

The Living Light

“...and Christ shall give thee light.” *Ephesians 5:14*

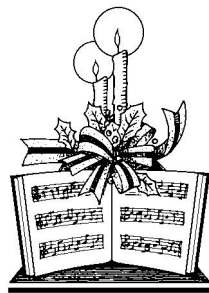


Volume 50, Number 12 First Friends Church of Whittier Twelfth Month, 2011

COME, CHRISTIANS, JOIN TO SING!

*Come Christians, join to sing
Loud praise to Christ our King!*
(from *The Worshipping Church*, Hymn #108)

Music expresses the joy of the Christmas season in a uniquely wonderful way. This month at First Friends Church we will observe the Advent of Christmas with many musical events.



The Braille Institute's Johnny Mercer Children's Choir will present their Christmas concert "Let's Sing Together" at 4:30 p.m. on **Dec. 3**. There will be a reception afterward in Fellowship Hall for this fine choir. **Dec. 9** at 7:30 p.m., the Rio Hondo College Choir, will present a holiday concert "Sounds of the Season". The New Century Singers annual holiday concert will take place on Sunday, **Dec. 11**, at 3 p.m. There is no charge for these wonderful concerts — all are invited.

Our own traditional Christmas Music Sunday will be **Dec. 18** featuring a special choral work. Come, Friends, join to sing and get filled with the Christmas spirit!

Many other beloved traditions will enrich our holidays. Whittier Friends School will hold its annual Winter Revue and Chili Cook-Off the evening of **Dec. 2**. All are invited to enter a home-made chili dish in the competition, or just come at 6:00 p.m. to enjoy this important WFS fund-raising event.

On Saturday morning, **Dec. 3**, the Junior and Senior High Fellowship groups will stage their annual Christmas Candy Workshop. The famous confections of these candy crafters will be sold at the First Friends Christmas dinner to benefit Youth Fellowship activities.

Business and Finance Committee will throw its annual Thank-You luncheon after the rise of Meeting on **Dec. 4**, capping the "Extravagant Generosity" stewardship campaign. (see the article on page 5)

One of our best-loved traditional events is the Christmas Dinner, to be held at 5:00 p.m. Sunday, **Dec. 11**. In addition to the Youth Fellowship candy sale, noted

glass sculptors Dan and Philip Wright will unveil a commissioned work of art to be auctioned for the benefit of the Meeting's youth programs. The children from our Sunday School classes will present an original Christmas play written by Melissa Sue and Joe Mendoza. Tickets are on sale for \$8 per adult, \$4 per for children through 3rd grade. This year the dinner will include a choice of turkey or pork tenderloin. If you can assist with food preparations on Saturday or Sunday, donate a cooked turkey, or sponsor a tenderloin for \$15, please contact Harry or Anne Eggleton.

On Thursday, **Dec. 15**, the United Society of Friends Women (USFW) will hold their annual Christmastime luncheon. Whittier Friends School children will entertain with Christmas carols. The program will include a Philip Gulley essay from the 2011-12 program book of this venerable international organization. The essay is entitled "A New Way of Being." All Friends (including men!) are invited. The cost of \$6 will help support the charitable work of the USFWI.

"Monday Before Christmas" is now an outstanding FFC tradition. Children, in grades K-5, from the community are invited to spend the morning and afternoon of **Dec. 19** making Christmas gifts, playing games, learning new Christmas songs and singing old ones, and watching movies. The workshop is held from 9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. The suggested donation is \$10.

Please include our Christmas services in your holiday plans. On **Christmas Eve**, Saturday, December 24, we will gather in the Meeting House at 7:00 p.m. for a candle-light service of hymns and Christmas Story recitations. On **Christmas Day**, Sunday, December 25, Meeting for Worship will begin at the usual 11:00 a.m..

We close out the holiday season with our traditional **New Years Eve** celebration in Fellowship Hall. If you have never been to New Years Eve at FFC, now is the time to find out how much fun it is. We gather at 6:00 p.m. for a gala evening of games, puzzles and treats, counting down to Quaker Midnight (9:00 p.m.). Come on out and help us herald the New Year!

Friendly Fare by Lea Wright

Dear Friends,

Friends Visit: **Dorrie Votaw** (from Oregon) visited **Don & Shirley Votaw** recently and came to church with them. **Becky Memmelaar** recalled her first connection to Whittier First Friends was that she and Dorree's daughter, **Peggy**, were pen pals when they were girls.

Friends About Town: **Gerald Haynes** gave a speech at Toastmasters entitled "Revenge or Forgiveness." It was well received. More recently the local paper published a letter of his. Gerald is a successful writer. One person upon reading it said she now realized how 'individual' peace is. **Tom, Mindy, Tammy** and **Wes Van Dorn** have just launched their on-line store. It stocks products to help protect you and your "Clan." The site is <http://www.clanprotection.com/>.

School and Work News: **Sheri Snively**, who lives near San Diego, published a book in 2010 called *Heaven in the Midst of Hell: A Quaker Chaplain's View of the War in Iraq* which **Anthony Manousos** reviewed in the September *Friends Journal*. Sheri transferred her membership to the Spring Valley Friends Church after she moved away, but her mother, **Blossom Snively**, is still a member of First Friends. Sheri reminisced about **California Bailey**, her Whittier grandmother, when she brought a message in Meeting for Worship a few years ago. **Wes Van Dorn** and the Patriot's High School band have been performing one or two shows each weekend. They have received many high scores and at press time were ranked 2nd for all 3A bands in the SCSBOA circuit for Southern Cal. They were scheduled to go to the WBA semi-finals on Sat. Nov.19 (and you thought "Friends" have a lot of alphabet short cuts.)

Friends Travel: **Michael and Elisabeth Elliot** met Elisabeth's mother **Beth Strader**, sister **Lori** and cousin **Penny Richie** at Mohonk Mountain House in New York. Michael and Elisabeth spent a few days in New York City for some sightseeing and theatre, then went on to Orlando for the Live Design International trade show and finished up in Washington DC for the Friends Committee on National Legislation annual meeting.



Bill & Marygene Wright's cruise to Hawaii was a relaxing time and they enjoyed the 8 days at sea. **Chris & Lea Thirkettle**, their daughter, met them in Nawiliwili and they spent the day with them visiting a part of Kauai-- driving the golf course for the marvelous views and

looking closely at their vacation house construction. There has been much development since their visit about 20 years ago before the hurricane Iniki. **Bill & Marygene**

also made a fall trip to Oregon & Washington to visit **Kirk & Allison Wright**. **Max Knott** and **Jennifer Davis**, granddaughter of **Liz & Jim Cradler**, were married in Vienna, Austria in August. Attending the wedding from the U.S. were **Mark & Karen Davis**, the bride's parents, and the bride's brother and sister. The Cradlers, now deceased, were long time members of First Friends. **Esther Nelson's** daughter, **Linda Brickley** and her husband **John** toured the US and parts of Canada in their RV. Both recently retired from teaching in the Chula Vista School District. **Ella Tiffany** recently spent a week in Colorado, visiting relatives in Denver and Boulder. There was a beautiful snow while she was there, which clung to the branches of the trees just like a Christmas card photo. **Dan, Lea, Philip,** and **Milton Wright** and **Cassie, Steven,** and **Landon Caringella** took a day trip up to



Oak Glenn, also known as apple country. **Landon** had his first experience with snow as the flurries came down on him. Here they are with the *Living Light* continuing our tradition: "*The Living Light Travels*." (Remember, your submissions are welcome and needed.) **Sue** and **Rob Settlage** flew east for Halloween in Delaware and for the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. They heard granddaughter **Maggie** (now 6) debut in a University of Delaware children's choir. They enjoyed a just-harvested farm dinner in a tent in Nottingham, MD, during a beautiful three-inch snowfall, the first in October since '79. After a Main Street parade, they handed out treats while costumed '**Santhi, Miles,** and grandchildren **Maggie** and **Robbie** (3) joined hoards of trick-or-treaters in the neighborhood. The FCNL meeting drew over 200 Friends from around the country. The closing Meeting for Worship featured Earlham School of Religion Professor **Lonnie Valentine, Rex Jones's** ESR roommate.

Friends Celebrate: **Dave & Stephanie Murillo** (and Nathaniel) spent Thanksgiving week at Lake Arrowhead and Thanksgiving Day with her grandparents, **Don & Shirley Votaw**. Then they had their annual get together with Grandpa Don's sister's family on Friday (also at the cabin.)

We are looking forward to reading about your holiday stories next month.

Friends Sharing News: Help to keep the Friendly Fare going. Email me a quick note and tell me your news. Send to Lea at lealouw@gmail.com, or deliver to me at church on Sunday. See you next month!

Whittier College Professor Explores Faith Vs. Doubt

When Pastor Becky Memmelaar called on Whittier College affiliates, including students, alumni, parents of students and alumni, present or former employees, and friends of persons in these categories, to stand on Whittier College Sunday, October 23, nearly the entire congregation rose. Although the college is no longer officially linked with the Society of Friends, ties between the College and First Friends Church remain strong.

Sharon Herzberger, President of Whittier College, brought greetings to worshippers. She enumerated the ways in which traditional Quaker values persist in the college's operation and curriculum. The Whittier College seal bears candles, recalling the Quaker Inward Light, with the inscription "Light, Poetry, Truth, Peace and the Love of Knowledge." A principal guide to human relations at the college continues to be "There is that of God in every person."

Worship on Whittier College Sunday concentrated on the question of what constitutes true faith. Jon-Paul Cook, a Whittier College student, read the Scripture, James 2:14-26, which asserts that faith without good works is barren. Lynda Ladwig stressed the theme in her message for the children that faith and good deeds work together like pencil and paper. These worship elements set the stage for Whittier College Associate Professor Rebecca (Becky) Overmyer-Velasquez' message "Hesitating Between Two Alternatives."

Becky's message was a personal statement of her own quest for a guiding faith. She started by citing recent developments in astrophysics, which indicate that most of the matter and energy of the universe are now believed to be unobservable ("dark matter" and "dark energy"), leaving a mere 5% that can be observed directly. What little we know is based on the incredibly complex phenomena that we observe in this small portion. Having faith would therefore mean, on a rational basis, learning to live with uncertainty, a previously uncomfortable mindset. To Becky, the alternative position of faith as certainty of knowledge is even more uncomfortable. She quoted Quaker historian Howard Brinton's statement that faith has to exist beyond certain knowledge.

Becky has been influenced by author Karen Armstrong, who has written "What our world needs now is not belief, not certainty, but compassionate action." This perspective, recalling James 2, lifts the irresolvable conflict of faith versus doubt to a higher plane, in which faith is compatible with doubt.

Becky's scholarly work centers around urban politics and social movements, as she has studied



Sharon Herzberger and Rebecca (Becky) Overmyer-Velasquez

them in Mexico and in Los Angeles County, in order to understand the interplay of economics, the environment, and human relations in policy making.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the congregation sang the Whittier College Alma Mater, as we have done many times before on Whittier College Sunday.

— Bob Newton

Friends Get Shot In The Arm

Thirty Friends prepared for the winter flu season in an unusually convenient way. After worship on Sunday, Oct. 30, Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital (PIH) sent a vaccination team to First Friends. Rob Settlege learned that the hospital provided this community service, and acquainted Jamie Benjamin with PIH contacts. She made the



arrangements and distributed prior announcements at Meeting for Worship.

Both seasonal influenza and pneumonia vaccines were available. Friends lined up in Fellowship Hall and rolled up their sleeves

after completing medical forms given out by PIH Community Health Educator Janette Lupercia and volunteer worker Yi Song. Nurse Debbie Schenkel rapidly and skillfully made the inoculations. You could take the shot standing or sitting, and avoid having to watch the puncture by facing away from the nurse, an option taken by this reporter.

Friends are appreciative of the concern of Rob and Jamie for keeping us healthy.

— Bob Newton



Pumpkins Assume Personalities

Approximately 40 people arrived at Fellowship Hall shortly after 6:00 p.m. on October 29, most bearing pumpkins to be turned into jack-o'-lanterns. Dan and Lea Wright, the organizers of the annual family carve-in, brought child-safe carving and scraping tools and paste-on templates of imaginative spooky faces or designs. Among the first arrivals was the Marshburn contingent: Ted and Mary, son John, grand-kids Brooke and Holly Rose, and their other grandmother Liz, accompanied by their young neighbors, twins Charlotte and Anna Jordan. Their load of pumpkins, some grown in the Marshburn garden, occupied a long counter in the kitchen, where most of the carving took place.

Karen Bungay and daughter Lilly sketched out "Mike Wazowski," a cyclopean cartoon character. Olivia Allen's pumpkin became a shark face. Sharon Sturr tooled "Evil Face" while daughters Jasmine and Bella did ghost designs. Austin Allen turned out a handsome "Trick or Treat" pumpkin that glowed its message beautifully when candle-tested outdoors. Cedric Woirhaye created a triangle-featured jack-o'-lantern with a two-tooth smile that he termed a "rare traditional design." Lyn Gruber executed a dancing goblin in bas-relief. Jamie Benjamin chose a very complex five-ghost pattern. Philip Wright circulated among the carvers offering technical assistance. The artists periodically took time out to enjoy cookies, chips and apple cider brought by the participants. Youngsters Liza Thompson, Jayden Vance-Velez, Lara Wemmerus and Elyse Woirhaye provided continuous entertainment on the Fellowship Hall stage with improvised dramas. A group of non-carvers spent an enjoyable evening building a 300-piece jigsaw puzzle depicting an old-fashioned country air show.

As the 9:00 p.m. closing hour approached, Raquel Allen was scavenging pumpkin seeds which, she explained, make a delicious snack when roasted, and the last pieces went into the puzzle. Then the sculptors proudly arranged their works of art on a long table and posed for a group picture.

Family night fellowship activities are important in building community at First Friends Church. This pumpkin-carving party was a great bonding event, thanks to Dan, Lea, and Philip.

Movie Night Is Important Outreach!

The First Friends community service of a free monthly Movie Night for children of all ages gave evidence with both its 38 October attendees and 64 in November, that word about this event is getting out. Both presentations had large numbers of non First Friends Church attendees.

The October event featured "The Ghost and Mr. Chicken." For November, we showed "Rio." A list of queries and comments for parents and children accompanied both movies, calling to their attention the ethical and moral messages.

At a recent community meeting in town one woman attending expressed her appreciation that one of the churches (ours) was holding a free monthly movie night for children to help give people a night out away from the pressure! This outreach is important to First Friends and the larger community.

— Alene Burke



Youth Scavenge for Gifts

At rise of Meeting on November 13th the Junior and Senior High Fellowships set off to Del Taco for sustenance before taking on the annual Thanksgiving Scavenger Hunt. This year the hunt began when the youth received their first clue giving instructions for writing out "We Are Thankful" with french fries resulting in a photo opportunity for *The Living Light*. Then it was off to Albertson's where our serious clue solving began. Divided into 3 groups and equipped with our budget of \$50, we found edible crystalline carbohydrates (sugar), pommes de terre (that's French for potatoes), and many items that have been preserved under pressure and by heat — a.k.a. canned fruits and vegetables. Of course there was turkey and many other delights as well. This year our food baskets are going to a few deserving folks in our meeting.

December 2011



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	2 6:00p WFS Chili Cookoff	3 JHF & YFF Candy Making 4:30p Braille Institute Children's Choir Concert
4 9:30a First Day Classes 11:00a Meeting for Worship 12:15p Monthly Meeting and Extravagant Generosity Luncheon	5 1:30p Writing Class	6 6:30a Spiritual Growth & Quaker Men	7	8 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	9 7:30p Rio Hondo Choral Concert	10 10:00a Whittier Christmas Parade in Uptown
11 9:30a First Day Classes 11:00a Meeting for Worship 3:00p New Century Singers Holiday Concert 5:00p Christmas Dinner	12 10:00a Quiltmakers 1:30p Writing Class	13 <i>Friendly Fare Deadline</i> 6:30a Spiritual Growth & Quaker Men 9:15a Trustees 7:00p M&C	14	15 <i>The Living Light Deadline</i> 10:00a USFW Luncheon 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	16	17
18 9:30a First Day Classes 11:00a Meeting for Worship	19 9:30a "Monday Before Christmas" Children's Workshop 1:30p Writing Class	20 6:30a Spiritual Growth & Quaker Men	21 <i>Editors lay out The Living Light</i>	22 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	23	24 Christmas Eve 7:00p Christmas Eve Candle Light Service
25 Christmas 11:00a Meeting for Worship	26 10:00a Quiltmakers 1:30p Writing Class	27 6:30a Spiritual Growth & Quaker Men	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve 6:00p New Year's Eve Game Night

Lisa Adam
 Charles Adams
 Joyce Ajlouny
 Stephen Bailey
 John Bateman
 Nate Bates
 Audine Coffin
 Derek Creelman
 Ann Davidson
 Paul Edinger
 Elisabeth Elliot
 Thomas Gilbride
 Jesse Grace
 Marjorie Hadley
 Holly Haworth
 Magaline Heusel
 Edwin Holland
 William House
 Jack Huffaker
 Gavin La Montagne
 Christine Li
 Russell Litchfield
 Ryan Marshall
 Luke Marshburn
 Elise Marshburn
 Brooke Marshburn
 Holly Marshburn
 Theodore Marshburn
 Becky Memmelaar
 Joey Nolan
 Jay Oberholtzer

Gary Snyder
 Debbie Stellman
 Toni Sustaita
 Chris Thirkettle
 Sue Walker
 Milton Wright
 Zachary Yost

If we've missed your birthday, we apologize (and happy birthday)! We're working hard to keep our birthday calendar up-to-date so please let us know if we're forgetting anyone. Thank you!

Humanitarian Project Founder Tells of South Africa Mission

As South Africa was emerging from the oppressive apartheid regime in August of 1993, a tragic event occurred in Capetown. Amy Biehl, a 26-year-old Stanford graduate and a Fulbright scholar doing research on human relations in South Africa, was killed in mob violence. Although merely an observer at a demonstration by black nationalist militants, and escorted by black friends, her white face was apparently targeted.

Within hours of the incident, the news arrived at the California home of her parents, Linda and Peter Biehl. Their compassionate response to personal tragedy was told eloquently to First Friends by Linda at a special All Friends Fellowship noontime gathering on October 26. The luncheon for this event was prepared by Mary Marshburn and Shirley Votaw.

Peter and Linda launched the Amy Biehl Foundation in 1994, the year of the first open democratic election in South Africa. They

contributed start-up funds and solicited support from South African and U.S. sympathizers for a Capetown-based program of human rights advocacy, so desperately needed in a country where basic rights to equal employment, education, and health care had been denied to the black African majority for 150 years.

Today the Amy Biehl Foundation employs 80 community workers in South Africa, and enjoys the support of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and charitable contributors from around the world. Seventy percent of operating funds come from within South Africa. Internes from many countries participate in what has gained the reputation of a model program for social development.

Linda emphasized that the heroic story of Nelson Mandela and the other founders of the new South Africa motivated the Biehls to react to their tragedy in a humanitarian way. Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) is still the dominant political party in South Africa. Bishop Desmond Tutu, another prominent figure in the South African liberation movement, has paid public tribute to the Biehls, as has Mandela. The Biehls have received many international awards from human rights groups. In 2008, several years after the death of Peter, Linda received a special award from the South African government. A new high school in Albuquerque N.M. has been named in honor of Amy Biehl.

Linda carries on with the Foundation's work. Serving as a board member and advisor, she spends as much time in South Africa as in her home in San Diego. The Foundation has a South African director who administrates small grants to support education, the arts, job training, and public health facilities. They run a successful modern bakery in Capetown that provides a significant amount of the Foundation's operating funds.

Viki Marshburn, daughter-in-law of AFFN organizers Ted and Mary, was instrumental in bringing us this distinguished visitor. A long-time volunteer at the College, Viki knew that Linda Biehl, an alumna of Whittier College, would be in town the last week of October as an invited speaker for the inauguration of the College's Center for Continuing Engagement. Friends expressed their appreciation to Viki, Ted and Mary for bringing this rewarding fellowship event.



— Bob Newton

AFFN Visits

Land of Fire and Ice

Iceland is a land of few natural amenities. Almost barren of trees, this island country on the Arctic Circle sees few sunny days during the year — the normal forecast is for rain, snow or fog. There is a mere seven-week period in mid-summer when flowers bloom. Volcanic eruptions periodically bury large parts of the country under many feet of ash. Yet, according to Elinore Petoletti, who toured Iceland last summer, the people are cheerful, prosperous, and proud of their country.

Elinore reported on her Iceland experiences to 30 vicarious travelers at All Friends Fellowship Night, Nov. 9. Her outstanding photos took the audience all around the island by boat and bus, documenting the life-style in this unique country. It was exciting to listen to the sound track of video movie segments showing boiling hot-springs, waterfalls (the country has lots of these natural wonders), and stampeding sheep.

Elinore's trip at the end of August got off to a rough start. She was to have connected with her Iceland Air flight to Reykjavik in Boston, but all flights there were cancelled that day because of Hurricane Irene. An experienced traveler, Elinore immediately got on her cell phone and arranged an alternative route through Minneapolis, meeting her tour in Reykjavik on time.

Reykjavik, a city of 200,000, has two thirds of the country's total population. The people are comfortably housed in sturdy concrete houses (having no wood for construction), heated and lighted by geothermal energy. The people of Iceland have exploited their most abundant natural resource, volcanic heat, and are the world's leading developers of this power source. There are even bakeries where volcanic heat bakes the bread! Fresh vegetables are abundant, grown in steam-heated greenhouses.

When Elinore arrived, Icelanders were still digging out from the ash deposited by the eruption of the volcano Eyafjallajökull (don't even try to

pronounce Icelandic names!) that paralyzed air traffic all over Europe last year.

Elinore's tour circled the island clockwise. On the rugged Snaefellsnes Peninsula, she visited fisheries and fish farms. The smell of curing shark meat is nauseating, she reports. Fishing is the leading industry. Iceland supplies much of the fresh fish consumed in Europe and North America.

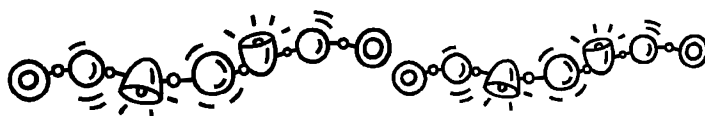
Elinore's cruise vessel put in at cities on the North Coast, above the Arctic Circle. She learned much respect for the hardy, industrious people of Viking descent who first settled an uninhabited island in 900 A.D. They claim to be the oldest democracy in Europe. For centuries they were ruled by the kings of Norway and Denmark, but have always been culturally and linguistically distinct from other Scandinavians.

The most scenic area is the Vatnajökull plateau of the southern coast. Its Skaftafell National Park is an ice-capped region of intensely active volcanoes. Elinore's dramatic pictures showed geysers and other hot-water phenomena similar to those of Yellowstone.

After a week's cruise and many adventures, Elinore flew home from Reykjavik.. She had had only a brief glimpse of many other interesting things that she would love to go back and see.

Friends expressed their gratitude to Elinore for an absorbing travel experience and to Ted and Mary Marshburn for organizing a fine program and elegant pot-luck supper.

— Bob Newton



Finance Committee to Host Generosity Celebration

Thank you to all who participate in the life of the Meeting who have returned a Plan for Support of programs of the Meeting for 2012. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

If you have not yet had an opportunity to return your Plan for Support, please do so soon. The asking budget for 2012 and anticipated income for 2012 will be presented to Monthly Meeting on December 4 for consideration for approval.

I would also like to take this opportunity to, again, invite everyone to come to the meal before Monthly Meeting as guests of the Business and Finance Committee. The gathering for a meal is to celebrate the "Extravagant Generosity" of all of us who participate in the life of the Meeting.

— Tim Root, Clerk - Business and Finance Committee



Print Museum Brings History To Life

The International Printing Museum, founded in 1988, is advertised as a place where history comes to life. An impressive collection of antique but operational equipment is currently housed in a building in Carson which you might think was a warehouse if just driving by. Inside is the amazing collection of the late Ernest A. Lindner of Glendale, a printing equipment salesman who traveled the world discovering, buying, and restoring artifacts that document how the written word has been copied and distributed from ancient to modern times.

The museum is open to the public every Saturday. But on Thursday, October 27, by pre-arrangement, a history teacher docent, wearing a long denim printer's apron, opened up just for the Senior Sneaks, and guided our party of 15 around, holding our attention from beginning to end. (You can see a video of one of his tours by Googling "Peter Small, printing.") Many students visit the museum and it takes programs to schools. The museum also works with the film industry, supplying presses as needed, both on the premises and on location.

Our tour began with Ben Franklin, the American author, scientist, and statesman whose tombstone reads "Benjamin Franklin, Printer" as he would introduce himself. The museum has a replica of his Philadelphia printing shop, and in it is the third oldest printing press made in America, just like the one Ben Franklin used. He started out as a teen-age apprentice, assigned to do the print-shop's dirtiest drudgery. He supported himself by printing in his early years and disseminated his views on public issues through the newspaper he published, though he retired from actual printing around the age of 40.

We heard even more about Gutenberg, the 15th Century German whose invention of movable metal type changed history, contributing to the Protestant Reformation and the spread of democratic ideas. Think of the effect of the Internet today on populations which have heretofore had only limited access to printed information.

Remembering Max Rees

Robert Maxwell Rees (1928-2011), father of Becky Memmelaar and known to everyone as "Max," spent 61 of his 83 years as a Friends pastor. He began his pastoral career in Western Yearly Meeting, having attended Earlham and received a BD from Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. After moving into North Carolina Yearly Meeting, he enjoyed a tenure of 35 years at Springfield Meeting in High Point, which named Rees Fellowship Hall in his honor. Retiring in 1996 to Vermilion Grove, IL, an old Quaker center where the Reeses were early settlers, he preached from 1997 to 2009 at Hopewell Meeting nearby but in Indiana.

Max was a second generation Quaker pastor, son of Russell Rees (1896-1983), who received his BD from Hartford Seminary in CT. One of the meetings he served was the Chicago Meeting, where he was kindly remembered by Friends the Newtons knew. Both he and Max received pastoral invitations from Whittier First Friends, but each decided against moving to California.

Max is survived by seven children and their spouses, 24 grandchildren, and 36 great-grandchildren, as well as by Avis, his wife of 65 years. Readers of *Quaker Life* may remember her recipe columns in the 1980s.

David Haworth, who visits First Friends on occasion, wrote in a condolence posted online that Max Rees, his pastor when a High Point youth, had been an important mentor and all of the Rees children were personal friends. Max's sermons on civil discord, inequality of peoples, and other problems of the day were "absolutely prescient... His question was always, 'And what shall we as Quakers, and followers of Christ, do about it? Anything? Certainly not nothing!'"

Before 1450, it took scribes in monasteries five years to copy a single Bible, using quill pens and ink, and only royalty and the Church could afford to own books. Gutenberg's press produced over 500 Bibles in five years, 48 of which survive today. By 1500, millions of books had been printed, and ordinary people were reading them. The Museum's Gutenberg press, on which we watched our docent print a page, is a replica, but Southern California is also home to an authentic original press, located at the Huntington Library.

As we walked through the museum, many innovations were pointed out, including presses portable enough to be shipped to the growing cities of the West. One of the last machines demonstrated was the noisy linotype. Made obsolete in the 1970s by photo-offset printing, its invention in 1884 eliminated tedious type-setting by hand, making large big-city newspapers possible. At the end of this informative tour, we thanked the Votaws for arranging it as well as our very knowledgeable docent, and adjourned to the Alpine Village for lunch.

— Sabron Newton

Remembering Gertrude Kurth

Gertrude (Trudy) Kurth celebrated her 102nd birthday on October 3, 2011 and went to her eternal reward on October 26, 2011. Trudy was born in Amsterdam, Holland on October 3, 1909 and christened Gertrude Alexandria Fersenaar. She lived through the German occupation of Holland during World War II. During the five years of war, she harbored two Jewish children in her home, protecting them from the Germans until war's end.



Trudy married Fred Leck and immigrated to the United States in 1948. She quickly learned English, assimilated into American life, and became a U.S. citizen. Trudy worked at Murphy Hospital in Whittier as a physical therapist and was an active member of First Friends Church where she sang in the choir. She was an accomplished organist and writer of poetry.

After many years as a widow, Trudy married Edward Kurth in 1982. Edward worked as Chief Engineer at Presbyterian Hospital. He was also a well-known repairman at Ken's Shaver shop and an active member of the Whittier Masonic Lodge. After his retirement the couple moved to Yucca Valley. But Trudy missed her "hometown," Whittier, and they moved back, into the Whittier Lutheran Towers. Ed Kurth passed away at age 93 on January 18, 1993.

Although Trudy had no children of her own, she is survived by a stepdaughter Virginia (Kurth) Clark. Trudy celebrated her hundredth birthday in 2009 with old family friends, Tom and Helen Tomey and their children and grandchildren, and with her stepdaughter Virginia and her husband David. Trudy had stayed in close contact with the Tomey family since they first met in 1959.

For You Are God

The power of all power,
The Supreme strength,
In life's uncertain way,
But at the valley of the mountain,
I know He guides me day by day.
When days are dark and storms are weeping.
When everything seems dark and gray,
Within thyself, thy heart is weeping,
Then I look up and hear Him say,
My child rejoice, I'm here beside you.
I know your troubles and your pain,
Don't think I ever will forsake you,
Don't think you ever pray in vain.
Oh, praise the Lord,
He's always faithful,
His love and mercy without end.
Peace and rest fills now my being,
A peace which only Jesus sends.

— Trudy Leck Kurth

Becky's Byline



Finding Room

Ten days before Thanksgiving, I find myself examining my calendar carefully in an attempt not to double book my Christmas events and commitments. After looking at my ever growing to do list, I found myself thinking: *this isn't humanly possible!* I began to think of the work of Christmas rather than the "good news of great joy" that the angels promised. I realized that I wasn't all that different from the innkeeper in the Christmas story (Luke 2:7).

In Luke's story, Mary's first child, Jesus was laid in a manger because there was no room for his family in the inn. In our ramp up for Christmas, it is easy for us fill our days and calendars with the stuff of Christmas: cards, presents, family gatherings, parties, and church activities. Make no mistake these are important aspects of our holiday celebrations, but if we're not careful we end up like the innkeeper with no room to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

We begin to fill our houses and yards with symbols of Christmas. We make room for a blow-up Santa and his reindeers. We carefully decorate our hearths with stockings and our trees with ornaments. If we're not careful our total acknowledgement of the birth of Christ is a baby doll we set in a ceramic manger.

This year we have the unique opportunity to celebrate Christmas as a church family on Christmas Eve at 7:00 p.m. with a candlelight service. Additionally, we have the opportunity to worship together on Christmas morning at 11:00 a.m. As you are planning your family gatherings consider worshipping with us.

Regardless of whether you are here in Whittier or far away, remember to make room to celebrate the birth of possibilities as we remember the birth of Jesus. Be intentional about making room for Jesus in your lives and in your celebrations. Make certain that Jesus is more than a tiny ceramic figure that you place carefully in a manger. Make sure that you find time to hear and experience the "good news of great joy" for all the people. Find time to celebrate the birth of the Christ child.

The Living Light

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**AFFN and Senior Sneaks
are taking a vacation for the holidays.
These two great groups
will resume their programs in January.**



*Please
remember in
prayer
those Friends
unable to
worship with
us regularly.*

POINSETTIAS



Order deadline December 18
Please place ___ poinsettia plant(s) in the Meetinghouse on Christmas Sunday, December 25 at \$7 each.

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Name _____

Phone _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____

[] I will take after worship [] Deliver to shut-ins.

- Peggy Anderson
- Carlos Bailey
- John Basham
- Arden Bode
- Audine Coffin
- Monica Dean
- Ruth Esther Durham
- Gerry Jansen
- Esther Morris
- Alice Newsom
- Alice Rosenberger
- Ami Troedsson
- Mary Wanner