached island-wide mass protests, José Daniel Ferrer García, is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for his consciously held beliefs. I call on you to immediately release him and pending that, allow his family regular visits and communication with him.

Sincerely,

Wednesday Meeting for Worship

All are welcome to join us after 5:30pm for a check in, chat, tell each other concerns, and are welcomed to a safe Quaker space. We are quiet from 6 to 6:30 when you worship in your own way that you have to connect with the Light; at 6:30 we come out of our worship space and greet one another.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81331805733?pwd=SnF1WE5waUZ3ZDdleEw1SVR4Wjdsdz09>

Meeting ID: 813 3180 5733 Passcode: 190526

November 9th, 2022

Taking care

This week we are remembering, and caring for, veterans of wars. This is the function of the Veterans Administration, the American Legion, and supportive friends and families.

I first arrived in Philadelphia in November 1978, three years after the end of the Vietnam War, a war that appeared unnecessary while ongoing on, and criminal 50 years later. What was even worse, if pitting Vietnamese family members against each other could get worse, was the way Vietnam veterans were treated on their return. They were spat at, derided, as if every one of them had been responsible for the war, when every one of them had signed up to do the will of the government of the United States of America.

And Australia: Australians were in the military too; and a few were not because of medical examinations by my mother who was working in the Australian equivalent of Veterans Affairs. She, and other Australian and American physicians asked first if a young man wanted to be in the army, and then figured out ways they could avoid it. This was how President Clinton and tfg avoided army service. Then we thought the war avoiders were the heroes, they were not going to kill anyone: and we completely forgot that every day young men would go to Vietnam and die in their place.

Not all young men wanted to avoid military service from 1966 until 1975, the years when conscripted soldiers were sent to Vietnam. If a young man had not had the opportunities of a great education and well-paying job, or any job, signing up for the army with promise of training and help after service ended sounded like a great idea. Especially in a country where going into a shop, taking a drink of water, walking in a street was another opportunity for you to be the target of hate.

The Vietnam War came home to me in a jolt from 1988 until 1991, when I was volunteering making Sunday breakfast in Camden, New Jersey. Most of the breakfast guests were men, most of the men were Vietnam Veterans. Mostly sleeping on the streets. Mostly of African descent. We are a cruel nation, with sparks of kindness that are not enough.

I had the following letter from Old First about community dinners which are starting this month. I hope that anyone within walking, bicycling, public transport range of 4th and Race Street will volunteer, on November 26th. This year we are severely handicapped by the death of our clerk of Worship and Ministry, Paul Laskow. He always brought substantial food to the monthly dinners when Old First ran a shelter (they are building permanent dwellings to replace the shelter).

We need someone to volunteer a meat dish for 30, another a salad for 30, another a desert for 30. I can do potatoes and cabbage, which always was more acceptable than my other attempts. If you want to

help and can donate money for the dinner, tell me and I will alert the clerk of Peace and Social Concerns.

Climate Crisis

We are all vulnerable to the rising seas, changing weather patterns. Here is a November 7th, 2022 letter from the leader of a nation that is likely to be underwater sooner than Atlantic City, or Miami. Our turn will come:

Dear world leaders at the COP,

Climate change is drowning the Pacific Islands.

The world's addiction to oil, gas and coal threatens to swallow our lands under the warming seas – inch by inch.

But we will not stand by as our home is wiped from the map!

So we're uniting with a hundred Nobel laureates and thousands of scientists worldwide to **urge world leaders to join the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to manage a just transition away from fossil fuels.**

The time has come to make peace with the planet. **To deliver vulnerable nations the long overdue funding needed to cope with the loss and damage incurred from climate disasters and to make polluters pay.**

They say that one day, the oceans will swallow the place we call home. But I promise you this: until that day comes, we will keep fighting.

Because if we can save our islands, we can save the world.

Tuvalu mo te Atua

Kausea Natano

Prime Minister of Tuvalu

Remembering

This week includes the remembrance of the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, when German high command signed articles of surrender in a train carriage in France in 1918. We call this day Veterans Day in the United States, with parades of veterans, their families, their survivors, active military, aspiring military. I recorded the 2022 Veterans Day parade from 18th & JFK Boulevard up to 5th & Market, and walked through the festival from 5th and Market to 3rd and Market. More than sixty organizations marched and drove. The final march of Aces Museum

But we rarely remember the women who were caught up in war. I wrote the following story in 2003, updated it in 2004 when a brave Polish resister died. Now women can suffer three ways in war, as military, as military family, and as civilians caught up in genocide and brutality.

Anniversaries this week:

1915: Death in Belgium of a Scottish portrait painter

1918: Surrender of Germany

1938: Crystal night in Germany, when Jewish businesses were destroyed.

Videos

Philadelphia Veterans Day parade at Independence Mall: <https://youtu.be/jZnzMFuntZw>

Visiting Walt Whitman and Nick Virgilio, while remembering Father Michael Doyle and Catholic nuns who built a hospital in Camden, NJ: <https://youtu.be/JapYg4zvR4Y>

Finished shipping container and mural at Arch Street Meeting House <https://youtu.be/uby7IVHg4Lk>

Wiesbaden memorial to the Holocaust. I was flustered and pronounced Wiesbaden incorrectly at the beginning. And then my daughter found names of her relatives: <https://youtu.be/rtvYKBBYqBo>

Halina and Avery

This story is long, I have only included the first part, and I do not send attachments because you should never click on attachments. Send an email to publisher@mjota.org if you want the second half.

In 1701 my town started its transformation from a lush home for native Americans to maple-tree lined streets of Haddonfield when a woman of twenty sailed from England to the east bank of the Delaware river. The mission of Miss Elizabeth Haddon was to clear, cultivate, and build on lands her father had bought from the British sovereign.

In 1701, land ownership was simple. Someone swearing allegiance to a sovereign sticks a flag in a continent not previously known, and then everything belongs to the sovereign. Including the humans, animals, rivers, lakes, ponds, forests, fields, and dinosaur skeletons; all of which were on the land now known as Haddonfield. Mark Twain wrote about this in “Life on the Mississippi” published in 1873, and available for all at all times on the online library <http://gutenberg.com>. A paragraph:

“Day by day they floated down the great bends, in the shadow of the dense forests, and in time arrived at the mouth of the Arkansas. First, they were greeted by the natives of this locality as Marquette had before been greeted by them—with the booming of the war drum and the flourish of arms. The Virgin composed the difficulty in Marquette's case; the pipe of peace did the same office for La Salle. The white man and the red man struck hands and entertained each other during three days. Then, to the admiration of the savages, La Salle set up a cross with the arms of France on it, and took possession of the whole country for the king—the cool fashion of the time—while the priest piously consecrated the robbery

with a hymn. The priest explained the mysteries of the faith 'by signs,' for the saving of the savages; thus compensating them with possible possessions in Heaven for the certain ones on earth which they had just been robbed of. And also, by signs, La Salle drew from these simple children of the forest acknowledgments of fealty to Louis the Putrid, over the water. Nobody smiled at these colossal ironies.”

When I look back over three hundred years, I wonder whether desperation or insanity was behind the goals of the father and the daughter. They were members of the Religious Society of Friends of Truth at a time when this was dangerous in parts of Americas and in Britain, and they were following other members who had decided that their truth could only be told by moving to the New World.

In 1682 William Penn sailed down the Delaware River from the Atlantic Ocean and stopped on the west bank, before other Quakers followed and the growing settlement was named Philadelphia. The east bank all the way to the Atlantic Ocean is now known as southern New Jersey, but then, 100 years before the State of New Jersey was established in 1787, it was filled with forests hunted and lands cultivated by humans who had arrived earlier by land and sea. In a clever act of theft, because theft is more effective when nonviolent, no guns ever rained death on Native Americans. However their stewardship and rights to their homes and livelihoods were taken from them forever, and claimed for the British crown, which was worn 1682 by Charles II, the first sovereign the monarchy was restored after the British parliament removed the monarchy by removing the head of Charles I in 1649.

I cannot find any evidence from the 1600s that any upstanding English citizen ever asked why the British crown claimed the right to sell land that had fed and clothed Native Americans for centuries, probably millennia. Villains, thieves, pirates, colonizers, conquerors have blind spots, and so do peaceful people, including Quakers. I am a Quaker, which was how I met Halina, through David who became a Quaker after he married my friend Sandy in an hour-long unprogrammed ceremony at the Haddonfield meeting house followed by an elegant reception in the social hall.

I learned from David that for over fifty years Halina had lived and created art in the beige corner house with blue shutters on the corner of Haddon Avenue, on the street which has included my house since 1983. Three blocks from the Haddonfield Friends Meeting House.

When I met Halina in 2003, I had lived in my white two-story wooden house twenty years, changed my religion from Anglican to Quaker, changed my career from bench scientist to writer and publisher, produced a son and a daughter with a German survivor of the Jewish Holocaust, and educated two Polish-American sons all the way through Haddonfield schools through college graduation.

Every day I passed Halina's house. Every summer day I admired her white roses growing from a single vine. Behind the roses was a glassed-in porch through which I saw a life-size statue of a Scotch terrier keep watch.

David's hopeful marriage did not endure, but his ties to South Jersey Quakers did, including his friendship with a British Quaker married to a Quaker teacher descended from a Quaker pharmacist who was thought of highly enough to have my street, Halina's street, named after him.

David divorced Sandy, moved his wedding ring from his first marriage back to his ring finger, changed his religion to Armenian Orthodox, and made plans to move to China to teach English. In the last year of Halina's life David told me about her, an irascible old Polish lady artist living and sculptor in the beige corner house, and her Scotch terrier Avery, long gone but always remembered.

David told me he had visited Halina every week for 13 years and he was looking for someone to take her shopping every week, and listen to her stories over lunch.

"Stories!" David told me, "I am like a child, a child at her feet. Stories!"

I love stories, but I told him as the single mother of four, with two in grade school, I did not have enough hours to take care of her shopping, but I could give her an hour for stories on Saturday mornings before I took my daughter to her music lessons. He lined up others to take her shopping, knew I had recently published three books, including one of letters and photographs from 1950s Afghanistan, and told me he wanted me to turn Halina's stories into a book.

Halina had told David stories of her long life that started in Poland in 1917 and continued telling stories to anyone who would listen right until her heart stopped beating in a New Jersey hospital on the 60th anniversary of D-Day, June 6, 2004.

Thirteen years later, I saw her oil paintings, which were large, offered on an online auction site for thirteen dollars, the price of a lunch for two at a Middle Eastern cart near Philadelphia City Hall, four miles from where Halina painted and sculpted and told stories for 50 years. I imagine they were brought for the frames, or dare I hope that someone, somewhere, has Halina's paintings on a wall in a special room, and sees hope and love beyond the buildings painted in soft colors about to fall over, and nudes, and doomed-looking flowers?

A box of papers ended up in David's basement. After his parents died and he moved to a third wife and a new life in Tennessee, he gave the box to me. Filled with pages that Halina had written on, trying to make sense of her charmed youth being so violently snatched from her, trying to understand why she was arrested by American soldiers at the end of the war along with the wives of Nazi officers "because she was blonde", only released when a Polish-speaking American soldier understood that the liberators were torturing a righteous soul.

The stories Halina tried to write she had previously told David and wanted them recorded. Stories about her charmed childhood in Warsaw, the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939, the Nazi occupation of Warsaw, her emigration to Italy and marriage, immigration to America and widowhood, and her nearly 60 years living in America making paintings and sculptures in the image of her lost humans and lost

country. She told him about her mother, who had been a Polish movie actress in Germany and Russia; her father, the famous and handsome head organist of St. Mary's Cathedral of Warsaw, which was the national cathedral of Poland, and principal conductor of the Warsaw Opera and the Warsaw Ballet; and her husband, the famous and handsome Polish surgeon of broken hearts. And about Avery, her Scotch terrier who stayed with her through everything, and came with her to America. She laughed and told stories, and in the night stayed up writing them on paper in an undecipherable mixture of Polish, French, and English.

I have carefully preserved the box, which includes pictures of some of her paintings. I would like to find an institution that wants them. This will probably be harder at the end of 2022, when stories of genocidal terror are reaching South Jersey from Ukraine, where the Rashist invasion looks like a copy of the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939.

David's then still-living nonagenarian engineer and educator parents had settled in the town when he was a toddler. He lived with his late health professional wife in Ireland during the troubles, was present at the birth of their four children, and her slow death from cancer. David had made peaceful several protests against the US coast guard in his boat. He was a brave man, never afraid to speak truth to power, and yet in awe of Halina's courage and strength and the life that had swirled around her until she settled in this quiet town that even tornadoes and hurricanes never find.

When I sent this story to David in China during his second tour, his reaction was sadness and anger: sad that Halina's story had been reduced to a short story, angry at Halina's pride and vanity that prevented her permitting anyone to tell her story on terms other than her own,

'I guess it comes down to seeing Helena's life reduced to a magazine article. Once again she has managed to destroy something she cherished: her life story. She trusted no one or at least never let anybody know that they were trusted. I look at all those notes she wrote, and for what, one third in French, one third in Polish, and one third in English. I read your article and suddenly realized by the time she was able to speak it was too late. She wanted it her way, recorded her way. You really tried and what you have is bits and pieces. Curse the Nazis, curse the Communist regime of Poland, Curse God. How could a Holocaust still be claiming lives at this late date. Is nothing to be left but memories in a few people who passed her, in her night of the dark of the soul.....ultimately she was her own worse enemy. This is the death of Halina Anneski by Halina Anneski. We were all simply onlookers, bystanders to her life of struggle while she cursed the darkness and God. She was self absorbed to the end and in the end she got what self absorbed people get, nothing. Nothing. Nothing. Nothing.'

The year before Halina died, in June 2003, I had started working in North Jersey in a stunning art deco glass and steel building that had been part of the behemoth communication company. I was driving

from the sand flats of South Jersey to the mountains filled with trees in North Jersey every Tuesday morning, returning after enduring Friday night traffic jams on the New Jersey turnpike. All week I worked on documents requesting government permission to sell a drug aimed at stopping the inexorable spread of metastatic cancer while my eldest son patiently cared for his two youngest siblings, and all weekend I brought work home with me and wrote on my computer in between laundry, cooking, shopping, cleaning the house and taking my daughter to music, dance and choir lessons.

In October, when I could see through my cubicle window more clearly deer running by maple trees above the highway that had turned red, David sent me an e-mail from China. He was happily teaching debating in the style of the Oxford Union, and had been informed that Halina had decided that she would pay small sums to me to put her stories in a book, and wanted me to start immediately. I did not have time to take on the huge task of writing a biography, but the job in North Jersey was limited to six months, and I calculated that if her story grabbed me, I could work on Halina's story after my contract ended.

Early the following Saturday morning I told my daughter I would be back in an hour to take her to her cello lesson, rode my bicycle to Halina's house, and knocked on her door.

Nothing happened. I knocked loudly, and again, and a tiny, slight lady appeared. She had big blue eyes and silky shoulder-length white hair touching a pink shirt. She ushered me inside to a green wooden chair at a brown wooden table jammed with papers in a small, sunny over-furnished room off the kitchen and laughed "Ah there they are!" as she pulled underpants and slacks off the back of another chair and pulled them on. "I can't see and I can't hear, so you have to shout. Susie? You are Susie? You are David's friend?"

"Yes!" I screamed, averted my eyes and pulled out my notebook.

I tried to ask her what she wanted me to do, but anything I asked was greeted with "You have to shout Susie! I can't hear you!"

I shouted that I would like to come back with a tape recorder, but she shook her head and said no, she needed me to write down her words because she was writing a book and it had to be written. I had immediate evidence for my hypothesis: waiting to write an autobiography until you are blind, deaf and 87 was too late and the chances of anything coming out of it were slim.

"You must preserve my speech with all my facts. It is the size for the book will be too big or good. That's what I wanted it on the machine because that is how I can see. Do we start? OK. Introduction to the book by Halina Janina Anneski."

..... send me an email for the rest, publisher@mjota.org

Amnesty International 112

Act against gun violence. The election results from yesterday were mixed, but many support government action is restricting women's rights over their own body, and support the right of any child, or adult, with a grudge to obtain assault weapons and gun down easy targets. The elections are over: we need to work on the ever present danger of gun violence. <https://heroes.amnestyusa.org/>

If anyone from Amnesty International would like to help provide and cook a meal on November 27th at Old First on 2nd and Race, please join me. I can give you some printed letters to sign afterwards, and will even mail them for you.

Wednesday Meeting for Worship

All are welcome to join us by Zoom after 5:30pm for a check in, chat, tell each other concerns, and are welcomed to a safe Quaker space. We are quiet from 6 to 6:30 when you worship in your own way that you have to connect with the Light; at 6:30 we come out of our worship space and greet one another.

November 16th, 2022

Brummana Friends School

The headmaster of Brummana School made a quick trip to the United States and Britain in October: the economic collapse of Lebanon has brought this 150-year-old Quaker school to its knees. It is only the second Quaker school in the Middle East, the other is Ramallah Friends School in Palestine. Please read about the school, and if so led, figure out ways to support the school from institutional or personal support, <http://peacescientists.org/quakerschoolinlebanon.html>

Battle of the Bulge veteran honored by ESPN on Monday Night Football

I met Sgt Benjamin Berry early on in my lasting relationship with Aces Museum, maybe in 2012 or 2013. He showed up at Aces Museum, and became part of it. My first memory of Sgt Berry was of him folding and stacking chairs after a program in Vernon Park, under the statue remembering the 1688 plea to abolish slavery by Francis Pastorius and Germantown Friends Meeting in the 1688 Germantown Quaker Petition Against Slavery.

Aces Museum is at 5801 Germantown Avenue. I first came to see the Museum in March 2012, and return whenever I am able. Love that place, love the spirit, love the volunteers and the CEO.

Francis Pastorius was a Lutheran Pietist and the founder of Germantown, and a co-signer of. He was not a Quaker, and never became one. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting rejected the idea that slavery was indecent, appalling and evil, coming round to the idea some decades later.

ESPN recording Sgt Berry and Pastor Nesbitt in Independence Mall on November 12, 2022:

https://youtu.be/_01BKdZMccw

Walking around Vernon Park on the 2022 Day of Honor: <https://youtu.be/dWzlAKvjv8o>

Sgt Berry interview: <https://youtu.be/Gw35Xq2HPIw>

Sgt Berry talking about the Battle of the Bulge (needs editing, go forward to Sgt Berry speaking):

<https://youtu.be/g49DxjoE0RY>

Peace Islands Institute gives thanks at Radnor Friends Meeting

The temperature dropped the day after I hung out with Sgt Berry and friends at Independence Mall. Said, from Peace Islands Pennsylvania invited me to a Thanksgiving potluck at Radnor Meeting which is about one mile straight up Radnor Chester Road from the Radnor train station. From the map I could see that the road passed through a lot of forest before reaching Conestoga Road and the Radnor Friends

Meeting buildings and burial ground. A lovely walk, but a cold walk. The Welsh Quaker influence is strong in these suburbs of Philadelphia; understated affluence, and a horrible lack of sidewalks.

I realized I would need a ride back to the station after the event; which Said arranged with a young scientist employed by Philadelphia research company, who came to the area after a post-doctoral fellowship in Florida with her husband, who is also employed as a scientist, and their young children. Flashbacks to my 18 years working in the lab in the Physiology Department at the University of Pennsylvania, where I arrived in November 15th 1978 as a post-doctoral fellow who had just lost election to NSW state parliament – expected, I bought my ticket to the United States before election day – and being a mother of four children, all born during my time at Penn.

When I arrived in Philadelphia the leaves had all fallen from the trees in West Philadelphia. I wondered about the dead trees; how excited I was in March 1979 to see sprouts that turned into leaves and flowers, and finally understood the point of Easter and spring festivals. The Light comes back, and brings with it life.

The Thanksgiving meal was wonderful, and was part of a carefully organized program which included questions about what matters to us, Quaker prayers (sitting in silence) and Islamic prayers.

Walk down Radnor Chester Road: <https://youtu.be/cSACQnXXvCA>

Tour of Radnor Friends Meeting grounds: <https://youtu.be/3Ms554XG8q8>

Profiles in Peace

Emre Celik, Executive Director at Peace Islands New York, invites you to his discussion with Rabbi Dr. Ron Kronish about his book, "Profiles in Peace", today, Wednesday at 7pm ET (GMT-5hours). Click to register: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSctOcZGf_RXq4p-OOk2EuQIoVpYYkD9RW4VGDFx8haWCedkkg/viewform

Rabbi Kronish has focused on the work of Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs in Israel and Palestine who have dedicated their lives to building peaceful relations among the two peoples as well as between individual people who simply seek to live in peace and harmony with one another. The book has profiles of six peacebuilders-- men and women, secular and religious: three Jewish Israelis: Rabbi Michael Melchior, Professor Galia Golan and Mrs. Hadassah Froman; and three Palestinian Arabs: Professor Mohammed Dajani, Ms. Huda Abuarquob, and Bishop Munib Younan.

Emre Celik: "Originally from Sydney, Australia, he is currently the Executive Director of [Peace Islands New York](#) based in Manhattan. Previously he was president of [Rumi Forum](#) Washington DC (2009-2019). Since 2016 he has been the Chairman of the International Festival of Language and Culture-[IFLC USA](#). He is also currently an advisor to [North East Islamic Community Center](#) and sits on the

[Scholars Council](#) at Braver Angels. In 2021-2022 he was project coordinator for the first ever [Holocaust Education Project](#) for Muslim students.”

Emre is fun. Trained as a teacher, in business, in religion, like all women and men of Turkish descent associated with the Peace Islands Institute he is better educated than just about anyone else I know, and certainly more compassionate. Growing up in Australia, as did I, and leaving his family of origin behind spread across continents, as did I, gives us a bond that is unbreakable. Immigrants learn to not be a threat, be cheerful, be useful and grateful to the communities that take us in.

He and Said came to Philadelphia in October 2021, during my 70th birthday week although I did not tell them, and we had a lovely dinner on the road outside the Curtis Institute on Locust Street. They returned in November to meet with me and a Quaker elder, and for a walk around Philadelphia. Delightful again. Emre gave me a box of Turkish delight, and a book by Fethullah Gulan, a Turkish cleric, educator and founder of Peace Islands Institute living in exile in Pennsylvania.

I must remember to give Emre and Said copies of *The Quaker Reader*, by Jessamyn West. Finding out who Quakers are by talking to Quakers does not work, we are all individuals, and the yearly meetings Faith and Practice are dry readings that include suggestions for how to run Monthly Meetings.

Letter from Fetullah Gulan and links to essays about Peace Islands Institute:

<http://www.peacescientists.org/peaceislandsinstitute.html>

Marble Collegiate Church on 5th Avenue, near where Peace Islands New York had offices:

<http://drsusanna.org/mjotatalksreligion/marblecollegiatechurch.html>

Washington Square Park in Philadelphia on a hot July Monday: <https://youtu.be/NnFD-MTT5ak>

Peace Island Institutes at the Constitution Center: <https://youtu.be/vZ20g1mZSTM>

Peace Islands Institute in Manhattan: <https://youtu.be/kqAUf4J3iFI>

Covering your hair

Hijabs are worn by a lot of the women and girls, maybe the majority, but this is not enforced, and they are usually color matched to outfits. Gorgeous. I am always interested to read about how hijabs are signs of oppression, which they clearly are in Iran, but my observation in Muslim communities in New York, DC, Camden, and Philadelphia are that the women want to wear them. During the early lifetime of my mother, and the entire lifetime of my English and Irish grandmothers, hats were always worn outside the house, and always in church, and relieved the onerous task of taming hair.

I understand the Koran includes a command for women to cover their hair; but so does the Bible. Dive into 1 Corinthians 11 and see. I do not like St Paul's version of Christianity. I wish some other letters had been included in the New Testament, something that goes along with Jesus saying there is no man, woman, freed or slave in anyone walking in the Light.

Nurses at war

British nursing started with Florence Nightingale and the Crimean War. Before February 24th, we could not all find Crimea on a map, now we can.

What confused me about the Crimean War was why it started, why was Britain involved, and why was the hospital where Florence Nightingale cared for the wounded soldiers in Turkey, all the way across the Black Sea? I am not completely happy with any answers I have given, but what happened is gone, and decisions made by military and political leaders frequently are not based in logic that I can understand.

I found these pieces in the Times of London that are about the war in the air over Europe from 1939 to 1945. They are helping me to understand the bravery and unity of Ukraine behind its president. Britain was fighting for its life then; Ukraine is fighting for the right to live, and the right to live in peace now:

The Times of London

August 3, 1939

Field-Marshal Goering, commander-in-chief of the youngest of the German services, in the course of his order to the Air Force said:- "The Fuehrer has given the German people the German Air Force, and has given me its command. In past years I have done my best to make our Air Force the largest and most powerful in the world. Its strength and readiness for action was not the least factor which made possible the creation of the Great German Reich. Born of the spirit of the German airman in the Great War, and sworn to the ideas of our Fuehrer and supreme commander-thus does the German Air Force stand to-day, ready to execute any order of the Fuehrer with lightning speed and unimagined fighting power. Our thoughts to-day are for that day 25 years ago, but our gaze is directed ahead into the future of our eternal Germany."

September 9th, 1939

JOHN BREEZE, 50, air raid warden, of Dagnum Road, Sheffield, was at Sheffield Police Court yesterday sent for trial at the next Quarter Sessions on a charge of breaking and entering a public-house and stealing bottles of beer and cigarettes to the value of 7s. Id. Mr. J. J. McAvoy, solicitor, prosecuting, said that the penalty for such an offence in France at the present time would be death. The alleged offence took place soon after the air raid warning early on Monday morning. Mr. McAvoy added, "It is a most serious case, because of the fact that at this time the country is supposed to rely on these air raid wardens for protection." Breeze, who did not give evidence and reserved his defence, said he had been twice wounded and had had a fractured skull. At times he did not remember anything. He went to get a drink to steady his nerves. The cigarettes were his own property. Bail was allowed. The licensee said his door was closed but not locked. Breeze was allowed bail.

November 21st, 1941

A fighter pilot who had an arm shot off by a Messerschmitt cannon shell over Malta in March has been appointed to lead a Hurricane squadron in Britain. He is Flight Lieutenant J. A. F. MacLachlan, D.F.C., aged 22. After his left arm had been amputated above the elbow he was sent to Africa on his way-home. While there he obtained permission to fly, and put in more than 250 hours in six months. By the time he reached Britain he was so used to flying with an artificial arm that a medical board passed him fit for operational duties. His artificial arm was made after experiments in the cockpit of a Hurricane. The arm includes several devices which he can attach or detach in an instant, according to the operation he is carrying out. Flight Lieutenant MacLachlan has destroyed at least 22 enemy aircraft.

May 14th, 1942

On Tuesday, the anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, the nurses of Great Britain formally presented to the country 10,000 pounds to buy two more night fighter aircraft to defend the hospitals of Britain." One of these night fighters is to take the place of Nightingale, the original aircraft subscribed for by the nurses last year, which later crashed, killing the pilot. The second is a companion machine, to be named " Night Duty." The presentation was made by Miss Charter, matron of the Wadsley Mental and Wharncliffe Emergency Hospital, Sheffield, which contributed 1,390 pounds to the fund. The cheque was received by a young night fighter pilot, Squadron Leader J. A. F. MacLachlan, D.F.C. and Bar.

Miss Charters said: These two aircraft the nurses of Great Britain proudly dedicate to the service of their country, in memory of one gallant pilot who, in a great company of others, gave his life in defence of the hospitals and homes of Britain. To-day the nurses remember him, and them, and, as far as we are able, we repay." With their latest gift the nurses of Great Britain have brought up to nearly 20,000 pounds their total subscriptions to the two funds organized by the "Nursing Mirror".

June 30th, 1943

Two Fighter Command pilots yesterday morning shot down six enemy aircraft in 10 minutes in three combats a few miles from Paris. The successful pilots were one-armed Squadron Leader J. A. F. MacLachlan, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, and Flight Lieutenant A. G. Page, who was shot down in the Battle of Britain in August, 1940, and badly burned. For MacLachlan it was his first operational sortie since he returned from special duties in the United States. For Page it was his first operational flight after 18 months in hospital and " learning to fly and fight again." MacLachlan and Page, in two Mustangs, penetrated to the Paris area before they saw their first victims-three Henschel 126s, German Army cooperation aircraft, flying near St. Leger. All three were shot down Two fell to MacLachlan. One of them flew in flames for three minutes and then crashed into the side of a house. Then they flew on to Limours, where Page sent another Henschel 126 crashing in flames. At Bretigny airfield, south of Paris, the pilots saw two Ju88s going in to land. One had its wheels down as we both went in to attack" said Squadron Leader MacLachlan. " I

hit it and Flight Lieutenant Page finished it off. Then I turned my attention immediately to the second Ju88, which was about 100ft. up. In a matter of seconds it had also crashed on to the airfield." Yesterday's victories bring Squadron Leader MacLachlan's total to 16 and 1/2. Eight of these he destroyed while flying a Hurricane from Malta. It was while fighting in the defence of Malta that he had his forearm shot off by cannon shell. Later it was amputated at the elbow. Some months later in England a medical board found that with the artificial arm MacLachlan was fit to fly.

And what happened to this brave pilot, adored by family, friends, military and British nurses? His artificial arm did not have magical powers. This is the text from the certificate from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission:

In Memory Of Squadron Leader JAMES ARCHIBALD FINDLAY MACLACHLAN
Distinguished Service Order, Distinguished Flying Cross and 2 Bars
Service Number: 39639
Air Fighting Development Unit, Royal Air Force who died on 31 July 1943 Age 24
Son of Hugh Findlay MacLachlan, and of Helen MacLachlan (nee Orr-Ewing), of East
Grinstead, Sussex. His brother Gordon Baird MacLachlan also fell.
IN PROUD AND LOVING MEMORY OF OUR DEAR JAY. "DEATH IS SWALLOWED
UP IN VICTORY"
Remembered with Honour
PONT L'EVEQUE (ROUTE DE CAEN) COMMUNAL CEMETERY
Grave 4.
COMMEMORATED IN PERPETUITY BY THE COMMONWEALTH
WAR GRAVES COMMISSION

Amnesty International

Our November meeting of Amnesty International is tomorrow, on November 17th, at 7pm, on Zoom, all welcome, in all time zones, [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81659253839?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81659253839?pwd=WSswcm80NVJRR1dXOHJRcGVxcGV3Zz09)

[pwd=WSswcm80NVJRR1dXOHJRcGVxcGV3Zz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81659253839?pwd=WSswcm80NVJRR1dXOHJRcGVxcGV3Zz09)

Meeting ID: 816 5925 3839; Passcode: 392878

We will discuss half of the letters to persons listed below, as well as any concerns of individual members. Old First is hosting late afternoon community dinners for Philadelphia's homeless: if you would like to volunteer in a combined Amnesty International 112/ Arch St Friends group to cook and serve, and eat with the community, on Sunday November 27th, 2022, please tell me. So far volunteers have offered to prepare chicken and vegetables.

We will be writing letters for Write for Rights. This can be by downloading the letters, or handwriting your own version, or sending postcards. Whichever method works. Also please visit the Amnesty International USA site and send emails and sign petitions where requested.

The annual Write for Rights program has started, this year it is called: Write for Rights 2022: Protect Our Right to Protest! All about this in the following letter from Patrick Gregoire:

Good afternoon Activists!

Yesterday, Amnesty International USA launched its Write for Rights campaign and this year's theme is the Right to Protest!

Write for Rights is Amnesty International's largest annual letter writing campaign. Activists around the world write letters on behalf of individuals who need urgent help. Through the power of collective grassroots action, your letters will help convince government officials to free people who are unjustly imprisoned, and to seek justice for past human rights abuses!

Check out our amazing [Write for Rights Landing Page](#) and [all the resources!](#)

Introduction to the 10 Cases:

- [BANGLADESH: SHAHNEWAZ CHOWDHURYURY](#) (Facing prison for a Facebook post)
- [HONG KONG: CHOW HANG-TUNG](#) (Jailed for remembering victims of deadly crackdown)
- [ZIMBABWE: JOANAH MAMOMBE, NETSAI MAROVA, & CECILLIA CHIMBIRI](#) (Abducted, beaten, sexually assaulted, and jailed for protesting)
- [CAMEROON: DORGELESSE NGUESSAN](#) (Jailed for attending her first protest)
- [PARAGUAY: YREN ROTELA & MARIANA SEPULVEDA](#) (Don't tell us who we are)
- [CUBA: LUIS MANUEL OTERO ALCANTARA](#) (Artist jailed for protecting freedom of expression)
- [RUSSIA: ALEKSANDRA SKOCHILENKO](#) (She opposed the war, now she faces prison)
- [FRANCE: ZINEB REDOUANE](#) (Killed by a tear gas grenade)
- [IRAN: VAHID AFKARI](#) (Tortured and unjustly jailed for protesting)
- [MOROCCO: NASSER ZEFZAFI](#) (Locked up for 20 years for demanding change)

On the [Write for Rights Resource Page](#), you will find all the tools and resources needed to run a successful Write for Rights event, including AIUSA's Write for Rights is from November 14, 2022 to January 31, 2023. Please mobilize your group members, colleagues, friends, and family to take action with you! And please make sure to [sign up](#), [take action](#), and [report your actions](#) by January 31!

In solidarity,

Patrick Gregoire (he/him), Community Program Specialist
Grassroots Leadership & Engagement, AIUSA

Amnesty International 112

Act against gun violence. The election results from yesterday were mixed, but many support government action is restricting women's rights over their own body, and support the right of any child, or adult, with a grudge to obtain assault weapons and gun down easy targets. The elections are over: we need to work on the ever present danger of gun violence. <https://heroes.amnestyusa.org/>

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All are welcome to join us after 5:30pm for a check in, chat, tell each other concerns, and are welcomed to a safe Quaker space on Zoom. We are quiet from 6 to 6:30 when you worship in your own way that you have to connect with the Light; at 6:30 we come out of our worship space and greet one another.

November 23rd, 2022

Falling leaves

The leaves have been released from high and low places. Saddler's Woods is carpeted with leaves in all shades of coffee, looking like carpets gently warming the earth. Not sure why this brings out the killer leaf-blower instinct with my neighbors whose goals include removing every one from their properties. I love my leaves.

Yesterday I walked through a huge dump of green and yellow ginkgo biloba leaves. This tree hangs on to its leaves until the bitter end, which is the first freeze, yes, the freeze has started and that is the end of my tomato plants producing any more tomatoes.

Ginkgo biloba: lectures are given about them, for example, here: <https://youtu.be/WBogvipUIK8>

Chiang Mai walk next to protected mountain forests: https://youtu.be/dLgR5D_FpLo

Chiang Mai Aquarium: <https://youtu.be/AwmBolsZdJM>

Chiang Mai waterfall: <https://youtu.be/OopZxWKKPJo>

Camden aquarium: <https://youtu.be/XzEbk7i9TU>

Water buffalo: <https://youtu.be/gopgS8v6hEI>

My first Thanksgiving

After leaving Sydney, and three weeks talking about kangaroo blood in California, Texas and Florida, I flew into Philadelphia a week before Thanksgiving, and was invited to my first Thanksgiving by Dr Forster and Mrs Elizabeth Hilbert Forster. Their home in Haverford was gorgeous, filled with family photographs and old furniture. It looked familiar, more like the houses of my English grandparents in Eastbourne and my Irish grandparents in Belfast, and my mother's house in Sydney, although grander and with a lot more stuff.

This Thanksgiving, 44 years later, I managed to get into the attic of the house I have lived in for nearly 40 years. Good heavens. Stuff. Too much stuff. I have to eliminate a lot of it before I breathe my last, my children would have to work for a year to sort it all out, sell or toss it. I remember Dr Forster telling me that I needed to downsize for my children, he had done that after his beloved Betsy died. I guess that was another thing he was good at, I don't really know where to start.

The Forster's family house was connected by a bridge across Oakley Road to Haverford College. A Quaker College. I believe this was my first brush with Quakers, whom I had heard of from my mother, whose father's parents had started life as Irish Quakers, switching to Church of England perhaps because they were kicked out. They were cousins.

My first Thanksgiving was lovely, a respite from the grime of a West Philadelphia row house that I was sharing with a lot of Penn undergraduates who smoked all sorts of intoxicants, and said things like, “My father would laugh at a pay of \$100,000”, “my sister is a Harvard law student”, “Hawaiian is the best”. I was being paid \$10,000, which went a lot further in 1978 than it does today. I believe the ones that survived all became respected leaders in their professions.

Old First

Thanksgiving is feeding people, and we need at least one or two more to help Lois and I feed 30 people on Sunday November 30th. Lois is cooking chicken, I am making vegetables, which probably means collard greens, carrots, onions and potatoes. We need desserts, bread. Packets of cookies would work. Drop them off at Old First at 4th and Race (2 blocks from Arch Street Meeting House) on Sunday at any time, or come and help me in the kitchen after 3pm, and sit down with guests at 5pm. Truly a thankful, joyous time. Do come and help if you can.

Old First in November 2021: https://youtu.be/abXy_gvldn4

Old First in Advent 2017: <https://youtu.be/UGS7mZ7Zm4s>

Colonialism

I have been a member of the Constitution Center for about a decade; it was built at the north end of Independence Mall in 2005. I cannot remember what was there previously, that area has changed a lot over the last 44 years. I used to be able to walk into the federal building across the street from the Mall, and renew my children’s passports. Now passport renewal must be done by mailing completed forms at a tiny post office next to the jail at 7th and Arch Street.

How much has Philadelphia changed since 1682 when William Penn arrived, looked at forests, fields and lakes and told himself God had given him this lands, via his father and whichever king kept his head and his breath long enough to hand over the deeds to the lands to William Penn’s father in payment of a military debt.

I took friends to the Constitution Center the last two weeks, and both times we walked in to terrific lectures. The first was about the appalling treatment of military veterans, the second about the appalling treatment of the six nations who had build civilizations in North America over a thousand or so years. The lecture has not been added to the YouTube video collection, but other talks by Robert J Miller are available. Mr Miller explained that concepts that made their way into to US Constitution originated from the Indian Nations, who had learned to live with each other.

From the National Constitution Center site:

“American Indians political theories and their governments had a profound effect on many of the Founding Fathers, shaping specific provisions in the U.S. Constitution. The framers were influenced by both “positive” aspects of tribal governance and political science that they were familiar with and adopted into the Constitution, and they were also influenced by what can be called the “negative” aspects of the threats posed by the American Indian tribes to the new United States. Many of these effects are reflected in provisions in our Constitution. Indigenous theories of government affected our Founding Fathers in drafting the U.S. Constitution.

Robert J. Miller is a professor at the Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law at Arizona State University where he is also the Willard H. Pedrick Distinguished Research Scholar and the director of the Rosette LLP American Indian Economic Development Program. He is the chief justice of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe Court of Appeals and an appellate judge in other tribal courts. He graduated from Lewis & Clark Law School in 1991 and then clerked for Judge Diarmuid O’Scainnlain of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in 1991-92. Miller is a citizen of the Eastern Shawnee Tribe. He was elected to the American Philosophical Society in 2014, the oldest learned society in the United States.”

Brief history of what my ancestors called the New World. Ancient civilizations had called the Americas home for millennia <https://youtu.be/MazI9dFA6ME>

Changing the ending

Giving thanks is always good, every day, every minute. Remembering who I am, where I came from, and the millions of helps, and victims, who pushed me to where I am. How much of my pleasant life came from my own efforts? Gosh, how hard was it to study when the university was across the street; milk and bread were delivered every morning, and my mother made sure we had shelter and food, and quiet to study? I did not have to fight Romans, Vikings, or Normans, in England; their culture was grafted onto mine and they became me. I did not have to fight the Delaware Indians or those from any other nation after ancestors of relatives bought land in New Jersey because it was less expensive than in Pennsylvania.

Indigenous nations had, and have, two possibilities:

- (1) be amused at invaders plonking flags on lands they had never heard of or seen, and claiming them for their sovereign;
- (2) fight back, a war that they were going to lose when the invaders had bigger and stronger weapons.

Ukraine had the same choice on February 24th, 2022. Those of us who have benefited greatly from invasions and colonization applauded Ukraine. I continue to support Ukraine, which is manifest through my subscription to Ukrainian media, and always wearing Ukraine flag necklaces.

International outrage continues 10 months after the invasion, and Europe has declared Russia a terrorist state. However Russia has supporters which include Iran, Belorussia, Syria and Iraq. Europe is outraged because individual nations look at maps, and see they may be next. Russia's supporters have already been invaded by Russia.

Russia has been doing what it is doing now for centuries: its invasions and colonizing has turned Russia into the nation with the world's largest land mass? How dare Russia do what Europe did to the continent of Africa in 1871, carving it up and handing it over to Germany, Portugal, Spain, Britain, France, only "giving" independence to individual nations after they have figured out how to continue stealing their resources through willing leaders and shaky infrastructure?

I understand Russia used to be part of Sweden. I learned this from my favorite young Russian historian who continues to live in Russia <https://youtu.be/60J1ka4O06A>

Here is a good place to include a quote from CS Lewis, my favorite person who died on November 22nd, 1963 (as did President JF Kennedy and Aldous Huxley):

"You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending."

Brummana Friends School

The headmaster of Brummana School made a quick trip to the United States and Britain in October: the economic collapse of Lebanon has brought this 150-year-old Quaker school to its knees. It is only the second Quaker school in the Middle East, the other is Ramallah Friends School in Palestine. Please read about the school, and if so led, figure out ways to support the school from institutional or personal support, <http://peacescientists.org/quakerschoolinlebanon.html>

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Satsplat

Twitter was a fun place to hang out on for the last few years; as did many others from all around the world. I regularly interacted with politicians, analysts, scientists, and writers. Always thrilling to interact directly with Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia, and now of WT.Social, where you can pay a fee once a year and just hang out with interesting people who are not waving flags and telling me that every person is dangerous, but contagious diseases and the climate crisis are not.

Coming out of Wikipedia was also Wikimedia, and Wikitree, which has the goal of placing every single one of us on a family tree. Because one way or another, we are all related.

One Twitter writer and doodler called himself Craytus Jones, and asked for short stories based on a theme every Saturday. Here are my contributions, divided into whether I made it up, and whether it really happened. This division is hard, because made up things often have something true included.

This really happened

Gosh, this looks like a timeline of my life. I was taught biochemistry by Professor EOP Thompson, who was also my supervisor during my honors year in biochemistry. As I thought he would, he loved that the initials of my firstborn are ADP. I told him it was a pity I had not spelled my last name Todgson.

The first microstory I was told by the boy's mother, who was my grandmother-in-law. I found a report in a Sydney newspaper, and also records in databases. It really happened, as did all the other microstories in this section.

20220225. The youngest boy at the beach with his 3 brothers, happy to be away from the farm. They clambered down a cliff, climbed up again, the little boy slower than his brothers. A wave reached up, 30 ft, pulled him out to the sea. His mother mourned him every day of her life.

20211129. My parents met in London in 1944 when bombs were lobbed from France & my father saw my mother drinking tea with her unused sugar ration sitting there, in St Thomas' hospital cafeteria. "Will you give me your sugar?" he asked.

20211008. In 1957 I was 6, on the SS Southern Cross traveling from England to New Zealand. An old lady died. My brothers & I watched serious grownups saying prayers before they tossed the wood coffin overboard.

20221015. My English teacher at Sydney Girls High School told us her favorite ghost story. That was 55 years ago; every night when I turn off my light I remember it: "She woke and felt for the match to light the candle. It was put into her hand. She lived alone."

20211023. I arrived in the US 43 years ago yesterday. I had been told in Sydney that I would love grape nuts, but was not told what they were. I was driving all over Santa Monica looking for them, until a kind person told me they are cereal.

20220506. I stood in the train ticket line for 2 hours. When I tried to buy a ticket I was told US dollars only. Budapest behind the Iron Curtain. I came back next day with a book to read, *The Magus*; 2 hours, then \$1 short. An angel gave me \$1, disappeared in the crowd.

20220604. He demanded I marry him, pulled out graph paper to explain the extent German taxes were ruining him. I refused, but after 7 years & a son, I could no longer resist an elegant chart, we married in secret & produced a daughter.

20220423. The cat looked up at my son holding a box of treats. My son bent down, gave him some. The cat ate & jumped to the lowest branch of the peach tree which was flowering pink. "He's taller than me," my son said, "and he can fly".

20220101. A Nigerian lawyer who sued me for \$20 million (no, I don't have that sort of money) in NYC Federal Court claimed her father rose from the dead after 3 days during a revival meeting. The law suit was tossed out; she lies about everything.

20211218. I sent Mother's Day greetings to members of the Women's Union, forgetting a man who had been arrested for stealing my car had a restraining order against me & was on the list. NYC cop releasing me: "L is full of c**p." Me: "Being jailed in Nairobi was more fun."

20221118. Lights on in all rooms in my neighbors' house; three fire-engines lined up outside it in Feb 2021. In the last 20 months, every day something is discarded, installed, discarded, repaired even the grass. Family may never return. The fire ghost has not been exorcised.

Made it up

20210829. "I am hungry," he said as he walked through his doorway, which vaporized his nightclothes, removing bacteria, viruses, dirt, &, because he had forgotten to activate his maintenance contract, skin. Luckily it cauterized his broken capillaries, "Breakfast smells good."

(20210830. I definitely need practice at crafting a whole story in a single tweet. After I wrote this I had nightmares; it may not have been well received, but it scared the hell out of me.)

20220401. I sat in the lecture hall listening to Professor Thompson explain amino acid structure. Excited at the concept of order, I walked outside into a group of students protesting the Vietnam War. One was carrying a Ukrainian flag & a sign that said "Go Home Russia".

20220416. Following peace was easy when rains came; we harvested bumper crops & gave 50 bushels to the dictator. Year of no rain: the dictator took our lands, demanded 50 bushels. The goddess of war rose from dead, took back our lands, drowned him. Peaceful prayers at his funeral.

20210909. "There is nothing to fear. I won't hurt you, ever," he said as he held her hand, leading her gently up the stairs. She put her head on his shoulder, comforted when she saw the guillotine, which was waiting for her.

20220616. At WrongWing Religionist HQ, Data Queen waved a USB. "Fewer births! Stopping women controlling their uteruses succeeded!"

Me: "Hysterectomies now compulsory in women not wanting to be pregnant."

"Girls must stop getting themselves raped."

Me: "More guns, more rape."

20221008. Being happily alone is easy on an island with a sweet water spring & food that grows on trees, under the earth, & in the sea. Hard on the 7th floor of a New York City-owned apartment, & money comes from renting out rooms illegally. Are graves also shared?

20210903. "I only eat food that is totally delicious," he said, his eyes closed to savor the bread and soup slopped into his metal plate by the kitchen prisoner in the German concentration camp. [#satsplat](#) [#Sept4](#) [#HowToStayAliveWhenAllHopeIsGone](#)

Amnesty International 112

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2022 to January 31, 2023. Please mobilize your group members, colleagues, friends, and family to take action with you! And please make sure to [sign up](#), [take action](#), and [report your actions](#) by January 31!

In solidarity,

Patrick Gregoire (he/him)

Community Program Specialist

Grassroots Leadership & Engagement, AIUSA

202.573.6834; pgregoire@aiusa.org

If anyone from Amnesty International would like to help provide and cook a meal, and eat it with guests, on November 27th at Old First on 2nd and Race, please join me from 4pm.

Wednesday Meeting for Worship

All are welcome to join us after 5:30pm for a check in, chat, tell each other concerns, and are welcomed to a safe Quaker space on Zoom. We are quiet from 6 to 6:30 when you worship in your own way that you have to connect with the Light; at 6:30 we come out of our worship space and greet one another.

November 30th, 2022

We all gave thanks

Thanksgiving is always a welcome four days at the beginning of the cold weather; it may have been invented so we can all takeout the pots and pans we have been storing in our ovens, fill the pots with whatever does not fit in roasting pans that are jammed with potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions, parsnips, turnips, rutabagas and whatever I have made from gluten, grains, seeds, beans and peas I have cooked, to take the place of ready-made dead animals. Hey, eat whatever works for you.

I was told that I would have a full house on Thanksgiving by relatives whose plans are made on the fly. I plan ahead, so I had lots of food when my firstborn stopped by early on Thanksgiving to say hello! And explain that he and my fourth-born had far better plans. Which was code for wanting to eat turkey, and other animal parts.

My third-born resolutely sticks to plans and does not change them. He showed up at dinner, and enjoyed it, I know exactly how to cook for him, who is so vegan he does not eat honey. He happily sat drawing with his friend who showed up later. I made them a special hot chocolate; they happily sat drawing while drinking it. My son drew a gorgeous sunset over a warm sea. His friend drew a gargoye, perhaps in an earlier age they both would have worked on painting scenes on ceilings, church stone statues.

The next day my fourth-born drove me to the bicycle shop; my goal was to figure out why the bicycle tire of my third-born kept losing air, even after frequent replacement of the inner tube. Turns out a tiny tiny piece of steel wire had embedded itself in the tire, and just kept on happily piercing inner-tubes. While brilliant detective work and repairs were going on, my fourth-born breathed in the large display of gorgeous bicycles, and started trying them out. As she was deciding on a gorgeous mint-green aluminum bicycle, and riding it around the parking lot looking like a Greek goddess on a horse, my firstborn arrived, watched his sister riding by, and that was that. Christmas present sorted.

Afterwards my fourth-born and I went to RiteAid for our covid19 bivalent booster shots, my third-born ate a dinner I had made him and collected his bicycle. Everyone was happy, even my grand cats Lancy and PJ. Perfect Thanksgiving, perfect Black Friday.

Old First Community Dinner

I was sitting in the garden, looking at the front of Old First when Alec arrived, exactly at 3pm, and soon we were in the kitchen cleaning, chopping, cooking and figuring out how to best get ready Lois' magnificent four pans of chicken legs with apricots and honey. Lois had not messed around; she was told we needed chicken for 30, and everyone who ate chicken had two legs, and loved it. Something about eating meat, makes eaters so happy; I will never understand why, but I do observe it.

Alec came with some spectacular desserts, cake and pie, and by the time we had boiled and drained about 10 pounds of potatoes and sweet potatoes, and Alec had stirred in warm milk and a pound of butter, and the side dish of mixed greens, carrots and onions were ready, other cheerful helpers had appeared with a big plate of chocolate chip cookies and orange juice and other contributions. I had made some corn bread that was not very popular, and a vegetable stew with rice noodles for the non-meat eaters. The guests, most of them unhoused and sleeping in shelters, ate it all, and told me they were filled, and the helpers happily doing dishes after dinner were having fun. Working together and feeding humans. Perfect Sunday.

Christmas is on a Sunday this year; already volunteers have signed to prepare a community meal, which is wonderful; currently New Years Day is open for volunteers to cook. And many Sundays from now on. If cooking meals in a joyful atmosphere with a Quaker or two sounds like you, let me know.

I started talking to one of the men about the book he was reading; he told me he belongs to Philadelphia Free Library, and the hours suck, and that his education was all the way through New Jersey Quaker schools, until college and then taking over his father's business. He was happy that the Christmas Village had started, and was able to earn some cash doing odd jobs for vendors. Not bitter, not upset. Very grateful for a good dinner. My goodness. There but for the grace of God go I.

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