

Secretary's Report **to EC 04/04/2007 to be held at the Life Enrichment Center**

This report describes activities that have taken place since the EC Meeting, 1/12/2007.

General Office Activities:

The weeks following Winter Interim Business Meeting have been more than full and complex. This, however, is one of the joys of working for a busy yearly meeting. The variety and scope of the projects, jobs, and assisting others with their jobs seems limitless.

Notably, completing the *SEYM Operational Handbook, Procedures & Job Descriptions* and getting it to press, designing its recycled poly-binder cover and index tabs, and getting those to press required a great many hours. Hopefully, the *Operational Handbook* will provide great assistance to the volunteer SEYMers who give so willingly of their time and talents and these Friends will no longer feel like they must reinvent the wheel to be involved—a common thread, that I had been hearing.

I also believe that having the *SEYM Operational Handbook, Procedures & Job Descriptions* in hand (contents are being given to committee members, organizational representatives, meetings, and YM officers) as well as being available in searchable PDF format from the web 24-7 will allow the Nominating Committee to more readily seek and secure volunteers for our vital positions. Friends will know exactly what their “jobs” entail and may commit or not commit—no guilt wanted or needed!

On behalf of the ad hoc Handbook committee, Nancy Fennell, Caroline Lanker, and myself, I wish to thank all of you who participated by providing input and reviewing copy.

In addition to the hours spent on the above project, I have assisted the Gathering Committee with its seemingly unending tasks. Regular office activities slipped a little; QuickBooks Pro decided to malfunction, writing and backing-up unreadable files for the first two weeks in March.

Publishing:

The *SEYM Operational Handbook Procedures & Job Descriptions*, a 152-page book, went to press and will be available at the publications sales tables or from the office. Using upgraded Adobe CS2 software w/indexing and cross referencing plug-ins from Virginia Systems, a searchable PDF (portable document format) is now posted on the web in the file-folder named “Archived Documents Library” (scroll down left side of home page). As per EC minute 07EC04, SEYM workers will each be given a copy of its contents, and may purchase the optional poly-binder w/index tabs for \$6.50. Additional copies are \$15.00 (binder, contents, and index tabs).

Sales for booklets/pamphlets slowed a little. *Building the Life of a Meeting* by William & Frances Taber (Michener 1994) has been reprinted and is available for purchase at the publications sales tables.

At this time, with the costs of printing the *Operational Handbook*, poly-binders, *Building the Life of a Meeting*, and additional T-shirts, the publications bank account for the fiscal year is negative. This is not a worry because in past years, we have had a surplus that is now invested with the Friends Fiduciary Fund and being saved for printing the *Faith and Practice* (\$6000). Since this was an arbitrary decision on the part of your secretary and clerk of Faith and Practice in consultation with the Finance Committee, if need be we could reclaim some of last year's overage. However, I anticipate that continued publications sales for the remainder of the fiscal year will cover these expenditures.

Finances:

Meetings and individuals are continuing to contribute regularly; I greatly appreciate the continued and regular support.

Generally QBP-2007 is an easier to use and faster product than QBP-2003. Its few quirks and faults are worrisome, but patches are being made, and I continue to be pleased to have QBP on my faster computer and to be able to create PDFs directly.

However, we will be over budget for software this fiscal year by approximately \$500 due to upgrading QBP and due my finding Microsoft Word completely inadequate for publishing quality documents. I, personally, purchased Adobe CreativeSuite-2 Premium as *my* tool of choice (\$600 upgrade price; regular price \$1100) but with Treasurer Neil Andersen's encouragement reimbursed myself for \$300. Having this software allowed the creation of the superior PDF formatting of the *Operational Handbook Procedures & Job Descriptions*. I believe that all necessary software is now current for the office, the data-base clerk, and the Finance and Faith & Practice Committees.

Website:

Websites <www.seym.org>, <www.seymmeetings.org>, and <www.seympeace.org> are current with organizational details including posting all YBM Gathering related materials and site maps. I believe that Friends increasingly appreciate convenient access to current and archived SEYM information and documents.

As meetings continued to discern SEYM's relationship to FUM, minutes and their responses to Representative Phoebe Andersen's queries were posted, generally within the hour, in the file-folder named "FUM" on the home page. Letters, also, were posted, including the tender and thought provoking letter-of-concern from Netherlands Yearly Meeting.

Continued and New Concerns:

Continued: Archive materials and their location—to my knowledge (see Sec. Report to EC, FIBM 2006) no conclusions have been reached.

New Concerns: As EC reviews its role in creating a sub-committee to support personnel, I would also wish that a formal procedure could be in place to support committee clerks who, for whatever reasons, find themselves unable to fulfill their duties. The scope and extent of time required to assist them may, or may not, fall within the capabilities of the office staff. The real question is, is this the role you wish for staff to provide? Surely on a committee-by-committee basis, staff may be able to assist; the problem lies in the increasing number of committees depending upon such assistance.

What back-ups do we have in place to assist committees and their clerks? Surely, the new *SEYM Operational Handbook Procedures & Job Descriptions* will help by providing prospective volunteers with the scope of the positions they are being asked to consider. In addition, a support sub-committee of peers within EC could be a valuable resource and temporary labor pool.

Respectfully submitted by Lyn Cope, 04/02/2007