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# Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends Records

1698-2010

2 boxes, 4 vols. (1.25 linear feet)

Call no.: MS 902 d378

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Read collection overview

Located in South Dartmouth, Mass., the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting is one of the oldest Friends meetings in the United States, having been founded by Quakers seeking a haven from religious persecution in nearby Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colonies. Private worship may have begun in area homes as early as the 1660s, with the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting formally established in 1699. Today, the Meeting has two distinct meetings: the pastoral Smith Neck Meetinghouse and the Apponegansett Meetinghouse.

The records of Dartmouth Monthly Meeting are divided into two centers of gravity. First, the collection contains nineteenth century copies of the meeting's early minutes (1698-1792) and vital records covering most of that period. Secondly, the collection contains to the meeting since the late 1960s, including minutes (1968-1989) and newsletter (1999-2005). The remaining records of the meeting -- the bulk of them -- are maintained by the Old Dartmouth Historical Society and are available [online](#).

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## Background on Dartmouth Monthly Meeting



Abbie Loring in Cape Cod Quaker attire, ca.1930. Photo by Alton H. Blackington

Located in South Dartmouth, Mass., the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting is one of the oldest Friends meetings in the United States, having been founded by Quakers seeking a haven from religious persecution in nearby Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colonies. Private worship may have begun in area homes as early as the 1660s, with the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting formally established in 1699.

Dartmouth has been associated with only two quarterly meetings throughout its long existence, Rhode Island

Quarterly (1699-1788) and Sandwich Quarterly (1788-present). As an early and important center for Friends, however, it served as a starting point for other monthlies in the region. During the eighteenth century, two monthly meetings were set off from Dartmouth: Acoaxet (later known as Westport) in 1766 and New Bedford in 1792. Allen's Neck Monthly Meeting was set off in 1956, since which time, the Dartmouth Monthly has generally been referred to as Smith Neck (or Smith's Neck) Friends Meeting. The Wilburite separation in 1845 resulted in the formation of a parallel Wilburite Dartmouth Monthly Meeting in North Dartmouth, which retained its separate identity after the split was healed in 1945, taking the name of North Dartmouth Monthly Meeting.

Even more notably, Dartmouth has been the parent of a long list of worship groups and preparative meetings, including:

<b>Worship groups</b>	<b>Preparative meetings</b>
Acoaxet (1699-1745)	Acoaxet (1745-1766)
Acushnet (1699-1745)	
Allen's Neck (1798-1950): also known as Slocum's Neck	Allen's Neck (1950-1956)
Apponegansett (1784-1960), 1975-present (independent 1961-1974)	Apponegansett (1708-1784): also called Dartmouth of South Preparative
Centre (1721-1766)	
New Bedford (1772-1792): also called Bedford	
New Swansey (1764-1765)	
Newtown (1745-1882)	North (1784-1872): also known as Newtown and Bedford
Nosequchuck (1758-1759)	
Rochester(1702-1707)	Rochester (1707-1740): also known as Sippican
Smith Neck (1784-1901): also called Apponegansett	West (1813-1829): also called Allen's Neck

The first meetings for worship at Smith Neck were held in members' homes in 1768 under the care of the Monthly Meeting at Apponegansett. In 1822, Caleb Anthony donated land for a meetinghouse, which has served as home for the Smith Neck Friends Meeting since. Although Smith Neck began as a traditional unprogrammed meeting, in 1890, an Elder, Eldridge Faunce, stood up to read a chapter of the Bible, offering commentary, and he was followed by a similar talk by Elizabeth Smith. Their actions fed into the evangelical currents already operating on the meeting, thanks in part to the influence of Joseph John Gurney, leading Smith Neck to seek a regular minister and establish themselves as a programmed or pastoral meeting.

Dartmouth Monthly Meeting currently has two distinct meetings and two meetinghouses: Smith Neck (594 Smith Neck Rd) and Apponegansett (Russells Mills Rd.).

## Scope of collection

The records of Dartmouth Monthly Meeting are divided into two centers of gravity. First, the collection contains nineteenth century copies of the meeting's early minutes (1698-1792) and vital records covering most of that period. Secondly, the collection contains to the meeting since the late 1960s, including minutes (1968-1989) and newsletter (1999-2005). The remaining records of the meeting -- the bulk of them -- were maintained by the Old Dartmouth Historical Society into at least the 1990s, although their present location is unknown.

Note that some content for the meeting prior to the Gurneyite-Wilburite separation is included in volumes filed with the [Wilburite Dartmouth Monthly Meeting](#).

## Inventory

Minutes  
1698-1989  
Dartmouth Monthly: Minutes: copied  
1698 Nov.-1770 June  
Bound vol.  
09:A3  
Dartmouth Monthly: Minutes: copied  
1770 July-1792  
Bound vol.  
09:A3

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1968-1989  
Box: 0.25  
Box 1

(11:B4)

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1968 Nov.-1971 Jan.

Box 1: 3

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1971 Feb.-1973

Box 1: 4

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1974-1978 Mar.

Box 1: 5

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1978 Apr.-1981 Jan.

Box 1: 6

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1981-1983

Box 1: 7

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1984-1986

Box 1: 8

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1987

Box 1: 9

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1988

Box 1: 10

Dartmouth Monthly at Smith Neck: Minutes  
1989

Box 1: 11

Correspondence and reports

1765-1994

Smith Neck Friends Meeting: State of the Meeting

1989-1994

Pamphlet

Box 1: 2

(11:B4)

Also includes a certificate of removal, 1994.

Memorial: Elizabeth Sherman Gridley

1765

Box 2

(11:E5)

Vital records

1699-1841

Dartmouth Monthly: Vital records: Births and deaths

1766-1841

Bound vol.

09:A3

Dartmouth Monthly: Marriages: Extracts from the records of Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of marriages from  
6mo 1699 until the establishment of New Bedford Monthly Meeting: Copy

1699 June-1792 Dec.

Bound vol.

09:A3

Newsletters and publications

1947-2010

Apponogansett Meetinghouse, July 25, 1948: Annual meeting of worship called by Dartmouth Monthly  
Meeting of the Society of Friends, 1790-1948

1948

Pamphlet

Box 1: 1

(11:B4)

125th anniversary of the passing of the deed of the Smith Neck Friend's Meeting  
1947  
Pamphlet  
Box 1: 1

(11:B4)  
Smith Neck Monthly Meeting Newsletter  
1999-2010  
Box: 0.25  
Box 2

(11:E5)

## 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 records for the Dartmouth Monthly Meeting were reported by Rick Statler in 1997 as being in the possession of the Old Dartmouth Historical Society and housed at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. The are digitized and available [online](#).

- Men's minutes (1699-1727): 1 vol.
- Men's minutes (1727-1830): 3 vols.
- Men's minutes (1803-1891): 3 vols.
- Women's minutes (1699-1812): 2 vols.
- Women's minutes (1812-1892): 2 vols.
- Joint minutes (1891-1955): 1 vol.
- Joint minutes (1968-1989): 0.25 linear feet
- Births, deaths, marriages (1699-1880): 1 vol.
- Births and deaths (1841-1956): 1 vol.
- Marriages, New Bedford copy (1699-1792): 1 vol.
- Membership (1766-1841): 1 vol.
- Removals (1792-1847): 2 vols.
- Ministers and elders, with New Bedford (1796-1901): 4 vols.
- Ministry and oversight (1901-1922): 1 vol.
- Ministry and oversight (1922-1961): 2 vols.
- Trust fund (1823-1962): 1 vol.
- Discipline (1762): 1 vol.
- Treasurer: W to 1945 (1931-1960): 1 vol.
- Newsletters (1970-1995): 2 folders

### Current contact for the meeting

[Smith Neck Friends Meeting website](#)

### Processing Information

Processed by I. Eliot Wentworth, October 2018.

### Language:

English

### Copyright and Use ([More information](#) )

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# Search terms

## Subjects

- Dartmouth (Mass.)--Religious life and customs
- New England Yearly Meeting of Friends
- Quakers--Massachusetts
- Smith Neck Friends Meeting
- Society of Friends--Massachusetts

## Contributors

- Dartmouth Monthly Meeting of Friends [main entry]

## Genres and formats

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

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