

Merry Christmas, 2014

I have to apologize because I never got around to holiday greetings last year. I just kept putting it off, thinking about the general complaints I hear about holiday newsletters. Then in March I got a phone call from a classmate. It seems my friends had been contacting each other, asking if anyone had heard from me. Finally one of them made the international call. So, I vowed I would never again miss that annual getting in touch with friends and family. After all, I enjoy all those newsletters I get. So, I am reporting on two years, 2013-2014. I apologize in advance because this has gotten pretty long.



This year finds me surprisingly upbeat despite my worst fears coming true in the 2014 U.S. election, more discouraging climate change news suggesting we may have already emitted enough greenhouse gases to inevitably lead to tipping points, and the Belize government drilling for new oil in protected areas. So, what makes me upbeat?

I have been reading Naomi Klein's book, *This Changes Everything*, and *Coming Back to Life* by Joanna Macy and Molly Young Brown. Naomi Klein makes the argument that clearly we need to make major changes to our current systems, so let's take this opportunity to correct major problems like inequality, both within the U.S, and in our relationship with the rest of the world. Joanna Macy and Molly Brown combine psychological and systems approaches, acknowledging our grief over the current conditions and then giving us the energy and instilling the confidence to make changes. Our Quaker Institute for the Future (QIF) publications committee is in the midst of publishing a small book, a primer on the Transition Town movement. I have been listening to talks in the series, Global Indigenous Wisdom Summit: Walking a Path of Healing and Sacred Action <2014.indigenouswisdomsummit.com>.

And we are working on the February 2015 issue of *What Canst Thou Say* (a Quaker mystical journal, a meeting for worship in print <whatcanstthousay.org>) on the theme of "Paradigm Shifts." I hope and believe we are in the midst

of a major paradigm shift. As the threat of change grows, so, too, does the push-back against change, which explains the current chaos. I read a comment that Gloria Steinem said the current paradigm change is from organizing as a pyramid with hierarchy and ranking to a circle. I think that sums it up well, so I went looking and found this quote:

“I’ve been fascinated by—and addicted to—learning about original cultures, because the first 95 percent of the time human beings have been on Earth, cultures were quite different from the way things are now. The original Native American languages here—or other languages in Africa and India and so on—had no gender. There was also no word for nature because we didn’t consider ourselves separate from nature. The paradigm of organizing was the circle, not the pyramid or hierarchy.” Gloria Steinem <interviewmagazine.com/culture/gloria-steinem>.

This is why I am now upbeat despite evidence that our future is very fragile. I find great joy in friends and family. I have two wonderful sons, two wonderful daughters-in-law, and six wonderful grandchildren, as well as many wonderful friends.

From June to August of 2013, my eldest son Tim, his wife Cristi, and their children Ray, Dean, Frankie, and Billy moved from Atlanta to Maple Grove, Minnesota, a suburb of Minneapolis. I was in Atlanta in June to dispense with the things I had stored at their house and help with their yard sale. It was Cristi’s work that took them all to Minnesota. She got a big offer to open and manage a Chick-fil-A in Maple Grove. Tim searched for a position there and got a job as a Facilities Assistant with the Minnesota Vikings. Ray graduated from high school in June, 2014. He is working as an Assistant Manager at Chik-fil-A, and preparing to begin college. Dean is a high school football player and wants to go into medicine. Frankie is now a teenager and acting in plays. Billy is 10 years old and enjoying



Billy Mack Lumb

sports, especially soccer. I first visited them there in May, 2014, and thoroughly enjoyed seeing them all adjusted and thriving on the opportunities in their new home.

My son Jeff and his wife, Glee, still enjoy life in Portland, Oregon, with their two sons, Oliver Carter Lumb, age eight years, and Arlo Emerson Lumb, age six years. They live in the Alberta Street neighborhood, which has the last Thursday Albert District Art Festival every month. I managed to time my visit in July, 2013, to enjoy the



Ollie and Arlo Lumb

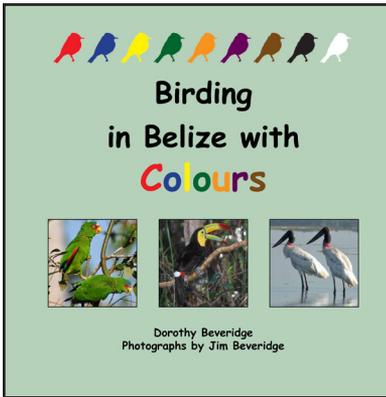
Arts Festival. Jeff is still a technology manager for FedEx Office (previously Kinko's) and Glee is an artist, creating many different kinds of beautiful paintings and crafts when she is not involved with their sons' school and other activities. The family is active in Multnomah Monthly Meeting of Friends.

In the summer of 2013 I went to five Quaker gatherings in June and July, in Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Colorado. It began with Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology, then the First Annual Gathering of Friendly Mystics, followed by Quaker Earthcare Witness, Friends General Conference, and the QIF Summer Research Seminar. It was intense and fulfilling, but I couldn't do it every year.

In 2013 was my 70th birthday, so I had a whole season of celebrations shared with visitors. In January my friend Bea Petito came to celebrate with a helicopter ride to El Mirador, the early Mayan site in the north of the Peten (Guatemala) surrounded by rainforest for miles around, as far as the eye could see from the top of the temple. It was spectacular! My sister Becky came to be here for my birthday and I took her to my beloved Barranco. Then in April my friend Donna Monroe came to go snorkeling with the whale sharks, which we didn't see, but we had a really good time snorkeling in the deep blue water with the spawning aggregations of fish, as well as hiking in the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary.

In 2014 I had a wonderful visit from my co-grandmother, Glee's mother, Janis Knox. In addition to all the usual Caye Caulker snorkeling activities, we enjoyed a trip to the Mayan site Lamanai. In July I was pleased to host my cousin Karen Snyder, who is responsible for me being here, and her two nieces, Erin and Megan Snyder, also my cousins. I really enjoyed getting to know Erin and Megan as adults.

I began my 2014 U.S. trip by flying to Portland in early May to hang with Ollie and Arlo, and their parents. From there I was on the train east to Minnesota and then to Indiana for the Second Annual Gathering of Friendly Mystics. In Philadelphia at the Friends Association for Higher Education we launched QIF's seventh pamphlet *A Quaker Approach to Research: Collaborative Practice and Communal Discernment*. A visit with dear friends in Atlanta rounded out that trip.



In Belize, along with my publishing partner, Dorothy Beveridge, we published three of Dorothy's preschool books, *Counting Belize Toads and Frogs*, *Belize Living Alphabet*, and *Birding in Belize with Colours*, as well as the Garifuna version of the 2012 Swahili children's book, *The Villagers: Lilana Ageiräü*. On the December Solstice we launched the Mayan cookbook by Aurora

Garcia Saqui, *U Janal Aj Maya: Traditional Maya Cuisine*. We also published Carlson Tuttle's *Bibliographic Collection on the Garifuna People*. For Kenya, we published an update of my 2012 book after the 2013 Kenya election, *Ending Cycles of Violence II: Kenyan Quaker Peacemaking Response to the 2007 and 2008 Elections*. And, finally, we published the eighth QIF pamphlet, *Climate, Food and Violence: Understanding the Connections, Exploring Responses*.

I spent the month of August, 2014, in Britain, beginning with British Yearly Meeting in Bath, England, where I was invited by my dear (F)riend Judi Brill. The second week Judi took me on a fantastic tour of Quaker historic sites. From there I traveled on my own in Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. I had marvelous adventures, especially with Celtic music. About halfway through the trip, I realized it was probably my last big trip because I can no longer justify the carbon or the expense. That only made me enjoy it more.

Back in Belize my focus the last three months has been to support my friend and publishing partner, Dorothy, whose husband Jim, well known wildlife photographer (*Willdlife*:

Wild Places) has been in late stages of dementia, probably Alzheimer's. He is now moved to a care facility in a rural area on the mainland where he is getting great care.

In late November we had several birding events scheduled here. I had paid attention to birds 25 years ago, but not much since then. In the meantime, Jim and Dorothy had become expert birders. So, once Jim was moved, I asked Dorothy for a crash birding course to prepare for these events. Most days find me out 6 – 9 am in my rubber boots watching birds. I am grateful for Dorothy's guidance. It has been a wonderful celebration of God's creation. I won't give it up again.

I am always very annoyed with the commercialism of Christmas, which takes away the original intent of celebration of the birth of the Prince of Peace. Consequently, I didn't give my sons many positive Christmas memories, which I regret. But my son Jeff has made up for that by creating a wonderful set of Christmas traditions, beginning with going out to cut down their own Christmas tree and continuing with decoration of the tree with precious family ornaments. In that spirit, I wish you all, my friends and family, a peaceful and fulfilling holiday season.

With all my love,
Judy Lumb