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The purpose of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group is to explore the meaning and implications of our Quaker faith and religious experience through discussion and publication. This search for unity in the claim of truth upon us concerns both the content and application of our faith.

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

For several years members of the Advisory Council of Quaker Religious Thought have wanted to make back issues of the journal available on the internet, but hadn’t found a way forward. Now we can announce great news. Since our last issue, the George Fox University Libraries approached us and offered to host the entire archive of QRT in their newly developing digital archive. As a result of their good and gracious work, all of the back issues of QRT are now available to anyone who has access to the internet. Articles are available in the pdf format and can be downloaded from the site. We are thrilled that readers almost anywhere can now enjoy what has been published in QRT over 50+ years. We’re glad that folks who haven’t had ready access to the fine libraries that carry the journal can now use it easily. And we hope that new readers might also decide they want to be new subscribers. (Of course, print editions of individual issues, even the whole archive, are still available.)

To find the QRT archive, go to http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/qrt. Once there, you can select a volume or search the entire journal. We offer special thanks to GFU librarians Merrill Johnson and Alex Rolfe and to GFU colleagues Phil Smith and Paul Anderson for creating this new resource.

This issue grows out of the residential conference of the Quaker Theological Discussion Group that met in Barnesville, Ohio, in 2009. That gathering celebrated fifty years of the work of QTDG and of the publication of QRT. Some papers from that gathering were published in QRT 113 and 114. This double issue finally publishes essays from that conference on “The Future of Friends,” and maintains the international scope of those papers. Though each of the essays varies in form, we have asked knowledgeable contributors to give readers a sense of the background and character of the region they’re presenting and to reflect on the prospects and challenges for Friends there in the future.

Many of the papers here were presented at Barnesville, but, after five years, all of them have required some revision. We thank the authors who so graciously took up that work. In a few instances we have needed to request new essays to sustain a robust international view. For Central America we have included two complementary essays, an edited version of Alvin and Lucy Anderson’s paper at the conference and a new essay by Gene Pickard. We thank the writers...
who wrote wonderful articles on short notice. In the end, we hope to have brought the global perspective of the Barnesville meetings. Thanks also to Paul Anderson who assisted in editing this issue and who led in organizing the Barnesville conference.

This issue includes a few articles beyond our major theme, but that should not be delayed. The first is an article by Ben Pink Dandelion that he presented at the QTDG meetings in November, 2013, but we inadvertently left out of the last issue, QRT 122. I’m embarrassed to note that I left out of the QRT 122 “Contributors” section a biographical note about Ruth Pitman, though it is now in the digital form of that issue. Ruth has long participated in and contributed to the sessions of QTDG and to QRT, and I’m personally grateful for her help and encouragement through the years.

Earlier this year, on February 13, 2014, we suffered the loss of T. Canby Jones, one of the early contributors to QTDG and QRT, and, for many of us, a dear friend and mentor. We have asked Ron Rembert and Arthur Roberts to help us pay tribute to him here. If you want, you can find some of Canby’s articles and editorial work in the QRT digital archive.

— Howard R. Macy

Editor