

**Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business**  
**Asheville Friends Meeting**  
**Sixth Month 09, 2024**

**DRAFT**

**Present in the Meetinghouse:** Pat Johnson, Clerk, Kitti Reynolds, Interim Recording Clerk, Nick Mimpkin, Margaret Normile, Jim Cavenor, Steve Livingston, Barbara Esther, Rylin Hansen, Owen James, Robin Wells, Debra Rice, and Courtney Asher

**Present via Zoom:** none

The Meeting opened with Silent Worship.

The Clerk shared a reading out of the silence.

*Freedom In Exile*

*The Autobiography of His Holiness The Dalai Lama of Tibet*

Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, Abacus edition, 1992, London. Copyright © Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet, 1990. P. 199

Finally, I would like to share with my readers a short prayer which gives me great inspiration and determination:

For as long as space endures,  
And for as long as living beings remain,  
Until then may I, too, abide  
To dispel the misery of the world.

**Minute #1:** Friends accepted the agenda without a report from Finance.

**Minute #2:** The Meeting approved the Fifth Month Business Meeting Minutes as briefly amended.

**Announcements:** Pat Johnson

This Tuesday evening, June 11, we will have a virtual meeting with Dr. Melchor Hall with our Truth and Reconciliation project.

We will begin using cloth napkins when we eat and cloth towels in our restrooms to honor our approved Climate Minute. Pat Johnson will launder used napkins and towels each week. Please see Pat if you would like to help with the laundry.

Pat has had no additional information from the family of Alford Jones so that request is on hold.

### **Very Important Volunteer Opportunities**

Handbook Revision. Continue the beginning work of Patti Hughes.

SAYMA Representative is still needed. A Friend is considering this position.

AFM Recording Clerk is still needed, as is an Archivist.

### **Memorial Minutes: Christopher Foreman & Elizabeth Roebing**

Christopher “Chris” William Foreman made his transition into the Light on Saturday evening July 29 during a tumultuous thunderstorm. Christopher was born September 17, 1947 in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania to Martha Jane Fish Foreman and Victor Godfrey Foreman, both educators. Most of his childhood was spent in Bucks County, PA. He received an Associates degree in Electronics from Mercer Community College before receiving his undergraduate degree in Computer Science from Salisbury State University in Maryland. He worked briefly at the Wallops Island Flight Facility in Virginia. He often shared an experience while at Wallops of being able to tweak an algorithm that tracked jets to help them land more quickly. Some colleagues told him it couldn’t work, but he persisted and eventually succeeded. Later Christopher went on to Clemson University to pursue his Masters degree in Mathematics and Computer Science. The majority of his professional career was at Clemson: first as a mainframe programmer and then as the automation engineer for the University Building Access Control System. His “can-do” mindset and determination helped establish a system in the late ‘90s that is ahead of systems in many universities today. Those who worked with him enjoyed his warm spirit and insistence on meeting over quality lattes. Over the years many of his coworkers were pulled into his various mountain biking adventures. In addition to his parents, Christopher is predeceased by his brother, Peter Foreman. He is survived by his partner, Rebecca “Becky” LedBetter. As well as his brother Nick Foreman (Laurie); daughters: Lauren Devine (Jim) and Kelsey Foreman (Shane Griffith), brother Mark Foreman (Xiuhua); sons: Michael Foreman, Frank Foreman, Timothy Foreman (Martine) and Raymond Foreman, Sister-in-law Maggie Foreman sons: Brendan Foreman (Rachel), Bryan Foreman (Erika), and Bradley Foreman (Courtney) and 5 grand nieces and nephews. Christopher valued the teachings from various faiths but especially the focus on Peace and Social Justice embraced by the Quaker tradition. Christopher found happiness in rescuing and raising dogs throughout his lifetime. He enjoyed a good downhill on a mountain bike adventure, reading a good novel, ice cream, cake or apple pie, supporting the Mills River Farmers Market, being part of a community and especially having a lively conversation with a good friend over an excellent cup of coffee. A pillow with this quotation sat on his couch - “All you need is Love and a Dog.” Holy Stars—He will be missed. The family would like to offer heartfelt gratitude to the CarePartners Transylvania County Hospice Team especially Nurses Kayla and Diane, Counselor Amanda as well as

the Carepartners Hospice Solace Center Team. The compassionate attention to Christopher's care was exceptional. A Celebration of Life was held Saturday September 9, 2023 at 3:30pm Asheville Friends Meeting House (Quakers) 227 Edgewood Road Asheville, NC 28804 \*\* For those attending the Celebration of Life service Christopher requested that, if you'd like, please bring a short passage or quote from your favorite piece of fiction to share in celebration of the extraordinary effect fiction has on our human condition. \*\* Interment was at Carolina Memorial Sanctuary in Mills River, NC. In lieu of flowers - Memorials may be made to: Blue Ridge Humane Society: <https://www.blueridgehumane.org/> Mills River Farmers Market : Contact: [millsriverfarm@gmail.com](mailto:millsriverfarm@gmail.com) Asheville Friends Meeting (Quakers) : <https://ashevillefriends.org/>

Friends accepted the memorial minute for Christopher.

### **Memorial Minute for Elizabeth (Lizi) Eames Roebling (Read by Steve).**

Born: April 15, 1947 Died: April 17, 2023

Elizabeth Eames Roebling passed away on April 17, 2023 after a brief but serious illness. She led a most challenging, full and adventurous life, partially because of bipolar disorder but primarily due to her indomitable spirit and unsuppressable leadings. Music, sailing, swimming, political journalism, being a good steward of the earth and service to others were her passions. Elizabeth's days were dedicated to these pursuits. Elizabeth's intellect, perseverance, faith and strong leadings took her all over the world. Some places were safe, others were not, yet she never shied away because Elizabeth knew where she was supposed to be, no matter the risks or conditions.

Born in New York City, Elizabeth grew up in Greenwich Village and was educated at Friends Seminary and later attended Middlebury College and Columbia University. Her mother was a well known artist and the house was often the center of artistic and musical gatherings. Sailing played a significant role in her family.

Later Elizabeth moved to Oyster Bay, Long Island and then to Providence, Rhode Island, where she continued to pursue her passion for sailing and helped found a museum for vintage sailboats. While in Providence, Elizabeth founded a non profit organization called The Voice of the Turtle. She established a publication of the same name with the purpose of raising awareness of environmental concerns affecting sea life and the oceans. Her work came to the attention of the United Nations. The UN issued her a press card and she served the organization as a freelance reporter. While in Rhode Island, Elizabeth formed what would become a lifelong friendship with Kimlee Revock whom she later adopted. Kimlee was an integral part of her life and supported her through thick and thin. Their relationship was an extraordinary example of agape love.

From Rhode Island, her next home was Asheville NC. Elizabeth found and fell in love with a homesite consisting of two adjoining geodesic domes in a peaceful wooded setting, where she maintained close relationships with her dogs, her neighbors, and the spiritual beings who inhabited the surrounding forest. She joined Asheville Friends Meeting and remained a member for the rest of her life. During

her years in attendance at Asheville Meeting, she earned a reputation as a “bee in their bonnet,” holding the Meeting’s proverbial feet to the fire with her persistent and eloquent advocacy for human rights and the environment. She shared her feelings plainly and without hesitation. She was fierce, but never unkind.

Elizabeth was also an active member and activist in community organizations in Asheville. She worked with a variety of nonprofits particularly those involved in social justice issues for many years prior to moving to the island of Vieques in Puerto Rico.

Elizabeth was led to Vieques upon learning how spent munitions from US bombing practice had polluted the water table resulting in a high level of cancer in the island’s population. Alongside other activists, she and others landed in prison. Thankfully, the persistent activities of the protesters helped convince President Clinton to stop using the island for a bombing range.

During her 14 years in the Dominican Republic she volunteered to teach people to read and speak English and devoted herself to witnessing the troubles in Haiti as well. Often Elizabeth traveled in both countries alone, even in dangerous times to gain understanding and expose conditions. The relationships she formed with locals and people involved with affecting change, earned her the nickname “Mountain Annie”. Her blog on Haiti was so insightful it was followed by hundreds of people and translated into multiple languages, and led to subsequent years of investigative journalism with the Inter Press Service.

Upon her return to the United States, Elizabeth faithfully continued her work on facilitating change in Haiti. She started working on her memoirs and wrote articles for various publications. She also mentored and worked with local immigrants teaching English, some of whom she lived among. In spite of challenges posed by her bipolar disorder and occasionally suffering from treatment lapses, Elizabeth had a tremendous impact on so many people, many who never met her or knew her name.

Friends accepted Elizabeth Roebling’s Memorial Minute written by Steve and Karen Cernek.

### **Committees:**

**Nominating:** Kitti Reynolds.

Nominating Committee is happy to ask for your approval of Ellie Cox to maintain our Meeting Directory and share it with those in agreement with SAYMA. Ellie will confirm with individuals about their contact information being included on the address list that we share with SAYMA. A Friend pointed out that the Directory is a great way to get in contact with others who attend Meeting. The Directory is on Google Docs. Please check your entry. A Friend asked if he could get a PDF of it. We will establish a PDF of the Directory. A Friend pointed out that we should not arbitrarily share the list. We need to respect others’ privacy. **We will put a statement on the list itself that the list will not be shared outside of Meeting.**

**Minute #3:** Friends approved Ellie Cox to maintain the Meeting Directory.

**Peace and Earth:** Steve Livingston.

**Item 1:** P and E recommends this minute:

1/11/2024 draft A MINUTE OF ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE QUAKER  
INDIGENOUS BOARDING SCHOOLS<sup>1</sup>

To: The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

From: Asheville Meeting, Religious Society of Friends

On May 11, 2022, the United States Department of the Interior released volume 1 of the "Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report." The report outlines the forced assimilation techniques employed to erase the names, languages, religion, customs, and cultural identity of Native American children. The report says that thousands of Native children were forced away from their families and communities and subjected to military-style discipline, forced labor, and institutionalized living in 408 federal Indian boarding schools. The report also identified sites where children who died at the schools were buried; the Initiative will press forward to identify all such sites.

([https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi\\_investigative\\_report\\_may\\_2022\\_508.pdf](https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi_investigative_report_may_2022_508.pdf))

In 1902, 3 girls drowned in the Oconaluftee River trying to escape the Eastern Cherokee Boarding School. One was buried on school property before her parents were notified.<sup>2</sup> Asheville Friends Meeting has been unsuccessful in finding the names of these girls. Worldwide thousands of indigenous children have died at boarding schools, including in the United States. Sometimes the families weren't even notified when their children died.<sup>3</sup>

According to the Interior report, the initial investigation showed that approximately 50 percent of Federal Indian boarding schools may have received support or involvement from a religious institution or organization, including funding, infrastructure, and personnel. The U.S. Senate has recognized that federal funds from the 1819 Indian Civilization Fund "were apportioned among those societies and individuals—usually missionary organizations—that had been prominent in the effort to 'civilize' the Indians." (report, pg. 11)

In the next phase of its work, the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative will take further steps to investigate the degree to which federal funds, including monies held in Tribal trust accounts, were paid to religious organizations and institutions to operate Indian boarding schools. It will also continue to investigate where Native children have been buried.

Members of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), both individually and as regional and local Meetings, were directly involved in the founding, financial support, and administration of Indian boarding schools under the federal government's effort to eradicate Indian culture by eliminating all traces of Indian identity from upcoming generations. In 1882, Quakers contracted with the

government to open a Cherokee Boarding School for 20 girls & opened a separate school for boys the following year. While most students were Cherokee, some came from all over the Southeast US. Students at the Cherokee school knew where the “crying tree” was. They would go there to hug the tree & cry when bad things happened like getting whipped for getting sick at dinner or disciplined with rulers. Many students ran away but truant officers would search for them & bring them back.<sup>2</sup>

Barnabas C. Hobbs, representing Western Yearly Meeting of Indiana, which included several Friends from North Carolina and with aid of the Western Yearly Meeting and North Carolina Yearly Meeting, also reopened day schools at Bird Town, Soco, Big Cove & Snowbird (Cheoah) using interest from tribal funds, organizational funds and governmental funds.<sup>4</sup>

In 2015, the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS), called upon the religious denominations to investigate their involvement in the operation of Indian boarding schools and to make amends for their complicity in this genocidal enterprise. Paula Palmer of Boulder, Colorado Meeting was motivated by this call to do preliminary research on Quaker involvement. (See her reports at <https://vimeo.com/192219802/376f2f1ddb> and <https://www.friendsjournal.org/quaker-indian-boarding-schools/> )

However, given our local and regional organizational structure, no comprehensive denominational response has yet been made by the Religious Society of Friends.

Both NABS and the Department of the Interior report call for support of pending legislation that would establish “The Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the U.S. Act” (H.R.5444 and S.2907). Friends Committee on National Legislation has called on Quaker organizations to voice support for this legislation, and several monthly and yearly meetings have done so. (See <https://www.fcnl.org/issues/native-americans>)

## **THEREFORE**

Asheville Friends Meeting apologizes, especially to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, for the Religious Society of Friends actively promoting and participating in the Indian Boarding School system. This caused Indigenous communities to suffer intergenerational trauma.

We apologize that Quakers punished you and your ancestors for speaking your own language. That is an act of oppression and cultural annihilation. To attempt to force you to replace your own mother tongue with English was egregiously wrong. We are deeply sorry.

We apologize that Quakers also banned dancing, teaching that it was evil and creating repercussions across generations. To lose dancing is to lose an important way to celebrate, communicate, share stories, and get to a deeper spiritual place. For the dancers who were stopped, and the community dances lost, we sincerely apologize.

We apologize that Quakers did not respect your ways of living and for our participation in forcing a Western way of life upon you. We apologize that Quakers wanted you, your ancestors, and your

children to feel that your customs and worldview were wrong. We were wrong to believe that Western European worldviews and practices are superior to ones that you built with each other and the other living beings of your homeland for thousands of years. We regret and reject these attitudes and actions, which we acknowledge we still carry to this day. Our behavior means that Friends actively denied and failed to see your full humanity. We are painfully aware that the direct harm caused by our failure remains personal, cumulative, and ongoing.

It is not the responsibility of Indigenous Peoples to help us to transform our behavior. At the same time, we see that our acting without first listening has contributed to great harm. We seek your guidance and input to ensure reparations are done on terms that will help your communities heal.

We will do more than simply acknowledge the harm we have caused. We pledge to teach ourselves and our children about this wrong. We will formally and collectively ask ourselves what wrongs we may still be perpetrating in ignorance or bigotry.

We resolve to undertake a thorough and comprehensive review of records to determine what financial support Quaker institutions received from the federal government and other sources to operate the Eastern Cherokee Boarding School;

We resolve to publish a report of our internal investigation;

We endorse the formation of a federal Truth and Healing Commission on the Indian Boarding School Policies and will continue to support Indigenous rights, self-determination, and sovereignty. We encourage individual Friends and monthly and yearly meetings to urge their U.S. senators and representatives to cosponsor and support passage of the “Truth and Healing Commission on Indian Boarding School Policies in the U.S. Act” (H.R. 5444 and S.2907).

We ask for forgiveness and pledge to walk beside you as we work together for healing and transformation.

**Note 1:** This model minute was drafted and approved by Decolonizing Quakers and Friends Peace Teams, and also endorsed by Quaker Earthcare Witness

**For more information, please contact:**

Paula Palmer, paulaRpalmer@gmail.com, Co-Director, Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples, a program of Friends Peace Teams

John Meyer, john.meyer.quaker@gmail.com, Decolonizing Quakers

**Note 2:** Hill, Sarah H., *Weaving New Worlds: Southeastern Cherokee Women and Their Basketry* (Chapel and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997. Pp209.

**Note 3:** Excerpts taken from Alaska Friends Conference, Annual Session 2022. Prepared by Alaska Quakers Seeking Right Relationships with Indigenous Peoples Committee.

**Note 4:** Friends Review: a Religious, Literary and Miscellaneous Journal (1847-1894); Feb 13 1886;39, 28; American Periodicals. Pg 436

**Minute #4:** Meeting approved the Minute of Accountability for the Quaker Indigenous Boarding Schools as read by Steve.

**Item 2:**

P and E recommends that the Meeting approve \$5 a month to Sol Systems to switch our electricity account to 100% renewable. A Friend asked if we would get reports back from Sol Systems. Steve replied in the affirmative. Steve will put information about this into the digest.

**Minute #5:** Meeting approved changing our Duke Energy account to Sol Systems.

**Item 3:** Postcard Writing. Steve announced that we will be able to write postcards in support of renewable energy at COP 29 by writing to our US envoy to that meeting.

A Friend expressed appreciation to Steve for all his work.

The Meeting closed with silent worship until the way opens for our Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business on the Fourteenth Day, Seventh Month, 2024.