

# Report from the spring meeting of Representative Committee

By Ellen Pye

About 25-30 Friends gathered in Friends' House in Toronto for the Spring meeting of Representative Meeting in what was, indeed, spring weather, to begin with. Later on it changed, so we did not rue being indoors too much. As always, seeing Friends from across the country was a delight, although we knew this was not going to be plain sailing.

Three issues were at the forefront of our deliberations, with the committees concerned at a loss as to how to proceed and asking Representative Meeting (RM) to reach final decisions from the various options they presented:

The Nominating Committee of RM had had difficulties in filling various vacancies, especially the one of Clerk of RM. The present Clerk will not continue beyond CYM in August; it has become clear that it is not feasible for someone in full time employment to carry out this task, as there is no office support for the considerable amount of administrative work this position entails. Even YM Clerks, who do have that support, would find it hard to do this work adequately while working full time. (The present CYM Clerk is not thus burdened, but the incoming Clerk for 2006/2007 will be).

Program Committee had not been able to come to a decision on the site for CYM 2007, and this was now an urgent matter. The different

options all had serious draw-backs.

Finance Committee found itself unable to choose between three possible ways of dealing with a looming shortfall in the 2007 Budget and was also very concerned about a likely large deficit for 2006, due to unforeseen circumstances. Contributions showed a drop of about \$10,000 and office expenses were higher than expected by about the same amount, due to two unavoidable changes of Bookkeeper, which meant greatly increased hours so much needed training and orientation could take place, as well as catching up on back-logs.

After hearing the backgrounds to these issues, the Meeting held them in prayerful Worship during the Friday evening session, hoping that way would open to deal with them. The fact that we were stymied in the three most essential parts of the life of CYM at the same time, made me wonder if Someone was trying to get our attention. We seemed to have reached such a dead end, possibly because we had gone off the right track some way back. Perhaps we need to reexamine our road map and directions, in a practical as well as spiritual sense.

As we worked our way through the Agenda, one of these issues was resolved: CYM 2007 will be held at Kings Edgehill School in Windsor, Nova Scotia. Some of the negative aspects of this site are being dealt

with, and some remain, but we had to accept that finding a completely suitable venue would never be possible. The other two issues proved more intractable and will have to be dealt with at a further meeting at or by CYM.

These were not the only matters to be worked on, but the details of these can be found in the forthcoming Minutes, which it is hoped Friends will read.

Many Friends at the meeting seemed to have an expectation that the final report of the Consultation and Renewal Committee's final report in 2007 will provide solutions to all problems — a bit of a pipe dream, I fear, which puts unfair pressure on the members of that group.

We were blessed with inspired Clerking, which allowed us to be heard while keeping us on track, no mean feat, and which makes me regret that as things stand at the moment, we will be deprived of the skills of this Clerk. We were, as always, well taken care of by our hosts from Toronto Meeting, for which we expressed our heartfelt thanks. ☺

*Ellen Pye is a member of Vancouver Monthly Meeting*