TO: BYM Interim Meeting

FROM: BYM Ad Hoc 350th Committee

RE: Final Report; Request to Be Laid Down

Dear Interim Meeting Clerk:

Having fulfilled its purpose, the Ad Hoc 350th Committee is asking to be laid down.

The 2019 proposal and its approval are attached below. Followed by our report.

* Attachment I2019-53 Proposal for ad hoc 350th Anniversary Committee Baltimore Yearly Meeting’s 350th Anniversary: In 2022, Baltimore Yearly Meeting will mark the 350 years since its establishment in the Mid- Atlantic region. At its monthly meeting in September, the Development Committee became aware of this upcoming anniversary year. In considering what might be done to best celebrate this milestone year, Development agreed that an ad hoc committee be established to plan for how this anniversary year might be marked and to serve as conduit among monthly meetings and the Yearly Meeting. The committee is asking Interim Meeting Clerk Marcy Seitel to endorse an ad hoc committee, whose members are yet to be identified.
* I2019-53 Ad Hoc 350th Anniversary Committee. We heard of a request for an Ad Hoc 350th Anniversary Committee; two Development Committee members are willing to serve on it; the desire is to have anniversary events that are not exclusively focused on development. We APPROVED this: we created an Ad Hoc 350th Anniversary Committee, to be laid down at the end of 2022 unless otherwise led.

The BYM Ad Hoc 350th Committee spent two years working on this project, with a lot of time, energy and thought going into seeking creative meaningful ways to both honor this anniversary and learn from our history. We made efforts to incorporate diverse views and acknowledge the shortcomings and weaknesses in our history.

We worked to develop and present, in close cooperation with the Program Committee, the selection of themes and speakers for our 2022 Annual Session’s Opening Plenary, relevant workshops, an All-Age event Thursday evening, and the Thursday night film.

The theme chosen with Program Committee – Consider the Wildflowers: Rooted in History, Growing Toward Spirit-- was intended to remind Friends to consider our Quaker faith as “a meadow full of wildflowers” with each of us a bloom spreading the seeds of our ministry.

The Tuesday night Opening Plenary: *Re-membering the past: seeking lessons learned relating to Racial Justice, Native Peoples and the Peace Testimony* featured speakers Bette Hoover, Cy DeVries, and Ruth Flower who spoke on the challenges Friends faced in the past, including their failures and limited successes in addressing them, and brought those concerns forward into the present with personal accounts**.**

The All-Ages event on Thursday evening included games, cake, frozen desert treats, and the film Quakers: The Quiet Revolutionaries complete with freshly popped popcorn. An enlightening question and answer session with the filmmakers, Janet Gardner and Richard Nurse, followed.

 https://pbsinternational.org/programs/quakers-the-quiet-revolutionaries/,

Jim Fussell and Linda Coates created a game of biographical identities, based on short research biographies shared with participants. These profiles included historical Quakers, “Adjacent Quakers” and “Disowned Quakers.” Some were famous, some obscure. Using the structure of the game “The Big Wind Blows” the organizers engaged participants of all ages in a lively exchange of information.

Jim Fussell created four workshops which were given at Annual Session. Several monthly meetings asked Jim to provide a presentation for them. Jim's carefully researched presentations highlighted areas of Quaker history that were not generally known. His presentations included:

* Black Resistance in Quaker Enslaver Households in Maryland and Virginia and how it helped precipitate a crisis and struggle among Chesapeake Regional Quakers.
* Transformative Internal Struggles in the History of Baltimore Yearly Meeting. An exploration of past transformative conflicts among Friends over establishing Women’s Business Meetings, ending Quaker Slaveholding, reunifying Baltimore Yearly Meeting after 140 years, ending Racial Segregation in Quaker Schools, and fully welcoming LQBTQ Quakers including embracing Marriage Equality.
* Quakers and Anti-Lynching. An exploration of Quaker Anti-Lynching actions by four Yearly Meetings, by Black activists and individual Friends from the 1890s to the 1930s. And yet far too many white Quakers were silent in the face of these relentless white atrocity crimes.
* Continuing Revelation and the Future of Quaker Testimony: In the next decade the S.P.I.C.E.S. formulation of Quaker Testimony/Testimonies will likely be laid down by most Friends. WHAT might replace it? In particular, we will examine the longstanding but seldom named Quaker Justice Testimony.

To plan and complete these tasks and engage Friends, since our creation in 2019, our activities have included the following:

We worked with Mary Braun, Sarah Gilhooly, and Sunshine Klein to create the entries on the BYM 350th Anniversary Committee pages, including the timeline and maps for BYM’s history. We thank Dan Cole for help with the maps.

Our Quaker History and Quaker Witness (QH/QW) Project helped the ad hoc 350th BYM Anniversary committee, BYM clerks and Monthly Meetings and individual Friends by tracking people and resources, tracking on-going activism within BYM, and finding historical records of interest to Friends and others. This information is available at the BYM Website.

We sought to identify and highlight our histories. Committee members actively reached out to every BYM monthly meeting and its committees encouraging them to create timelines for local meetings. Suggestions for questions and areas of exploration were provided. Support was given to people working on the timelines during Quaker History/Quaker Witness.

Drop-in sessions. Some people reported that this was a very meaningful process for their meetings. Twenty-four monthly meetings and working committees submitted timelines which were displayed at Annual Session. These timelines are being distributed back to monthly meetings and are available on the BYM website.

Committee members worked with Mary Braun, Development to update the booklet Baltimore Yearly Meeting: Visiting Among Friends

Gettysburg member and longtime BYM attender Margaret Stambaugh encouraged the committee to create bumper stickers. She had personally seen how a Quaker sticker from Gettysburg meeting had created openings to share about Friends with strangers. Two bumper stickers were produced: Friends for over 350 years and Quakers- Friends not Food were produced and available in the bookstore.

While we were not responsible for these following activities, the 350th encouraged, supported and publicized these events:

350th Anniversary and re-dedication of the West River Quaker Burying Ground in Galesville, MD on 4/23/2022. The site is being rededicated as an historical and educational landmark. It may contain the remains of our earliest Quakers in unmarked graves. Phil Caroom led this effort.

Patapsco Friends Meeting participated in the 250th anniversary celebration of Ellicott City by three Quaker brothers. The meeting held Open House events to share Friends’ history with other celebrants.

The BYM Camping Program celebrated its 100th Anniversary with a gathering from August 26-28th for a “joyous and simple celebration of all that is the BYM Camps community.” All were invited: all ages, all camps, all degrees of connection to camp.

We were grateful that the BYM Annual Meeting was able to resume meeting in person for a hybrid session in 2022 after having met on-line only during the Covid pandemic, and thus continued its annual gathering tradition over many generations. As we continue, let us all strive to share our very best Light, to open our spirit to the Way Forward that we can carry on the work begun by Friends in past years and welcome new Friends in our midst who can help us to see and follow the Way Opening into our future.

We appreciate the opportunity to work together with BYM Friends and others on the BYM 350th Anniversary project. We thank our Clerks, Katherine Smith, Harry Scott and co-clerks John Yost and Donna Hamilton; Mary Braun of Development. Dan Cole, Smithsonian cartographer, Jordan Landes, Swarthmore College librarian, Caitlin Goodman, archivist for meeting records in the Friends Historical Library, and Mary Crauderueff, Haverford librarian were helpful in answering questions about Friends’ records.

Members of the committee have included: Sheila Bach, Marion Ballard, Patricia Barber, Mary Braun, Sara Brown, Wayne Finegar, Karie Firoozmand, Jim Fussell, Becca Rhudy, Bob Rhudy, Tom Hill, Denna Joy, Donna Hamilton, Lizzie Kellett, Rich Liversidge, David McClelland, Jim Riley, Byron Sandford, Harry Scott, Katherine Smith, Sharon Stout, Frannie Taylor, Barb Thomas, and John Yost.

In conclusion, feeling that we have fulfilled the mission we received, we ask that our Ad Hoc Committee be laid down.

The Ad Hoc 350th Anniversary Committee