

Pendle Hill

Autumn 1997

QUARTERLY BULLETIN

Sabbath Day

by Dan Seeger, Executive Secretary

AT PENDLE HILL we try to make every day a Sabbath Day.

This does not mean that Pendle Hill is a place of perpetual leisure! A lot of work takes place here, as my staff colleagues well know. Yet Pendle Hill is also a place where there are people who come to take time out from the pressures of their normal daily burdens, people who come for a period of enchantment and celebration, for a renewal of their relationship to God, for a refocusing on life's essential meanings, and for the enjoyment of the

. . . the sense of enchantment and renewal arises from a willingness to allow one's spirit to rest in the things which are eternal.

Creation. Indeed, it is for such sabbatical experiences that Pendle Hill exists.

There are two things about the Sabbath concept which it is essential to grasp in order fully to understand Pendle Hill. Sabbath time is intended to be relaxing and unpressured but Sabbath time is not formless or random. In Scripture we are cautioned against spending the Sabbath idly, "going our own way," talking thoughtlessly, and seeking our own pleasure (Isaiah 58:13-14). Sabbath implies focus. Indeed, the sense of enchantment and renewal arises from a willingness to allow one's spirit to rest in the things which are eternal, under circumstances where there is time and space to do so. The contemplative atmosphere of Pendle Hill, together with our excellent programs, resource people and teachers,

(continued on page 3, column 3)

Peace for Stillness: A Silent Retreat by Nancy Bieber September 5-7

A mostly silent weekend gives us the opportunity to withdraw from our daily lives so that we can return filled and renewed. Through prayer and silent worship, guided meditation and time for journaling, individual reflection and walking the early morning grounds of Pendle Hill, we will know our spinning selves and be still.

Nancy Bieber, an active member of Lancaster (PA) Quaker Monthly Meeting, is a graduate of the Shalem Institute's spiritual guidance program and an experienced retreat leader. She has studied at Pendle Hill and recently wrote the Pendle Hill pamphlet, *Communion for a Quaker*. She has been a psychologist for many years.

Toni Morrison's *Beloved*: The Hauntings of Memory by Linda-Susan Beard September 5-7

Participants are invited to a careful reading of the details and the studied absence of details in this complex fictive memoir of slavery. We will interrogate the text with the questions set forth in the narrative itself: what are the costs of amnesia and the risks of remembering? How does one negotiate with painful memories in order to keep them from becoming parasites? Is there a relation between individual and communal recall? In our discussions and reflective writing, we will question not only the novel but narratives of our own life experience as well.

Linda-Susan Beard is a contemplative and an associate professor of English at Bryn Mawr College.

(continued on page 4)

LATE SUMMER CONFERENCES . . . A REMINDER

Shaping Thoughts and Dreams

by Gregory Zeorlin

July 25-28

Build a sculpture using aluminum and paint in a "low tech" process that expresses the prayer or other thought inside you.

Love Toward Wholeness: Healing and the Arts

by Christine Linnehan

July 25-28

Come to explore how movement, music, art, writing and drama can be helpful in dealing with concerns of self-esteem, body image, illness, relationships, transitions and caring for the soul.

The Art of Drama: Another Way of Knowing

by Sandy Nicholson Asselin

August 1-5

Come to know your own spiritual nature more closely as we enter into scenes from the Cain and Abel medieval mystery play, *King Lear* and other dramas.

Dealing with Our Hands: The Psalms and Mixed Media

by Nancy Chinn

August 8-12

We will take up paper, paint, glue, clay, sticks and other media to discover our unique and personal response to the voice of the Spirit in the Psalms and other texts.

provide the balance of focus and space which makes for true rest and authentic renewal.

Secondly, inherent in the concept of the Sabbath is the idea of community. The Creation is a great togetherness and appreciation of it on the Sabbath is usually thought of as something we do as a people. While solitary study and contemplation is valuable, there is something different about re-forming ourselves in the company of others who are engaged in a similar quest. Sabbath implies that we are drawing closer to God *together* and that we are refreshing our relationships and our approach to all of daily life while doing so. While Sabbath time is intended to be distinct, it is also intended

to be closely related to life as a whole. It is our daily activities and relationships which provide the food for Sabbath contemplation; it is Sabbath contemplation which energizes the renewal of daily life and relationships. We keep holy the Sabbath in order to sanctify all of life.

Depending upon individual circumstances, people can organize sabbatical experiences according to different rhythms: some people can take a year off from ordinary work once in a lifetime, others can go on sabbatical one year out of every seven. Some people can take a week off from work periodically. Some people devote occasional weekends to sabbatical-like experiences. Pendle Hill seeks to be responsive to people in all different circumstances. In this Quarterly Bulletin you will see featured our programs intended for people who can see the way open for the occasional five-day or weekend sabbatical experience.

It is with much enthusiasm that we present the array of resource people and teachers and the excellent programs they will lead which are described on the following pages. We invite you to join us for one or more of these programs. Help us continue to make every day at Pendle Hill a Sabbath Day. Bring your susceptibility to enchantment and your search for the things which are eternal



ISOBEL M. GREGOR