

*Simplicity \* Peace \* Integrity \* Community \* Equality \* Stewardship*

**OAK PARK FRIENDS**  
**NEWS**  
**February 2014**



***Six More Weeks?!?***

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 – Judith Erickson

Recording Clerk – Sarah Shirk

Treasurer – Valerie Lester

Newsletter Editors – Pamela Timme and Bob Southworth

(<mailto:ptimme@hotmail.com>)

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Third Sunday Sing-alongs - Join Friends every third Sunday of the month at OPAL at 9:40 am for fellowship through song

The Ministry and Care Committee want you to be aware that there is a suffering fund for those that need. Contact a committee member for details.

OPFM welcomes donations for the needs of the meeting which include the meeting space, activities and charitable giving. Donations can be mailed to Oak Park Friends Meeting, PO Box 3245, Oak Park, IL 60303.

Wanted: babysitter for adorable six-month-old boy from 9am to 1pm on the first and third Saturdays of the month. If interested, please contact Pam Timme at [ptimme@hotmail.com](mailto:ptimme@hotmail.com).

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

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

**Feb 2 11:30am** Adult Religious Education on Famous Historical Quaker

**March 2 11:30am** Adult Religious Education on Contemporary Quaker

## **EAGLE WATCH TRIP**

Submitted by Sue Beckman and Pam Timme

Cold weather has its benefits. The eagles were out and about this year for the third annual trip to the Eagle Watch Weekend at the Illinois Waterways Visitors Center near Starved Rock State Park. Five OPFM F/friends traveled to see them last weekend, January 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> - Sue Beckman, Ida and Arushi Helander, Valerie Lester and Sarah Shirk. Most stayed overnight nearby at Clear Creek House at Illinois Yearly Meeting.

Eagles often congregate at Starved Rock location by the dam on the Illinois River so that they can fish when cold winters freeze the waterways farther north. The Illinois Waterways Visitors Center provided telescopes and experts from the Audubon Society to answer questions, as well as activities for children.

Eagle facts: Eagles lay between one and three eggs per season. Usually only one or two hatch. Parents only take care of the eagles for one year, and then they are on their own. They do not start reproducing until they are five years old. They develop white feathers on their heads at this stage also. Eagles can live to be twenty-five years old. They sit on broken patches of river ice and watch for fish to catch. They not only eat fish, but they also hunt ducks and other birds.



*Reprint from 2012 Eagle Watch Trip*

## **BUSINESS MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

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

### **January 2014**

#### **Discussion of Committee as a Whole.**

After much seasoning, Helen and Valerie were approved as naming committee members to fill two spots on the nominating committee. Bob Southworth will continue in his third year on the nominating committee. We will continue with or current committee structures. Naming committee is able to nominate themselves to nominating committee. A called meeting or business meeting will be utilized to approve nominees for the nominating committee. Appreciation is expressed to current committees for their inspired and conscientious work.

#### **Finance Committee**

All annual contributions have been made with the one exception of the food pantry. That contribution is being held until spring for the Feinstein challenge benefit. Thanks to generosity of Friends.

## **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:

### **Meeting for Business**

Is our meeting for business held in the spirit of a meeting for worship in which we seek divine guidance?

Are we careful to keep in the spirit of worship each of the concerns that emerge, whether of nurture, of Spirit, of social concerns, of property, or of finance?

Are Meeting decisions directed by prayerful consideration of all aspects of an issue and are difficult problems considered carefully with patient search for truth, unhurried by the pressures of time?

How do we respond if we notice the meeting has lost an understanding of the presence of God?

Do we recognize that we speak through our inaction as well as our action?

*Do I regularly attend meeting for business and in a spirit of love and unity? If unable to attend, how do I attend to my responsibility?*

*Do I consider prayerfully the many concerns that are lifted up on any issue, acknowledging that the search for truth in unity involves what God requires, being open to personal transformation as the community arrives at the sense of the meeting?*

## OPFM HISTORICAL GLIMPSES

### THE FLITCRAFTS

Submitted by Pamela Timme, Reprinted from January 2006

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. Isaiah’s brother and sister-in-law, Allen 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 (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 about the 1941 beginning of the Oak Park Meeting, 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*

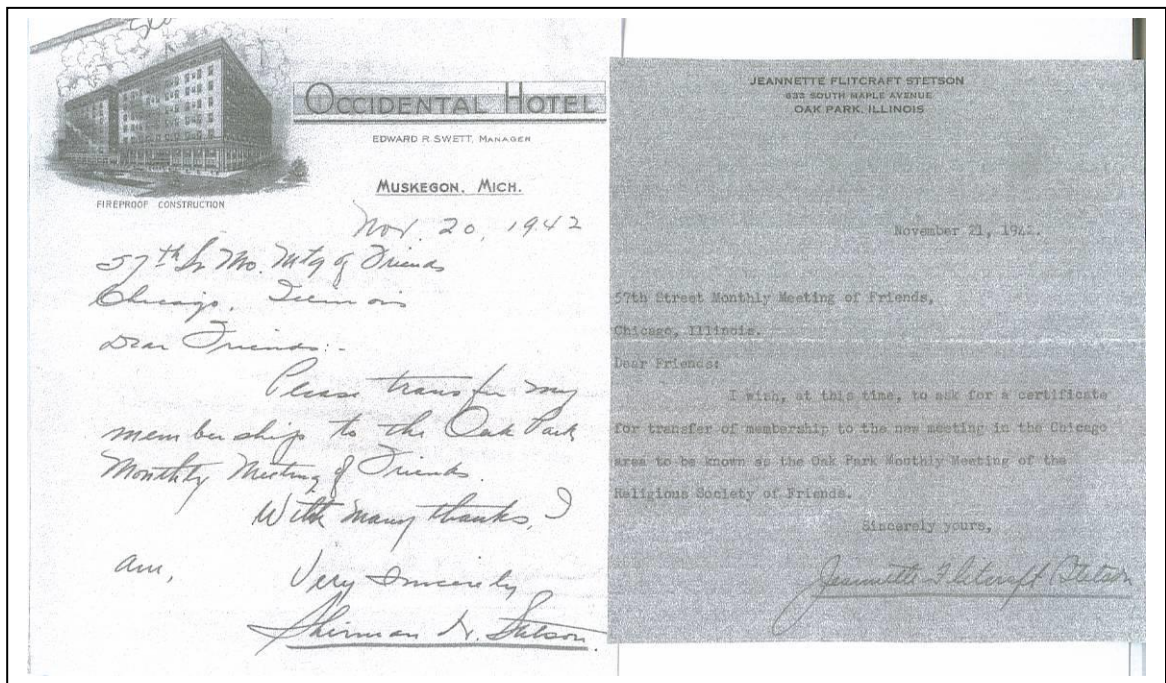
Oak Park Friends met in Clement and Luella’s home at 633 S. Maple for the first few years of the meeting. In those early years the Meeting shut down for the summer, as the Flitcrafts went to their summer home in Michigan. Several members of 57<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting chose to join Oak Park Meeting (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*

~ 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".

## AND IN CONCLUSION...

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

*Isaac Newton, 1676*

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

*Matthew 5:14-16*