

**Environmental Concerns Committee Report
To Illinois Yearly Meeting
June 5, 2013**

The Environmental Concerns Committee has met three times with Maintenance and Planning Committee to work on the grounds and structures of the ILYM campus: September 8, 2012, April 20, 2013, and May 18-19, 2013 (Work weekend). We also had two phone conference calls, one on Dec. 2, 2012 and the second on January 13, 2013. Much work has been accomplished and includes:

- 1) Planting of Prairie Fire crabapple tree in memory of Paul Schobernd at the southwest corner of the ground encircled by the Clear Creek House drive.
- 2) Removal of several mulberry trees adjacent to and impacting the barn.
- 3) Annual clearing of fallen trees and brush and pruning of trees and shrubs on the grounds.
- 4) Cleanup and mowing of a large portion of the pallet pile southwest of the Clear Creek House.
- 5) We assisted with the exterior refinishing of the Quaker cabins.
- 6) We weeded the green roof, adding additional partridge pea plants besides those that germinated this spring, and sowing seed of lance-leaved coreopsis.
- 7) Moving the compost bin to behind the propane tank, so we could clear off the concrete cistern cap to serve as a stable sitting area in the dining tent at ILYM.

At the last annual session, we were tasked as follows: “The Clerk asked for consideration of the recommendation that a number of projects, as presented in the Site Envisioning report, be seasoned in a collaborative effort of the Site Envisioning, Maintenance & Planning, and Environmental Concerns committees and the Stewards during the coming year and brought for action at the 2013 annual sessions. The Clerk will convene the first meeting of this group. Approved.” We believe that through thoughtful, holistic, and inspired planning of the external grounds of the ILYM campus, our inward spirits and worship will be enhanced through appreciation of this lively world and in the delight of the mystery of life and creation, in a place that has deep Quaker roots. The grounds will also serve as an outward testimony of our faith and beliefs. In light of this, we have learned that planning for the grounds is a task that cannot be completed in one year. Nevertheless we have moved forward in considering the memorial garden and tree concept, the pathway between the Meeting House and Clear Creek House, possible planting of prairies, proposed labyrinth, and mowing issues. Attached is Roy Treadway’s report concerning the memorial garden, noting that further seasoning is necessary.

We want to move forward initially in developing a stable pathway, on a trial basis, between the Clear Creek House and the Meeting House. We have flagged the tentative pathway route with flags. This would be a walking and golf cart route between the sites. We are requesting \$1000 towards this project. We propose that the pathway will be graded in the late summer and planted in September with grass to make a flat surface. We have not decided how the pathway might be marked, but this initial design will be tested and evaluated in 2014. We envision the grass will be rolled occasionally to maintain an even surface.

Bill Howenstine and ECC are hosting a three-day workshop during the annual sessions to consider the future of the barn at the southwest corner of the property. This structure has great potential, but ILYM has not considered possible uses. Thus we hope to gain insight and inspiration through the workshop. Please join us for an interesting workshop.

We will continue planning for the grounds next year, consider the purchase of a chipper to make mulch on site for trails and other uses, season concept of pathway (s) from Quaker cabins to the bathhouse, and continued eradication of tansy and hemlock on the grounds.

Prepared by the clerk of ECC with approval of the committee members.

Memorial Garden and Trees at Illinois Yearly Meeting

Roy Treadway
2013 April 27

Background

With the acquisition of the west part of the ILYM campus (formerly the Mills property) in 2009, the development of an area somewhere on the campus for a memorial space to remember past members of Illinois Yearly Meeting was part of early plans. The memorial space would be a landscaped place where Friends might stop and stand or sit and rest and remember other Friends who came before. Originally conceived of as a “memorial grove” with trees as well as bushes, flowers, and benches, it was intended to provide a place to contemplate and celebrate the lives of those involved in the yearly meeting. Currently, the term “Memorial Garden” seems more appropriate since any trees would provide shade to the area and not be an integral part of the space.

Memorial Trees

As envisioning for the entire ILYM campus proceeded, ideas of what might be and not be in the memorial garden have matured. It would not be the only location for memorial trees (although some might be planted in or near the area). Memorial trees should be planted throughout the ILYM campus wherever they are useful and desired by the memorial person or his or her family, subject to the oversight of the Environmental Concerns Committee to avoid planting trees where future buildings (such as the dining hall, dormitories, and houses) and other activities, (such as play spaces and prairie) might be located. Native trees would be encouraged.

Place for Remains

In addition to being a contemplative, landscaped area, the Memorial Garden might also provide a place where remains of persons from Illinois Yearly Meeting could be placed in an orderly fashion. A small plaque with the names of persons whose remains are placed there could be located in the area. Inquiries have been made about such a possibility; Sandy Springs Friends Meeting in Maryland has such a site on the edge its cemetery.

Possible Locations

Such a Memorial Garden should be located away from major activities, such as play spaces and buildings, but close enough for easy access. Three areas (and possibly more) might be suitable.

1. East of the Clear Creek House and the metal shed, part of the redevelopment of the open space left by the long shed, or in an area just to the north which is currently a lawn with small trees, would be far enough from the new parking, but near the top of the hill and the path between Clear Creek House and the Meeting House; in that area we would be likely to think about those former active Friends in a somewhat active way.

2. The south east corner of the campus, near the proposed labyrinth and the Hans Peters memorial trees, perhaps using the triangle of land if purchased, would be a quieter place on the campus but near the Meetinghouse.

3. South of Clear Creek House in the area being cleared of debris, but with some trees now, if not too close to the proposed dormitory or a renovated barn, would be an even quieter place, taking advantage of a naturally secluded place, but near the Clear Creek House.

The location and nature of the Memorial Garden will need to be seasoned further as the plans for the entire ILYM campus are developed.