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# Providence Monthly Meeting (Society of Friends) Records

1725-2019

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The Providence monthly meeting began in 1705 as a preparative meeting under the care of the East Greenwich Monthly. Set off in 1718, Providence Preparative became Smithfield Monthly Meeting by 1731, when the town of Smithfield was formed from Providence. At its inception in 1718, it joined the Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting, and has continued with this quarterly meeting--

in various forms--ever since. Almost 50 years later, in 1783, this meeting split into four groups, one of which continued as the Providence Monthly. The Wilburite Separation of 1844-1845 affected Providence significantly, but the meeting has remained viable to the present day.

A large and particularly rich collection for a Quaker monthly meeting in New England, the Providence Friends Meeting records include a substantial series of minutes of meetings, vital records, records of Ministry and Counsel, the Women's Foreign Society, and the run of business with respect to epistles, cautions, admissions and denials, and transfers.

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## Background on Providence Monthly Meeting (Society of Friends)

The Providence, Rhode Island monthly meeting began in 1705 as a preparative meeting under the care of the East Greenwich, Rhode Island monthly meeting. Set off in 1718, Providence Preparative became Smithfield Monthly Meeting by 1731, when the town of Smithfield was formed from Providence. At its inception in 1718, it joined the Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting, and has continued with this quarterly meeting--in various forms--ever since. Almost 50 years later, in 1783, this meeting split into four groups, one of which continued as the Providence monthly meeting for another 60 years and more.

In 1845, this meeting split into a separate Wilburite meeting and a Gurneyite meeting. The Wilburite meeting eventually took in some of the members of the Swansea monthly meeting when it was laid down in 1863 as well as some of the members of the Rhode Island monthly meeting when it was laid down in 1864.

The Wilburite Providence meeting joined a newly-separate Wilburite Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting. During its lifespan, it oversaw several different constituent groups including: 1) the Fall River (MA) preparative meeting (1863-1872) that then became a worship group (1872-1876); 2) the Greenwich (RI) preparative meeting (1856-1863) that then became a worship group (1863-1864) that in turn became the Warwick (RI) worship group (1864-1881); 3) the Newport worship group (1864-1872); 4) the North Providence worship group (1844-1874) that in turn became the Pawtucket worship group (1874-1881). However, by 1881, the Wilburite Providence meeting was laid down, and some of its members joined the South Kingston monthly meeting as the Pawtucket worship group.

The Gurneyite meeting, however, continued meeting from 1845 on. During that time, it oversaw a number of different preparative meetings and worship groups, including: 1) the Scituate worship group (1783-1845, and again from 1859-1863); 2) the Smithfield preparative meeting (1783-1877) and then worship group (1877-1894); 3) the Wionkhiege worship group (1783-1799); 4) the Cumberland worship group (1809-1888); 5) the Saylesville preparative meeting (1894-present). In 1945, this Providence meeting became the basis of the newly-emerging unified Providence monthly meeting that was formed from the unification of the existing Gurneyite group with three other groups. The first of these three groups was the 10-year-old Wilburite Providence Friends Fellowship monthly meeting. The second of these two groups was a part of the 100-year-old Wilburite Nantucket (Mass.) monthly meeting that had in more recent years split into a Nantucket-based worship group and a Warwick (RI)-based monthly meeting. It was this Warwick-based group that joined with Providence in 1945. The last of these three groups was the remaining membership of the Greenwich (RI) monthly meeting that was laid down in 1945. From 1944-1951, the newly-unified Providence monthly meeting held joint membership with ongoing Gurneyite-oriented Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting and with the Wilburite-oriented Narragansett Quarterly meeting. In 1971, the Rhode Island and Smithfield quarterly meetings merged to become the Rhode Island-Smithfield Quarterly Meeting to which Providence now belonged.

Historically, Providence has overseen several worship groups and preparative meetings: Martha's Vineyard from 1946-1953; an occasional meeting in Jamestown, R.I. (1951-1970) that joined as the Conanicut worship group (1971-present); and a group in Newport (1989-1992). Worship groups in Newport have been ongoing for many years, but the worship group that was under the care of Providence was during the years shown.



Abbie Loring in Cape Cod Quaker attire, ca.1930.

Photo by Alton H. Blackington

## Providence Monthly constituent meetings

Conanicut Worship Group (1971- )

Cumberland Worship Group (1809-1888)

Martha's Vineyard Worship Group (1946-1953)

Newport Worship Group (1989-1992)

Saylesville Preparative (1894- )

Scituate Worship Group (1783-1845, 1859-1863)

Smithfield Preparative (1783-1877)

Smithfield Worship Group (1877-1894): became Saylesville Preparative

Wionkhiege Worship Group, Smithfield, R.I. (1783-1799)

## Scope of collection

A large and particularly rich collection for a Quaker monthly meeting in New England, the Providence Friends Meeting records include a substantial series of minutes of meetings, vital records, records of Ministry and Counsel, the Women's Foreign Society, and the run of business with respect to epistles, cautions, admissions and denials, and transfers. Providence has an unusually large and complete record of its finances and newsletters, with strong holdings for its constituent meetings.

## Inventory

Providence Monthly Meeting (Society of Friends): Minutes

1772-1997

Providence Monthly Meeting (Society of Friends): Minutes, Men's Meeting

1783-1881

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Men)

1783 Nov. 5-1800 Sept. 25

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [sporadic]

1783-1788

Box 1: 1

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]

1783-1787

Box 1: 20

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minute on building a meetinghouse

1785

Box 1: 2

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]

1791-1792

Box 1: 21

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]

1793

Box 1: 22

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]

1794

Box 1: 23

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]

1795-1796

Box 1: 24

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting

1798 Oct.-1799

Box 1: 4

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]

1799

Box 1: 25

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Men): Volume presumed lost as of 1997

1800-1841

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting

1800-1801 Jan.

Box 1: 5

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]  
1800-1801 Mar.

Box 1: 26

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]  
1801

Box 1: 6

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]  
1802

Box 1: 7

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]  
1803

Box 1: 8

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]  
1804

Box 1: 27

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]  
1805

Box 1: 9

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]  
1806

Box 1: 10

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]  
1807

Box 1: 11

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting [rough]  
1808

Box 1: 12

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting  
1809

Box 1: 13

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting  
1811

Box 1: 14

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting  
1812-1813

Box 1: 15

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting  
1814-1815 May

Box 1: 16

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting  
1815 June-1816 Aug.

Box 1: 17

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting  
1816 Sept.-1817 July

Box 1: 18

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes, Men's Meeting  
1818 Aug.-Dec.

Box 1: 19

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Men): Rough  
1835 Apr. 29-1839-007-24

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Men)  
1841 Sept. 29-1869 Aug. 25

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Men)  
1844 Nov.-1881 May

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Men)

1869 Sept. 29-1904 Oct. 29

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Men): [rough]

1877-1881

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Men's and Joint)

1904 Nov. 26-1924 July 26

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly Meeting (Society of Friends): Minutes, Women's Meeting

1783-1891

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Women)

1783-1825

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Women)

1825 July-1850 June

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Women)

1844-1881

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly: Minutes (Women and Joint)

1850 July-1891 Nov.

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly Meeting (Society of Friends): Minutes, Joint

1904-1997

Providence Monthly Meeting: Evening meetings

1903-1906

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly Meeting: Evening meetings

1906-1909

Bound vol.

09:B5

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report

1924-1925

Box 2: 1

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report

1926-1927

Box 2: 2

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report

1928-1929

Box 2: 3

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report

1930-1931

Box 2: 4

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report

1932-1933

Box 2: 5

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report

1934-1935

Box 2: 6

Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report  
1936-1947

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report  
1940-1941

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report  
1942-1943

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report  
1948-1949

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes and Yearly Report  
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1952

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1955

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1957

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1958

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1959

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1962

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1970 June-1971

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes  
1972

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minutes

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Correspondence



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Providence Monthly Meeting: Correspondence

1985-1999

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Correspondence: Harkness, Thomas

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Correspondence: On the sudden death of a new bride

1757

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Correspondence: Membership

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Correspondence: Membership

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1940

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Providence Monthly: Women's Missionary Society  
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Bound vol.  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Peace and Social Concerns Committee: Re: voting records  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Christmas party report  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: excerpt from will of Deborah Jones  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: On the christening of the USS Providence  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Report of Guilford College a capella choir concert  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Student subscriptions to Friends Journal

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Traveling minutes

1959

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Providence Monthly Meeting: What would Jesus mean to me: statements by members of the Providence Monthly Meeting

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Providence Monthly Meeting (Society of Friends): Vital records

1725-1997

Providence Monthly Meeting: Births and deaths

1728-1881

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Providence Monthly: Vital records: Births and deaths

1783-1877

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09:B5

Providence Monthly: Vital records: Births and deaths

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09:B5

Providence Monthly Meeting: Funeral bulletin: Jones, Elizabeth B.

1952

Box 7: 34

Providence Monthly: Vital records: Marriages [volume presumed lost by 1997]

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Allen/Benson

1903

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Almy/Brown

1789

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Andrews/Bell

1913

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Anthony/Gould

1801

Box 7: 38

Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Amos/Dennis

1815

Box 7: 39

Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Boss, Benjamin

1817

Box 7: 40

Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Briggs/Arnold

1913

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Brown/Sakwood

1799

Box 7: 42

Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Butler/Perry

1942

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Capron/Congdon

1817

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Comstock/Greene  
1788

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Cruz/Manni  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Downing/Le Marra  
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1803

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Lawton/Wing  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Mitchell/Spaulding  
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1964

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Box 7: 57  
Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Roundy/Sisson  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Tobey/Fry  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Marriages: Turner/Butler  
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ca.1950-1985

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Membership records: Last names M-P  
ca.1950-1985

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ca.1950-1985

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ca.1950-1985

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Membership records: Last names T-W  
ca.1950-1985

Box 8: 26

Providence Monthly Meeting: Notes  
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Box 7: 94

Providence Monthly: Register of the disinterment of the remains in Friends Old Burial Ground and of their re-interment in their  
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1857

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Treasurers reports  
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1942

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Treasurers reports  
1943

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Treasurers reports  
1944

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Treasurers reports  
1945

Box 10: 4  
Providence Monthly Meeting: Treasurers reports  
1946-1947 Mar

Box 10: 5  
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1950

Box 10: 6  
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1951

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1954

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Treasurers reports  
1955

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1956

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1957  
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Providence Monthly Meeting: Treasurers reports  
1958  
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1959  
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1784  
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1983  
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1811  
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1915  
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1924  
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1786  
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Providence Friends Fellowship: Correspondence with Lincoln School

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Providence Friends Fellowship: Financial reports

1940-1942

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Providence Friends Fellowship: Minutes

1935-1936 June

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Providence Friends Fellowship: Minutes

1936 Sept.-1937 Jan.

Box 11: 13

Providence Friends Fellowship: Minutes

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Providence Friends Fellowship: Minutes

1938 Sept.-1939 Aug.

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Providence Monthly Meeting: Minute on setting off Smithfield from the Providence Preparative Meeting

1787

Box 1: 3

Providence Preparative Meeting: Minutes

1808-1809

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Providence Preparative Meeting: Query responses

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Providence Preparative Meeting: Subscriptions

1793

Box 11: 23

Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting: Minutes

1809 Nov.

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1930

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Saylesville Preparative Meeting: Minutes

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Saylesville Preparative Meeting: Minutes

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Saylesville Preparative Meeting: Minutes  
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Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
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Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1963  
Box 12: 9  
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1964  
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1965

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1966

Box 12: 12  
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1967

Box 12: 13  
Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1968

Box 12: 14  
Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1969

Box 12: 15  
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1970

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Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1971

Box 12: 17  
Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1972

Box 12: 18  
Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1973

Box 12: 19  
Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1974

Box 12: 20  
Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1975

Box 12: 21  
Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1976

Box 12: 22  
Providence Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
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Box 12: 23  
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Box 12: 24  
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## Administrative information

### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Provenance

Gift of the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends Records, March 2016.

### Related Material

This collection is part of the [New England Yearly Meeting Records](#).

### Current contact for the meeting

[Providence Friends Meeting website](#)

### Processing Information

Processed by Nora D. Charles, Mar. 2020, and Susan E. Creighton, September 2019.

### Language:

English

### Copyright and Use (More information )

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## Search terms

### Subjects

New England Yearly Meeting of Friends  
Providence (R.I.)--Religious life and customs  
Quakers--Rhode Island  
Society of Friends--Rhode Island

### Contributors

Providence Monthly Meeting (Society of Friends) [[main entry](#)]

### Genres and formats

Financial records  
Minutes (Administrative records)  
Newsletters  
Vital records (Document genre)

### Link to similar SCUA collections

[Quakers](#)  
[Religion](#)  
[Rhode Island](#)



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