

OAK PARK FRIENDS  
NEWS  
August 2011



Picture taken at Volo Bog State Natural Area, Volo, IL

Oak Park Friends Meeting – Religious Society of Friends  
720 Chicago Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois 60303  
708-445-8201

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [www.oakparkfriends.org](http://www.oakparkfriends.org)

Meeting for Worship each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

Clerk – Helen Dickinson

Recording Clerk – Judy Erickson

Treasurer – Valerie Lester

Newsletter Editors – Pamela Timme and Bob Southworth  
(<mailto:ptimme@hotmail.com>)

Submission deadline – 25<sup>th</sup> day of the month

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pam Timme was nominated to be the Meeting Archivist. At Illinois Yearly Meeting she attended a workshop on record keeping for monthly meetings. There is an archive at the University of Illinois in Urbana/Champaign which collects records from ILYM and its monthly meetings. She would like help in considering whether to send some of our records to this archive, which ones to send, and in what format, perhaps over pizza! Please contact her at [ptimme@hotmail.com](mailto:ptimme@hotmail.com) if you are interested.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Please see the meeting website at [www.oakparkfriends.org](http://www.oakparkfriends.org) for further information.*

**Gather & Grow**, August 6, 9:30 am – 3:30 am. Process to envision what's next for Metro Chicago General Meeting (MCGM), location is Lake Forest Friends Meeting. For more information go to: [www.mcgmqquakers.org](http://www.mcgmqquakers.org), or call Bonni at (773)209-4712 or e-mail Earl at [quakerearl46@yahoo.com](mailto:quakerearl46@yahoo.com).

### **Vignettes from Israel/Palestine--What we don't see or read in the news!**

August 7<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 am. A report by Wil Rutt on his recent interfaith tour in Israel and Palestine organized by Neighbors East to West. This event is part of the Oak Park Friends Meeting's efforts to keep our community informed about international situations. Location: Oak Park Art League, 720 Chicago Avenue, Oak Park, IL. For more information contact: Kelly Maynard, [kellythelinguist@hotmail.com](mailto:kellythelinguist@hotmail.com), (773)824-0722, <http://www.oakparkfriends.org>

**The Sixth Annual Old-Fashioned Corn Roast and Pot Luck Picnic**, Metropolitan Chicago General Meeting, hosted by Upper Fox Valley Quaker Meeting

When: Saturday, September 3, 2011 – 3:00 p.m. till dark

Where: Alice and Bill Howenstine's  
Pioneer Tree Farm  
4614 Pioneer Road (3 miles north of McHenry, half mile off Rt. 31)  
McHenry, IL 60051 Tel: 815-385-8512  
(a map can be printed from the farm's web site: [www.pioneertreefarm.com](http://www.pioneertreefarm.com))

### What's happening:

3:00-5:00 – volleyball, hiking, hayrides, horseshoes, croquet, feeding the chickens, frisbee, or your own favorite game...and good conversation!

5:00 - pot luck supper – roast corn, lemonade, ice tea, and coffee will be provided by Upper Fox Valley

Evening - campfire, singing, stories

Camping overnight is okay. Breakfast can be a co-op affair – and you are welcome to join Upper Fox Valley Meeting Sunday: discussion group, 9 am; worship, 10 am (held at Crystal Lake Montessori School), followed by a simple pot-luck

What to bring:

-- some food to share (and cooler, if needed); soft drinks (if desired); your own non-disposable plates, cups, utensils; folding chairs or blankets to sit on (there are four picnic tables and benches); mosquito repellent; sun-tan lotion; musical instrument; (camping equipment, of course, if you want to camp overnight)

**DRESS FOR THE WEATHER WITH OUTDOOR CLOTHING!**

RSVP:

It would help in ordering corn to have an idea of how many will be coming!

815-385-8512 or [abhow@oawl.net](mailto:abhow@oawl.net)

**Blue River Quarterly Meeting**, September 23-25.at Dubois Center in Southern Illinois. Theme: Deepening Our Worship and Our Relationships. Location: Dubois Center in Southern Illinois. For more information go to: <http://www.ilym.org/drupal/node/189>.

Silent Retreat, October 14 - 16 - In association with Evanston Meeting at Menno Haven. For more information go to registration form: <http://evanstonquakers.com/PDF/SilentRetreat2011.pdf>.

[Another Peace Paddle?](#)

Submitted by Pam Timme



It has been three years since our Peace Paddle on the north branch of Chicago River. We canoed/kayaked for an afternoon through the urban wilderness - what a fun day that was! We discussed the possibility of organizing another paddle at the July business meeting, and now are hoping that someone, or perhaps several people, can coordinate such an event. If you are interested, please contact Pam Timme at [ptimme@hotmail.com](mailto:ptimme@hotmail.com).

## Who were the Flitcrafts and What Is Their Connection to OPFM?

*Submitted by Pam Timme, with excerpts from Illinois Yearly Meeting minutes, "History of 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting of Friends", and "Illinois Yearly Meeting Centennial Sampler, 1875-1975".*

This article appeared in the January 2006 newsletter. It is being reprinted in this edition as it may be of interest to those who have not yet seen it, or as a refresher to those who have.

It is amazing to me that people can devote many decades of their lives to creating, nurturing and influencing organizations, and within a few short years of their deaths their activities, personalities, and even their names can be forgotten. Of course, their influence lives on through those who follow them and who build on the foundations they have laid. But I think its important – and fascinating – to discover a few things about our predecessors at OPFM, and to recognize the ties that connect us.

In the case of the Flitcraft family, those connections reach back for more than 100 years of Quaker history in the Chicago area, including a sojourn with Jane Addams at Hull House. Various members of the Flitcraft family were instrumental in forming 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting, Oak Park Meeting, and encouraging the first meeting of the group that was to become Downers Grove Meeting.

The 1982 Illinois Yearly Meeting minutes state, "Quakers first organized in Chicago in 1864 when Elizabeth Comstock and Charles and Rhoda Coffin came to minister to Confederate prisoners of war held at Camp Douglas, located on the shore of Lake Michigan between 31<sup>st</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> streets. In 1866 Chicago Monthly Meeting was officially established, and in 1877 the Central Executive Meeting." According to the reminiscences of early Chicago Friends, in 1870 Isaiah Flitcraft was attending a Quaker meeting at Clark and Washington streets; and "during the troubles caused by the great fire of 1871, we met in private homes for a time." In 1910, the meeting began to meet in the Fine Arts building at 410 S. Michigan Ave. Allen (Isaiah's brother) and Emma Flitcraft attended Meeting there and were very active. "Allen often spoke in Meeting, and Emma served as clerk for several years."

Allen and Emma Flitcraft had several children, including a son, Clement (1880 - ~1950). Clement Flitcraft married Luella Wilson Flitcraft (1877 - ?), and the couple also were very active Quakers. Luella Flitcraft was, I believe, the first woman clerk of Illinois Yearly Meeting in 1928, after the women's and men's business meetings combined. She recalled the following about the Central Executive Meeting: "In 1925 an invitation came to our group from Jane Addams to hold our Meetings at Hull House. We felt this was a great honor, and her invitation had our grateful acceptance. Jeannette Flitcraft Stetson (Clement and Luella's daughter) was working at Hull House in those days, first as a Girl Scout leader, next conducting typewriting classes, and later as Jane Addams' private secretary. We met in the Music room of Hull House and entered through an attractive little court which was the only beauty spot on that Halsted street corner. Clement Flitcraft and I, Sherman and Jeannette Stetson (Clement and Luella's son-in-law and daughter)...and Harold and Alice Flitcraft (Clement and Luella's son and daughter-in-law) were very active members there." Alice Flitcraft remembered Jane

Addams' allowing her infant son, Allen, to sleep in his basket in her office during meeting for worship there.

The Hull House Friends merged with others to form the 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting in 1931. Harold Flitcraft (1901-1982) and Alice Blackburn Flitcraft (1900-1995) participated fully in the life of 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting. (They also attended Friends General Conference for 61 years!) 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting acted as an incubator for several area meetings, including Oak Park. The "History of 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting of Friends" states that, "While we are proud of 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting's function in drawing new life into the Religious Society of Friends and sending it on to other Meetings, some Friends who depart from Chicago leave gaps which we are keenly aware can never be filled." As reported in the 1995 Illinois Yearly Meeting Minutes, Clement and Luella Flitcraft, "encouraged the development of a small meeting for worship in Oak Park, where they lived, and were glad for its proximity during the travel restrictions of World War II...On December 7, 1941, after a meeting held in their home, the assembled Friends turned on the radio and learned about the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Alice remembered clearly that one member said, 'This means war!' They all lingered to discuss the consequences of this historic event for themselves individually and as Friends. As it developed, Alice and Harold shared their home, before the war was over, with a man who had been a judge in Germany before he escaped...and Harold's parents took in other refugees from Germany and Austria."



*Clement Flitcraft*



*Luella Flitcraft*

Oak Park Friends met in Clement and Luella's home at 633 S. Maple for the first few years of the meeting. In those early years the Meeting shut down for the summer, as the Flitcrafts went to their summer home in Michigan. Several members of 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting chose to join Oak Park Meeting (see copies of the Stetsons' transfer request letters, below), while others split their time between meetings. In 1943, the Stetsons moved to Michigan, where Jeannette continued a multitude of Quaker and other charitable activities. Alice and Harold, although they lived in River Forest and Oak Park, usually attended the 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting. In her later years, however, Alice eventually found herself again in close contact with the Oak Park Meeting, and in her last years Oak Park Friends visited her regularly and on occasion held meeting for worship with her at home. The 1995 Illinois Yearly Minutes noted, "She began to quote Browning's 'Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be,' and add, regretfully, that she no longer saw what lay

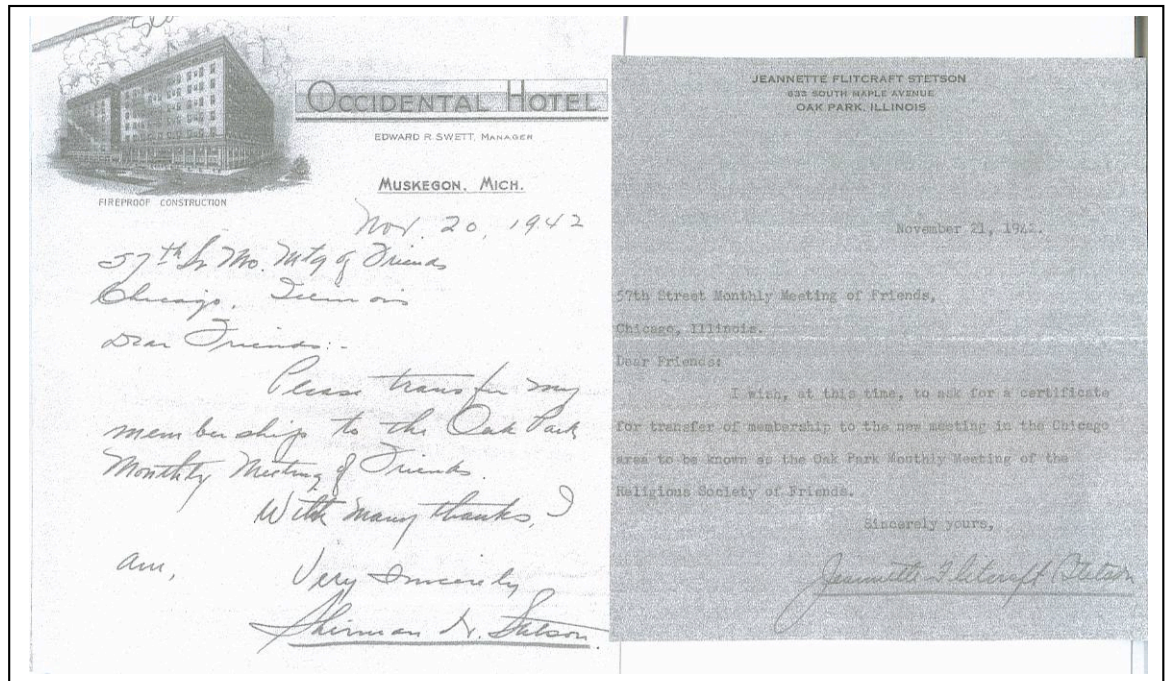
ahead as best. But even as she accepted declining eyesight and having to use a walker and wheelchair, she was heard to refer to herself as in her 'naughty 90s'."



Luella, Alice and Harold Flitcraft



Jeannette Flitcraft Stetson



The Stetsons' membership transfer letters from 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting to Oak Park Meeting

## BUSINESS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Please see the meeting website at [www.oakparkfriends.org](http://www.oakparkfriends.org) for further information, including reports from individual committees.

### June 2011

There was no business meeting in June.

### July 2011

Committee reports were reviewed. The role of the meeting archivist was discussed.

## QUERY QUOTATIONS

Rooted in the history of Friends, queries reflect the Quaker way of life, reminding Friends of the ideals we seek to attain. We approach queries as a guide, using them not as an outward set of rules, but as a framework within which we assess our convictions and examine prayerfully the direction of our lives and the life of the community. Here are a few selections from Faith and Practice, published in 1997 by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends:

### Peace

How does our Meeting act to advance peace, to oppose violence, and to support the constructive use of authority in our community, our nation, and the world?

What are we doing as a Meeting:

- to free our nation from militarization, so evident in our society and in its economy?
- to understand the causes of war and violence and to work for the development of the attitudes and institutions of peace?
- to recognize and correct the causes of violence within our communities, and to work toward overcoming separations and restoring wholeness?
- to increase the understanding and use of nonviolent approaches for the resolution of conflicts?

*Do I live in the power of that Life and Spirit that takes away the occasion of all wars?*

*How do I maintain Friends' testimony that military training and all participation in war and its preparation are inconsistent with the teaching and the spirit of Christ?*

*Do I work for the establishment of alternative ways of settling disputes? Am I aware that to build a world community requires that we all face our differences honestly, openly, and in trust?*

*Do I treat conflict as an opportunity for growth, and address it with careful attention? Do I seek to recognize and respect the Divine in those with whom I have a basic disagreement? Do I look for ways to reaffirm in action and attitude my love for the one with whom I am in conflict?*

## AND IN CONCLUSION...

If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.....Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. Since there will never cease to be someone in need on the earth, I therefore command you, "Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land."

~ Deuteronomy 15: 7-10

The New Oxford Annotated Bible, New Revised Standard Version