

Highlights from national gathering of Friends

by Rachel Singleton-Polster
and Lana Robinson

From August 16-22, about 140 Friends gathered on beautiful Prince Edward Island for the annual sessions of Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM). PEI was a scenic setting for a week rich in worship, business, fellowship, and learning about social justice and Friends' activities across the country. Canadian Friends Service Committee was well represented including staff Jennifer Preston, Tasmin Rajotte, Keira Mann, and Rachel Singleton-Polster. CFSC members included Clerk Lana Robinson, Nominating Committee Clerk Lesley Robertson, and Rachel Urban-Shipley. Many associates and long-time supporters of CFSC were also present. To follow are a few of the highlights experienced by CFSC staff present in Charlottetown:

Penal Abolition

Tasmin Rajotte (Justice Program Coordinator) conducted a special interest group (SIG) on penal abolition



CHRISTINA TELLEZ

L to R: Tasmin Rajotte, Keira Mann, Lana Robinson, Lesley Robertson, Jennifer Preston, Rachel Singleton-Polster, Penni Burrell and Monica Walters-Field enjoy a beautiful afternoon at Canadian Yearly Meeting.

in Canada, presenting a new four page educational resource that CFSC produced to explain what penal abolition is and is not, how Friends are involved, the impacts of punitive approaches to justice, several successful examples of restorative and healing approaches used in Canada,

and ways forward. Read it at <http://www.quakerservice.ca/PenalAbolition>

Breathing life into an age-old Quaker concern, Friends at CYM discussed the difference between *penal* abolition and *prison* abolition, wherein the former

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Considering the Best Interests of the Child

by Rachel Urban Shipley and Sarah Chandler

In April, Sarah Chandler, clerk of CFSC's Quakers Fostering Justice (QFJ) program committee, attended the Cornell Law School Avon Global Centre for Women and Justice 2015 Conference: *Women, Prison, and Gender-based Violence*. The conference met in Washington, DC, over a two-day period and participants included 25 judges from 14 countries in five continents. Globally, increasing numbers of women are coming into contact with the justice system and

women's incarceration is a growing concern. This, combined with the fact that the penal system has traditionally been designed largely by and for men, led the UN in 2010 to create the *Bangkok Rules*, a global set of standards for ensuring that women's unique needs are met when they come into contact with the justice system.

The 2015 Women and Justice conference involved three panel discussions followed by four working groups to determine next steps. Panel topics included *Advancing Justice for Survivors of Gender-based Violence*;

Framing the Issues: Women, Prison and Gender-based Violence; and *The Role of Judges in Addressing the Causes, Conditions and Consequences of Women's Imprisonment*. Panellists included judges, legal scholars and NGO representatives. Sarah particularly appreciated a presentation by Olivia Rope of Prison Reform International, which was part of the *Framing the Issues* panel. Olivia articulated how the law is gender biased, and is based on patriarchal values. She highlighted the growing

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KEEPING UP WITH FRIENDS

Federal election resource kit

Canadians will go to the polls for a federal election in October. Canadian Friends hold a broad range of concerns, so we've put together a set of election resources – brief background information and questions you may want to ask of candidates seeking election. The election resources kit includes links to questions from other organizations we share common concerns with and tips about regulations governing registered charities.

<http://quakerservice.ca/election>

QUAKER CONCERN

Canadian Friends Service Committee/Secours Quaker Canadien

Quaker Concern is the newsletter of Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers). Published three-times a year, it features articles on CFSC projects and concerns of Friends. CFSC's **Annual Report and Appeal** is sent to all donors in late autumn.

Canadian Friends Service Committee, founded in 1931, exists to unify and expand the concerns of Friends in Canada. Our work is carried out by three program committees (Quaker Indigenous Rights Committee, Quakers Fostering Justice, Quaker Peace and Sustainable Communities Committee).

Donations are received with gratitude. We rely on the support of individuals to carry out our work. CFSC issues tax receipts for donations over \$10.

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Friends support HIV+ patient care in Burundi

For the past year Canadian Friends Service Committee has supported the work of Friends Women's Association (FWA) in Bujumbura, Burundi. FWA provided information and access to products and services at a health clinic to promote improved family planning and sexual and reproductive health. Building on the successes of this relationship, CFSC, with a generous donation from Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting, will be helping FWA to provide care to HIV+ Burundians for the next three years. Read a report about FWA's work and the current difficult context they navigate, written by one of their volunteers: <http://bit.ly/FWARReport>

Empathy and criminal justice

The Church Council on Justice and Corrections, of which CFSC is a member, recently hosted a series of talks on empathy and the impacts of crime. CFSC associate Kate Johnson delivered one of the talks, discussing her experiences and insights in offering programs in prisons: <http://bit.ly/1Jjj6sn>

Friends in the news over boycott

"Canadian Quakers" were named in a CBC News story in May (<http://bit.ly/1KhXFcr>) which stated Canada may criminalize the participation of Friends and others in a nonviolent call for the boycott of products made in illegal Israeli settlements. The government called the story "ridiculous" and has given no further indication about what its actions will be to implement its stated "zero tolerance" approach to the

nonviolent boycott. For more information see our media release (<http://quakerservice.ca/MediaReleaseMay14>), answers to Frequently Asked Questions (<http://quakerservice.ca/FAQ>) and our newly released research paper on BDS and the opinions of Canadian Friends <http://quakerservice.ca/BDSPaper>

CFSC is mobile and social

Have you seen our newly mobile friendly website? Visit us online and you'll find new content including updated pages on criminal justice, new videos, educational resources and more. We're also using our Facebook page to share photos including ones from the recent CYM sessions and quotes from CYM Faith and Practice. You can visit even if you don't have a Facebook account.

Headlines from synthetic biology

At Canadian Yearly Meeting in 2014, Friends asked CFSC for annual non-technical updates about the field of synthetic biology. Stay aware of what scientists and hobbyists are doing with what has been called "genetic engineering on steroids": <http://www.quakerservice.ca/SBUpdate2015>

Update on CFSC General Secretary

Jane Orion Smith continues to be on medical leave recovering from a concussion she suffered in the winter. She appreciates all the expressions of support she has received and was sorry to be unable to attend Canadian Yearly Meeting in PEI.

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Life as a CFSC Summer Program Assistant

by Keira Mann

Each summer Canadian Friends Service Committee offers a Program Assistant (PA) position to a young Friend or young person with involvement or interest in the Religious Society of Friends. This summer I was lucky enough to take advantage of this opportunity.

I must admit that I had limited knowledge of Quakers before I began pursuing this opportunity. I was focused on the peace and social justice side of CFSC because I had more knowledge of that from my university education in international development and law. I didn't expect to gain so much knowledge of the religious dimensions of CFSC, but I soon learned that peace and social justice are a way of life to many Canadian Quakers. As a PA at CFSC I had opportunities to meet, listen to, and discuss issues that I was concerned about with Quakers who had first hand experience with these issues and who were always willing to further my understanding.

This position afforded me lots of opportunities to experience different aspects of CFSC. As I was not officially a member of any particular program or administrative committee, I gained experience with many of the committees.

I helped CFSC in organizing two panel discussions that were held at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's closing events in Ottawa in June. This meant I was in attendance at one of Canada's largest and most historic Aboriginal rights events. I met people who have been key in the struggle for Aboriginal rights, who have personally played a role in helping to achieve the victories we have already seen, and who are pushing further to achieve even more.

I attended Canadian Yearly Meeting in Prince Edward Island in August where I had an opportunity to meet Friends from all across Canada. This gave me a better understanding of how Friends practice social justice and peace in their everyday lives and it also helped me to see how Friends experience their spirituality. Attending CYM left me with an appreciation for the



L to R: Keira Mann, Jo Vellacott, Ginny Smith, Phyllis Fischer, and Rachel Singleton-Polster sharing stories about Friends' historic and on-going work in support of the rights of Grassy Narrows First Nation.

uniqueness of Quakerism and Friends' abilities to connect with their spiritual beliefs.

I also gained everyday experience from this position. I did tasks that would be expected of every PA, such as answering the phone and opening the mail. I sorted through the news every day to find articles that were relevant to CFSC's work and write news briefs for program coordinators. I did odd jobs such as selling old printers, helping to organize and design a banner, working on the CFSC website, creating posts for social media, and more. A large project I was involved in was organizing repairs and painting of the CFSC office. These jobs were both interesting and useful. They helped me to realize things that I was very interested in but never had a chance to do before. While organizing the banner I realized that I actually really enjoy graphic design and because of this I was given more tasks like it.

The tasks that had nothing to do with peace and social justice still gave me opportunities to work on skills that I could apply in any number of situations. They required, but also improved, my interpersonal and problem solving skills. My ability to adapt was tested by the sheer range of work I was responsible for, from

writing papers to figuring out how to recycle granite.

No two days are alike as a CFSC Program Assistant. I can proudly say that I was involved in the work that was done this summer and I can also say that I am a better person for doing it. CFSC opened up a range of possibilities for my future. They made my time here not just about what I could do for them, but also about what they could do for me. This is not your average summer job. It's a chance to learn, grow, and do something that you're proud of with some people that you're proud to know. I encourage Young Friends and young people to pursue this opportunity in the future to see what they can offer CFSC and to see what they gain from this experience.

Thank you to the wonderful people who made my time at Canadian Friends Service Committee so enjoyable, for helping me to thrive within the quirky little office as well as in Toronto as a whole.

Keira Mann served as CFSC Program Assistant from the beginning of May to the end of August 2015. She now returns to Dalhousie University to finish a BA in International Development with a minor in Law and Society.

Traveling the Road of Reconciliation

by Jennifer Preston

Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) held formal closing events May 31 – June 3 2015 in Ottawa, which included the release of their 94 Calls to Action. The TRC is part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, a negotiated settlement addressing abuse claims of survivors against the federal government and churches. The TRC is an independent body that provided space for survivors of residential schools to share their experiences and participate in a process of truth, healing and reconciliation.

CFSC was honoured to be part of the closing events, including the *Walk for Reconciliation* and the presenting of the TRC report. We organized and participated in panels on dismantling the doctrine of discovery and, for the plenary session, on the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a framework of reconciliation.¹ The closing events evoked deep emotional responses by those who attended and inspired us to rise to the challenges presented by the Commissioners.

The TRC report is an in-depth documentation of the suffering of the gross and systematic human rights violations that took place in Indian Residential Schools. CFSC urges all Canadians to read and share the findings of the report, and to support it as a crucial step in the journey towards reconciliation. "The children were meant to be the instrument of our own peoples' demise," stated Grand Chief Edward John, "but it didn't work out like that."

The settler populations of Canada have all benefited from occupation and usurpation of Indigenous lands, territories, and resources. Root causes of ongoing impoverishment and oppression of Indigenous peoples must be identified and addressed.

In order to achieve justice, a paradigm shift is needed. We invite you to stop and consider what that can look like. It

would include respect for Indigenous land rights, Indigenous governance, protection and revitalization of Indigenous cultures and languages... It is crucial to move from the current colonial paradigm towards one consistent with self-determination and human rights.

As Commissioner Chief Wilton Littlechild noted, reconciliation is a Canadian story that asks all to, "Open your mind and be willing to learn, and to link arms with Indigenous peoples as we work together to heal and secure a better future."

The TRC aimed to guide and inspire Indigenous peoples and Canadians in a process of truth and healing, on a path based on mutual

understanding and respect. In the summary of its final report, the Commission emphasized that, "Canadians must do more than just talk about reconciliation; we must learn how to practice reconciliation in our everyday lives—within ourselves and our families, and in our communities, governments, places of worship, schools, and workplaces."

For CFSC, implementation of the Calls to Action builds on our ongoing commitment to the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. The TRC identified the *UN Declaration* as the framework for reconciliation, a theme echoed by many. The report affirmed that the *UN Declaration* "provides the necessary principles, norms, and standards for reconciliation to flourish in twenty-first-century Canada."

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the report of the TRC and emphasized, "Truth-telling is important but not sufficient for reconciliation. I encourage all involved in this effort to follow up on the report's recommendations, using the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a roadmap."

The *UN Declaration* constitutes a principled framework for justice,



BEN FOWLESS

At the TRC Closing Events June 1, 2015, Commissioner Chief Wilton Littlechild addresses a packed room while more than 50,000 watch online. CFSC was honoured to be present and to facilitate this important plenary session on the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a framework of reconciliation.

reconciliation, healing and peace. Former UN Special Rapporteur James Anaya has underlined that, "implementation of the *Declaration* should be regarded as political, moral and, yes, legal imperative without qualification."

In the report issued, the Commission noted, "that a refusal to respect the rights and remedies in the *Declaration* will serve to further aggravate the legacy of residential schools, and will constitute a barrier to progress towards reconciliation."

The Calls to Action also address the doctrine of discovery, and call on faith bodies to repudiate it – an action Canadian Yearly Meeting (CYM) has already taken. CFSC is committed to working with partners on implementing the Calls to Action. We have developed resources to assist Friends and others to engage with this important journey, which can be found on our website. Please contact our office if you need assistance with any of the materials. Our work was used to inform a minute coming from this year's CYM, committing Quakers to action in response to the TRC.

Truth telling is a necessary first step towards reconciliation, and there is much work yet to be done. We all have

¹ Video of these events can be found at: <http://quakerservice.ca/reconciliation>

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CYM

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seeks the abolishment of a punitive system and mindset as a whole. Friends also watched a film featuring Friend Ruth Morris, and gladly received the CFSC resource on penal abolition to share with their home Meetings.

Truth and Reconciliation

Many Friends have been following the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) and the 94 Calls to Action issued in early June of this year. In a SIG hosted by Jennifer Preston (Indigenous Rights Program Coordinator), Friends had the opportunity to hear about being at the TRC's issuing of the report and how CFSC played a role in education on the doctrine of discovery and on the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* during the closing ceremonies.

Sunderland P. Gardner (SPG) Lecture

This year's SPG was given by Alastair McIntosh who spoke on *Decolonizing Land and Soul: A Quaker Testimony*. Alastair told the powerful story of local residents on the Isle of Eigg resisting a superquarry development, and challenged Canadian Friends to take action in their own communities. Alastair highlighted how a spiritual connection to the land can ground activism in an invigorating way. Friends may be interested in his numerous books including *Soil and Soul*.

Quaker Study

Deborah Fisch brought Light and energy to midday Quaker study sessions this year. Her focus was on how we conduct Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business. Friends were grateful for her light-hearted guidance on how we might better worship together when we meet for business. We were reminded to look

RECONCILIATION

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a role to play in achieving justice for Indigenous peoples and a more inclusive and respectful future for all. Justice Murray Sinclair emphasized at the closing ceremonies, "Above all, we must remember that this is a



RACHEL SINGLETON-POLSTER

Friends joined thousands in the *Walk for Reconciliation* as part of the closing events of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in Ottawa.

for the "deep joy that our hearts yearn for" in worship of all kinds, and also that we must be disciplined in our business practices. It was of great interest that Deb pointed out how early Friends were concerned about two items in their first Meetings for Worship with Attention to Business: how to live their lives faithfully, and how to care for those around them who needed it.

LGBTQ night

It was a full house for the 3rd annual LGBTQ night at CYM, and we watched *My Prairie Home*, a documentary about the life of singer-songwriter Rae Spoon, and their¹ journey to break free of the gender binary in their life as an artist and performer. The film, featured music and stories from Rae's life as a transgendered person growing up, and coming out, in the Canadian prairies.

Friends responded enthusiastically to the opportunity to ask questions and share perspectives after the film. It was encouraging to see Friends' willingness to move outside what is familiar in terms of gender-queer understandings, and stretch

themselves to learn more about the space Rae occupies as a person not willing to conform to, or identify with, the restrictive expectations of much of society. Friends reflected on gender, language, and culture as we experience it, and we shared ideas about how we might reach a greater understanding. *My Prairie Home* is available for free download. There is a link posted on <http://www.quaker.ca>.

Final Reflection

CYM is more than just a week of attending to business for Friends – it is a week of connection, of strengthening our faith, and of sharing the news and work of Friends, including CFSC. We look forward to Camrose, Alberta in 2016, and we are so grateful to all those who contributed to making this year's CYM a success.

Rachel Singleton-Polster, Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting, is currently serving on staff at CFSC. Lana Robinson is the Clerk of CFSC and a member of Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting.

¹ The use of the gender-neutral pronoun "they/their" is intentional and refers to Rae as someone occupying a non-gendered space.

Canadian story, not an Indigenous one," and Chief Littlechild described the seven most important words in this work: "I'm sorry, I love you, thank you."

Jennifer Preston is the Program Coordinator of the Quaker Indigenous Rights Committee. She was honoured to be at the TRC Closing Events with CFSC Program Assistants Rachel Singleton-Polster and Keira Mann.

INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

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number of women in prison and also pointed out that 60-70% of women in prison are mothers. Olivia explained that many women are imprisoned as a consequence of actions that controlling and abusive men told them to take.

Many of these women became involved with drug trafficking specifically, Olivia noted, because it offers a way to earn money while remaining present as a parent or caretaker. Drug policies play a prominent role in the incarceration of women and disproportionately affect women and children. These offenses for which women are incarcerated are usually nonviolent and involve small amounts of drugs. When sentencing is based on the specific substance being trafficked and its street value, it is the substance that is judged, not the person.

Sarah also appreciated Jaya Vasandani representing NY Women in Prison Project and NY Correctional Association, who also presented on the *Framing the Issues* panel. Jaya stated that 8.3 million children in the US have a parent involved in the justice system. 1 out of 20 women, Jaya pointed out, are pregnant at the time of incarceration. She discussed how women's protective behaviours arising from abusive and traumatic situations are criminalized, and how incarceration is being used as a response to socio-economic issues. Jaya strongly advocated for the return of judicial discretion to sentencing rather than mandatory sentences, which have become policy in the US (and Canada).

As a panellist, Sarah's topic was the vital role of judges in upholding the relevant provisions of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* when considering sentencing parents and primary caregivers. The best interests of the children of those incarcerated are rarely considered; and yet this is of great importance. Drawing on the work of the Quaker United Nations Office - Geneva, Sarah discussed the impacts that parental incarceration may have on children, including an increased lifetime risk of physical or mental illness, and an increased likelihood of contact with the criminal justice system. Sarah spoke to the importance of preventing adverse

childhood experiences, as these are strongly linked to a variety of negative life outcomes, including interference with learning. She finished by presenting a list of concrete suggestions as to how judges can consider children's needs in the sentencing process, including:

- giving parents enough time to make arrangements for their children,
- obtaining a child impact statement from a social worker or probation officer (to detail likely negative impacts on children and the family unit) and, most critically,
- considering alternatives to the incarceration of parents.

Finally, Sarah shared best practices in policies that other countries have instated in order to help minimize the impact of parental incarceration.

Overall this presentation was well received and generated many comments. The topic caught most

participants by surprise, as it has been overlooked in judicial training globally. A discussion group that followed Sarah's presentation recommended that the suggestions raised in the presentation be included in the final report of the conference.

The conference offered great opportunities aside from just the presentations. Participants had the chance to attend a celebration of Sandra Day O'Connor, the first female Supreme Court Justice in the US. Shared meals presented more chances for interaction and enjoyment. This experience created connections for QFJ and provided a good space for information sharing.

Rachel Urban Shipley served on QFJ from 2011 to this August's Yearly Meeting. She is a member of Ottawa Monthly Meeting. Sarah Chandler is clerk of QFJ and a member of Vernon Monthly Meeting.



Building peace from the grassroots!

Friends in the Democratic Republic of Congo are doing everything they can to create more peaceful communities. But they need help.

They are training a network of effective peacebuilders, a project CFSC has supported for years.

This work needs to become independently sustainable now. So CFSC is assisting Congolese Friends to create a small business that can be used to fund their peacebuilding work.

We are pleased to announce that construction is underway for a room which will be rented out for events, using all profits to fund peacebuilding.

Quaker service around the world

by Rachel Singleton-Polster

When I first applied to work with CFSC, newly graduated in 2010, I wanted to learn from F(f)riends who put their spiritual beliefs to practice in their work. Across a wide spectrum of Friends, the commitment to vocation, or “letting your life speak” is one that I have been drawn to learn from, and the work that I have witnessed coming from this place of spiritual commitment is exceptional.

After working for CFSC as an intern (what CFSC now offers is a Program Assistant position), and finishing my university degree, I left small-town Canada to move to New York to be a program assistant with the Quaker United Nations Office. There, from a beautiful old brownstone on East 48th Avenue, F(f)riends serve as “the Quaker witness to the UN.” In my experience, this ranged from serving tea to the likes of Kim Campbell and Mary Robinson, to researching the fascinating historical work of Friends at the UN, to supporting the work of long-term Quaker representatives at the UN.

In New York, and indeed around the world, some critique the UN as a monolithic ivory tower, far removed from what matters to people on the ground. Quaker work at the UN seeks to move beyond this way of thinking, and to connect diplomats and policy-makers with peace-practitioners; bringing people together on a human level. One afternoon I remember welcoming a diverse array of UN staff,



Will David (Assembly of First Nations) and Rachel Singleton-Polster at the UN in Geneva, March 2015

diplomats, and international NGO representatives to view a beautiful photo-exhibit titled *This Light that Pushes Me: Stories of African Peacebuilders*¹ which gave a powerful glimpse into the lives of grassroots peacebuilders. QUNO-NY recently released a report on this topic - how the UN peacebuilding system might better engage with civil society, with actors on the ground.²

In Geneva, QUNO works towards similar goals but on a different array of topics. I was fortunate to work with QUNO-Geneva staff when they came through New York, and I remember well a lunch that brought together renowned scientists, faith-leaders, and policy-makers on the topic of climate change.³ QUNO and the Friends Committee on National Legislation see bridging the gap between faith and science, religion and climate change, as instrumental in mobilization, and watching pastors and researchers brainstorm creative solutions to engaging local congregations was a fascinating moment.

CFSC works in these international arenas as well, with a particular long-term engagement on Indigenous peoples' rights, including the full implementation of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of*

Indigenous Peoples. By partnering with QUNO in both Geneva and New York, CFSC brings a niche knowledge and expertise to these issues. The QUNOs provide incomparable physical locations for informal, off-the-record meetings, as well as the specific knowledge of the UN environment and various diplomatic and civil society contacts. In this manner, Friends are able to carry out their work in efficient tandem.

These examples are just a few instances of Friends working worldwide towards an environment where the gap between policy and practice is bridged. These Friends are acting from that foundational belief that by bringing people together, diverse stakeholders can recognize the humanity in the other and work in concert to solve complex problems.

The QUNO and CFSC partnership has also been strengthened through the work of Friends on conscientious objection to military service, and on the rights of children of incarcerated parents. To learn more about the work of Quakers at the UN in Geneva and New York visit <http://www.quno.org> *Rachel Singleton-Polster, Vancouver Island Monthly Meeting, is currently serving on staff at CFSC.*

¹ <http://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/2014/04/this-light-that-pushes-me-stories-of-african-peacebuilders/>

² <http://quno.org/timeline/2015/6/quno-launches-new-report-gppac-civil-society-inclusion-un-peacebuilding>

³ <http://quno.org/timeline/2014/9/quno-and-fcnl-co-host-lunch-new-york-bringing-together-climate-scientists-and-faith>

FRIENDS ON THE MOVE

Program Coordinator **Jennifer Preston (Hamilton MM)** was invited to mark the 25th anniversary of the “Oka crisis” in Kanehsatà:ke, Quebec. The dispute took place between the Kanien’kéha (Mohawk) People and the town of Oka over plans to expand a golf course into sacred Kanien’kéha territory. The anniversary included discussion of the ongoing impacts of the crisis and its implications on national and international Indigenous rights. View a webinar of the event at: <http://quakerservice.ca/IndigenousRights>

Using engineering principles and computer science, synthetic biology (SB) tries to create new “designer life forms”. CFSC associates **Fred Bass (Vancouver MM)** and **Anne Mitchell (Toronto MM)** and Program Coordinator **Matthew Legge** recently spent nine weeks in online discussions about the benefits and risks. Industry and countries including Canada supported no further regulation, little or no investigation into the unknowns or “indirect” impacts of SB, and expressed concerns not to “stifle innovation”.

CFSC raised multiple economic, ecological and spiritual issues communicated to us by Monthly Meetings that discussed SB in 2013, noting in particular the critical importance of a precautionary approach and the need to recognize our delicate place within creation rather than outside of it. Fred Bass has now been invited to represent CFSC on a Technical Expert Group on SB, meeting in Montreal in September. For more background see: <http://www.quakerservice.ca/SyntheticBiology>



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