

Blue River Quarterly Meeting met for business at Urbana-Champaign At 2:30 on April 16, 1966, after a meeting for worship. Those who attended the meeting were as follows:

Urbana-Champaign:

Virginia and Gene Gilmore
Mahlon and Frankie Day
Mary Nell Eldridge
Mariellen Gilpin
Severyn and Louise Bruyn, Jacksonville
Marion Freeman
Francis Weeks
Rachel Weller
Merlin, Jo and David Taber
Gardiner Stillwell
James McCoy
Peg Stauber

Peoria:

Clear Creek:

St. Louis:

Susan, Rebecca and George Bruyn
Donna Smith; Stanley, David and Carolyn
Kathryn and Turner Mills
None

Chicago AFSC:

Paul Lauder

The minutes of the October Quarterly Meeting were read and approved.

Francis Weeks, Donna Smith, and Turner Mills were appointed to serve as a nominating committee to select a new Clerk and treasurer; their report was received after tea. Turner Mills suggested that perhaps the clerks of the Monthly Meetings should constitute an executive committee for Quarterly Meeting, with one of them chosen to be the clerk of Quarterly Meeting. The clerkship would thus rotate from one Monthly Meeting to the next during the course of the year. A discussion followed concerning who should have the authority to make this decision; the sense of the meeting was that the nominating committee should be asked to decide on this proposal. There was some question concerning the value of such a system; it was pointed out that this system would help to create communication among the different monthly meetings.

There was no treasurer's report, because no one from St. Louis was present.

Virginia Gilmore suggested the possibility of holding a Quarterly Meeting in Peoria or Bloomington, to increase interest in the local meetings' members. Too, it was suggested that either of these towns is more centrally located in Illinois and would be easier for the meetings in the northern part of Illinois to send representatives to. Donna Smith said that Peoria did not have enough people to cope with a Quarterly Meeting at this time, although they felt that the meeting had benefited very much when Quarterly Meeting had been held in Peoria four years ago.

Turner Mills then expressed a concern about the situation in Bloomington, Illinois, where there are two Friends Meetings, each apparently unaware of the other's existence. One meeting, outside Bloomington and named the Bentown Meeting, is financially healthy but, for all intents and purposes, without surviving members. The other meeting, in the city of Bloomington, is small, new and struggling.

Francis Weeks suggested that the Quarterly Meeting have a meeting for worship in the Bentown Meeting House, in accordance with the Friendly tradition of holding memorial meetings in old, no-longer-used meeting houses. He said he would be glad to stop in Bloomington sometime this spring to try to arrange such a meeting with Mrs. Roy Benjamin, of Route 4, Bloomington. It is hoped that by showing some interest in the state of the society there, a renewed local interest might result.

It was asked whether it might not be wise to suggest the two meetings get in touch with each other; Marion Freeman said they had tried, but no result had come of it; there is a community Sunday School, non-denominational, which is held in the Bentown Meetinghouse every Sunday.

Virginia Gilmore reported that four or five seekers are meeting together in Maroa, Illinois, with Bob Wilson, who is a member of the Urbana-Champaign Meeting. She also told Friends that Bob Wilson, who had been asked to lead a discussion group on Saturday evening, had called to say he could not come.

Severyn Bruyn reported that two families, ^{in Jacksonville, Ill.} the Palmers and Bruyns, have been meeting together every Sunday for some years; usually four or five college students or community people join them. But the Bruyns are moving to Massachusetts this summer; since the group has been meeting at their house, the group is contemplating disbanding.

Some suggestions were made to help alleviate the sense of isolation felt by the Friends in small meetings: they should encourage their members to go to Illinois Yearly Meeting, and should try to get their members on the Yearly Meeting mailing list; they should invite other meetings to send visitations to their meetings for worship.

The State of the Society reports were read. Donna Smith reported for the Peoria Meeting, informing the other Friends that their meeting had faced a severe trial this year, for the meeting had divided over the peace testimony, causing one member to resign from Friends altogether. The split had come as a result of discussion over the self-immolation of Norman Morrison, although the tension had built up some time before that. Those who left the meeting were opposed to opposing the Viet Nam war as publicly as the other three families wished to. Attempts have been made to contact and reconcile the group, but so far there has been no improvement in the situation. The meeting has undergone some soulsearching as a result of this split.

The Urbana-Champaign meeting State of Society report was read by Francis Weeks. Members have been asked--encouraged--to speak in meetings for worship, unless there is strictly a current events relevance in the message. This step was taken because it seemed to the Friends that issues discussed in the Adult Forum before Meeting for Worship were being carried over into the worship period, so that it, too, tended to become a discussion. The character of the Forum was also changed, so that the topics discussed are more closely related to Quakerly subjects. The more God-centered approach has lead to a change recently in the meetings for worship; in recent meetings there has been an increased forbearance, humility, and insight in the ministry of Friends. In response to this report, one of the Urbana-Champaign Friends was heard to murmur that they were delighted to hear they weredoing so well.

Kathryn Mills reported for Clear Creek Monthly Meeting. She commenced by remarking that other meetings seemed to have a wide diversity of opinions; perhaps, she suggested, Clear Creek was too interrelated to have divergencies of opinion. Clear Creek is concerned with the challenge presented to them by the sudden industrial growth which is taking place around McNabb. They are hoping to draw other Quakerly families into the area when the factories begin to hire. They have been saddened recently by the loss of one young member. Their Sunday School is active, if small, and they have seven or eight very active, concerned young couples.

The business meeting was called to a halt for tea; after tea, Turner Mills reported for the nominating committee, which suggested that the Clerkship for the Quarterly Meeting should be rotated among the clerks of Monthly Meetings. Urbana-Champaign should supply the Clerk for the spring Quarterly, Clear Creek for the summer Quarterly, St. Louis for fall, and Peoria for the winter Quarterly. Donna Smith of Peoria was nominated for treasurer. These nominations were accepted, and the April Quarterly Meeting for Business was concluded with a moment of silence.

Marjellen Helgin
Recording Clerk