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Friends Meeting at Cambridge Records

1911-2010

8 vols., 15 boxes (10 linear feet)

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Read collection overview

The present-day Friends Meeting at Cambridge began as an independent, informal, unprogrammed meeting for worship that met between 1899 and 1901, and then again beginning in 1911. After holding joint meetings with neighboring Boston Monthly Meeting starting in 1926, Cambridge became an official independent monthly meeting in 1937, and during the Quaker union of 1944, merged with Boston Monthly to create the new Friends Meeting at Cambridge.

Although records from Cambridge are beset with significant gaps, they nevertheless provide a rich opportunity for examining the growth of a monthly meeting in New England during the post-World War II era and the commitment shown by its members to creating social justice. The collection includes extensive records of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee (and related endeavors), documenting peace activism during the Cold War and Vietnam years, and initiatives to fight poverty and racial injustice.

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Background on Friends Meeting at Cambridge

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

Photo by Alton H. Blackington

The present-day Friends Meeting at Cambridge began as an independent, informal, unprogrammed meeting for worship that met between 1899 and 1901, and then again beginning in 1911. In 1926, Cambridge held joint meetings with the programmed Boston Monthly, but became a formal independent monthly meeting in 1937.

At the time of Quaker unification and reorganization across New England, Cambridge merged with Boston to form the new Friends Meeting at Cambridge, part of Salem Quarter in New England Yearly Meeting. Since then, several meetings have been set off from Cambridge into monthlies, including Acton (1965), Beacon Hill (1980), Framingham (1979), Fresh Pond (1990), North Shore (1981), and Wellesley (1959). Fresh Pond also meets in Cambridge.

Scope of collection

Although the records of the Friends Meeting at Cambridge are beset with significant gaps, they are nevertheless a rich resource for examining the growth of a monthly meeting in New England during the post-World War II era and the commitment they showed to social activism.

The collection includes a nearly complete run of the meeting newsletter (called a Bulletin in its early days), extending from 1927 to 2010, but the minutes are clustered in two disjunct periods of time: 1937-1844, when the meeting was working to union with Boston, and from 1998 onward.

What is most notable about the collection, however, is the fortuitous survival of an exceptionally rich body of records falling primarily in the period 1955-1970. During this period, the meeting preserved an extensive body of correspondence and records of some of its committees, providing fascinating detail on Quaker concerns over social justice issues, especially civil rights and peace activism. Members of Cambridge Monthly were deeply involved in peace and antiwar activity, working with Peace Witness and Witness for Peace, supporting a Draft Information Center, and offering sanctuary to soldiers resisting service in Vietnam. From the late 1940s into the mid-1960s, the meeting also operating work projects and community initiatives, including a work camp in Roxbury.

Inventory

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1937-2005

Cambridge Monthly: Minutes

1937 June 10-1944 Dec. 26

Bound vol.

09:A3

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Minutes

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Box 11

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Peace and Social Concerns: Peace testimony survey
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Anniversary and history
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Miscellaneous papers from Henry H. Perry
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Box 9
Opening of the meeting house
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Selleck, George, Quakers in Boston, 1656-1964 [information on book]
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Box 13
Cambridge Monthly: George Selleck Papers
1945-1977

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11:A4
With Friends in Cambridge [article]

1914
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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](#).

Additional materials on the merger of Cambridge and Boston are located in the records of [Boston Monthly Meeting](#).

The Friends Meeting at Cambridge maintains an extensive archive of their own records.

Current contact for the meeting

[Friends Meeting at Cambridge website](#) (accessed Nov. 2018)

Bibliography

George Selleck, Quakers in Boston, 1656-1964: Three Centuries of Friends in Boston and Cambridge. Cambridge, Mass.: Friends Meeting at Cambridge, 1976

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Search terms

Subjects

- Cambridge (Mass.)--Religious life and customs
- New England Yearly Meeting of Friends
- Peace movements--Massachusetts--Cambridge
- Quakers--Massachusetts
- Society of Friends--Massachusetts
- Vietnam War, 1961-1975--Protest movements--Massachusetts--Cambridge

Contributors

- Friends Meeting at Cambridge [main entry]

Genres and formats

- Minutes (Administrative records)
- Newsletters
- Photographs

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