

## **Alexandria Monthly Meeting Timeline**

*Covering Meetings Historically Associated with Alexandria Monthly Meeting located in Alexandria, (Virginia and District of Columbia), Woodlawn (Fairfax County, Virginia), and Washington, D.C.*

*Each meeting associated with Alexandria Monthly Meeting progressed from Worship Group, or Indulged Meeting, to Preparative Meeting, to Monthly Meeting status, at times moving back and forth between designations, depending on factors such as size of membership and ability to conduct business separately from the Monthly Meeting to which it is attached.*

### **Pre-European Settlement:**

#### **1608**

**The lands occupied by Alexandria Friends from their beginning as a worship group were the ancestral home of the Nacotchtank, Dogue, and Piscataway Native peoples.** In 1608, according to Captain John Smith, the Nacotchtank (also called Anacostin or Necostin) resided on both sides of the Potomac: on its Maryland shore (Washington, D.C., later location of the Alexandria Meeting's two successive meetinghouses) above the confluence of the Potomac and its tributary, the Anacostia River; and on Analostan Island (renamed Roosevelt Island) off the Virginia shore. Dogue (or Tauxenant, Toag, Taux, Doeg) villages were recorded downstream on the Potomac; on the Occoquan River, another of the Potomac's tributaries; on Mason Neck (formerly Dogue's Neck); and on an island, now eroded away, off Mason Neck. During the period when the Nacotchtank and the Dogue were prevalent on the Virginia side of the Potomac, the dominion and hunting grounds of the Piscataway, an Algonquin-speaking agricultural village people, also extended across the Potomac from their principal locations in Southern Maryland, the Chesapeake Bay, and the Maryland banks of the Potomac.

### **1780s:**

#### **1783**

**Alexandria Worship Group.** The Alexandria Monthly Meeting originates in the town of Alexandria as a worship group in the 1780s. Many of its early members keep close ties to their families in rural Loudoun County, while gradually adopting cultural attributes of their fellow merchants and artisans of the growing town, which in 1801 would become a part of the new capital city, the District of Columbia.

#### **1784**

**Alexandria Quaker Burial Ground.** Queen Street Friends' Burial Ground is established in 1784 and is active into the 1880s.

#### **1785**

**First Alexandria Meetinghouse constructed.** The meetinghouse is located on the west side of South St. Asaph Street, on a lot now designated 311 South St. Asaph Street.

### **1790s:**

#### **1790**

**Transfer of Alexandria Meeting to Baltimore Yearly Meeting as part of Fairfax Quarter.** Fairfax Quarter and its component meetings are transferred from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

#### **1792**

**Antislavery Petition.** Isaac McPherson of Alexandria Worship Group (later of Baltimore Monthly Meeting) transmits Antislavery Petition to Robert Pleasants of Henrico County, a founder and president of the Virginia Abolition Society.

**1794**

**Alexandria Preparative Meeting.** The Alexandria Worship Group is designated a Preparative Meeting, under the care of Fairfax Monthly Meeting in Waterford, Loudoun County, a part of Fairfax Quarter.

**1794**

**Quakers are co-founders of Alexandria Library Company.** Alexandria Friend Edward Stabler is appointed first Librarian.

**1796**

**Antislavery Society is formed.** Friends and other antislavery Alexandrians establish Alexandria Society for the Relief of People Illegally Held in Bondage. Association is formed after passage of a Virginia law making it more difficult for free Black people to win in court challenges to re-enslavement. Alexandria Quaker minister Edward Stabler advertises a meeting of the Society in February in the *Alexandria Gazette*. The Society represents African American petitioners, prevailing in fourteen of the twenty-six cases they litigated the following year. [Stanley Harrold, *Subversives: Antislavery Community in Washington, D.C., 1828-1865*, p. 25.]

**1796**

**Antislavery Petition.** Alexandria Friends submit petition to Virginia General Assembly, protesting its 1795 law restricting manumissions.

**1797**

**School for African Americans established in Alexandria.** Friends and other antislavery Alexandrians establish school for African Americans. Benjamin Davis engaged as teacher; reports enrollment of 108 students.

“Controlled then by aristocratic people who did not neglect the people of color, Alexandria also became a sort of center for the uplift of the blacks in Northern Virginia.” “The records of the Quakers of that day show special effort in this direction there about 1764, 1773, and 1785.”

[Carter G. Woodson, *The Education Of The Negro Prior To 1861: A History Of The Education Of The Colored People Of The United States From The Beginning Of Slavery To The Civil War*, p. 109; Special Report of U.S. Com. of Ed., 1871, p. 198.]

**1798**

**Alexandria is proposed to become Monthly Meeting.** Fairfax Monthly Meeting appoints elders, including Edward Stabler of Alexandria, for designating Alexandria Preparative Meeting as a Monthly Meeting.

**1799**

**Emancipation of enslaved people of Mount Vernon.** Through a provision of his will based on the 1782 Virginia law allowing manumission of enslaved people for the first time since 1723, George Washington stipulates that, upon his wife Martha’s death, all enslaved people of Mount Vernon in his “ownership” at the time of his death are to be freed. Martha carries out the provision one year later. Families are disrupted when Martha and her Custis relatives do not follow Washington’s example for the Custis “dower slaves” in their “ownership” or control. Many who remain enslaved are family members of those who are freed. Descendants of the emancipated slaves of Mount Vernon would become the neighbors of Woodlawn Quakers upon their settlement on Mount Vernon lands in the 1840s and 1850s. The freed people of Mount Vernon are allowed by the courts to remain in the state, unlike those whose manumissions would occur after a new Virginia law is passed in 1806 requiring freed people to leave the state within one year of manumission.

## 1800s:

### **1800**

**Emancipation of Bell family.** Alexandria Friends successfully purchase and emancipate over fifty enslaved people between 1800 and 1860, and participate as witnesses or agents in numerous other manumissions during that time period. On January 10, 1800, Isaac McPherson of Alexandria Meeting purchases freedom of Harry Bell, his wife, Dorothy, and their children, Priscilla, Robert, and John. Priscilla, then a child, would become the wife of West Ford in 1812. West would become the founder of the Gum Springs free African American community in 1833, a sister community to Woodlawn's free Black community, four miles south at Woodlawn.

### **1801**

**Alexandria Chapter of the Society for the Relief of People Illegally Held in Bondage disbands.** Efforts become unsustainable following events surrounding Gabriel's Rebellion, a failed uprising of enslaved people in Henrico County, Virginia, resulting in repressive laws such as one that makes it more difficult to prevent re-enslavement of freed people. Societal backlash increases against antislavery efforts by Friends and others seeking to prevent re-enslavements and dismantle the system of slavery.

### **1801**

**Alexandria is transferred out of the Commonwealth of Virginia to become part of the new Federal City.** Alexandria would remain a part of Washington, District of Columbia, until 1847.

### **1802**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting established.** On September 23, the Alexandria Meeting graduates from Preparative to Monthly Meeting status.

### **1803**

**Alexandria Quakers are appointed to Baltimore Yearly Meeting Indian Committee.** Edward and his brother William Stabler are the first Alexandria Friends to be appointed members of Baltimore Yearly Meeting Indian Committee, founded in 1795.

### **1804**

**Edward Stabler begins ministry as a "public Friend."** Edward Stabler travels in ministry in Southern U.S. states with Quaker minister Ann Alexander of England and her female associate.

### **1808**

**Edward Stabler, Clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.** Edward Stabler of Alexandria Monthly Meeting is appointed clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting in 1808 and serves through 1814.

## 1810s:

### **1810**

**Alexandria Friends minister Edward Stabler continues ministry in South.** Edward Stabler and his sister-in-law, Deborah Stabler, also a recorded minister, visit meetings within Virginia Yearly Meeting, traveling with a minute obtained from Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

### **1811**

**Alexandria meetinghouse is constructed.** The structure, located on the corner of St. Asaph and Wolfe streets, replaces the smaller, aging meetinghouse on the west side of South St. Asaph Street.

### **1812**

**War of 1812 war resistance.** For refusal to pay war taxes, Samuel Shreve of Alexandria Monthly Meeting is imprisoned, and property of eleven Alexandria Quakers is confiscated.

### **1814-15**

**Edward Stabler extends ministry to Northern states.** Edward Stabler visits New York, Rhode Island, and Philadelphia meetings; traveling on a minute from Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

### **1815**

**Alexandria Meeting establishes school for girls.** The school is conducted by Alexandria Friend, Rachel Painter, an 1812 graduate of Westtown Boarding School, formerly of Concord Monthly Meeting, Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

### **1816**

**John Janney, founding member of Alexandria Meeting, is appointed Clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.** Janney serves as yearly meeting clerk through 1820.

### **1817**

**Washington Preparative Meeting becomes part of Alexandria Monthly Meeting.** The Washington Meeting, which had resided with Indian Spring Monthly Meeting, Maryland, from its beginnings until 1817, is transferred to the care of Alexandria Monthly Meeting. In 1802, the Washington meeting had been changed from monthly meeting status to preparative meeting status.

### **1817**

**Alexandria women Friends are admitted to membership in the Baltimore Yearly Meeting Indian Committee.** Noted educator Margaret Judge is among the first group of women to join the committee. After her marriage to Hugh Brown in 1827, the couple would transfer from Alexandria to Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, Upper Canada, where she would continue her work on behalf of Native people as a member of the Genesee Yearly Meeting's Indian Committee.

### **1818**

**Alexandria Meeting establishes school for boys.** The appointed Committee states they "are unanimous in judgement that it will be proper for the Mo. Meeting to assume the Superintendency of the male as well as the female School."

## **1820s:**

### **1824**

**Alexandria Boarding School.** In fall 1824, Benjamin Hollowell establishes Alexandria Boarding School at 607 Oronoco Street. The school is attended by sons from Quaker families as well as those of the planter elite throughout the South. Hollowell would relocate to 220 N. Washington Street in 1826.

### **1825**

**Samuel McPherson Janney studies mathematics with Benjamin Hollowell.** Janney, who would become a well-known educator, attends night sessions of Hollowell's Alexandria Boarding School.

### **1825**

**Alexandria Meeting School is established.** The school is located at the residence of Deborah Pleasants Stabler, widow of William Stabler. It is conducted by Friends minister and educator, Margaret Judge (later Margaret Brown).

### **1826**

**Marriage of Samuel M. Janney and Elizabeth Hopkins Janney at Alexandria Meetinghouse.** Marriage takes place under the care of Alexandria Monthly Meeting.

**1827**

**The Benevolent Society of Alexandria.** Samuel M. Janney, Benjamin Hallowell (Secretary), George Drinker, with others (Friends and Methodists) form The Benevolent Society of Alexandria, “To rescue from the possession of slave traders, persons illegally held in bondage and to enlighten the public mind in regard to the evils of slavery.” With antislavery society in Washington, D.C., presents Antislavery Petition to Congress. The Society would succeed in the legal defense of twelve African Americans against slave traders. [*Memoirs of Samuel M. Janney*, pp. 28-29; Stanley Harrold, *Subversives: Antislavery Community in Washington, D.C., 1828-1865*, p. 25.]

**1828**

**Alexandria Quakers sign Antislavery petition.**

**1828**

**Hicksite-Orthodox Schism.** Alexandria and Washington Meetings’ membership hold to the Hicksite side of the 1828 schism between liberal (Hicksite) and conservative (Orthodox) factions of the Society, as do most of the meetings within Baltimore Yearly Meeting. Edward Stabler and Thomas Wetherald are noted Hicksite Friends ministers of Alexandria Monthly Meeting. Orthodox Friends establish Irving Street Meeting at 13<sup>th</sup> and Irving Streets, NW, Washington, D.C.

**1830s:**

**1830**

**Occoquan Cotton Mill is established as a free labor enterprise.** Samuel M. Janney establishes a cotton mill business, in partnership with brother-in-law Samuel Hopkins Janney, at Occoquan, sixteen miles south of Alexandria. Despite their use of only free laborers, they “could not escape the use of slave-produced cotton.” [*Memoirs of Samuel M. Janney*, pp. 33, 37, 41, 50, 90; A. Glenn Crothers, “‘I Felt Much Interest in their Welfare’”: Quaker Philanthropy and African Americans in Antebellum Northern Virginia,” *Journal of Southern History*, 2007, p. 22.]

**1831**

**Nat Turner Rebellion.** A revolt by enslaved people in Southampton, Virginia, prompts Virginia legislators to tighten its laws regarding emancipation. Enslaved people were thereafter mandated to leave the state within one year of emancipation. Free Black people of Woodlawn and Gum Springs, many of whom were descended from the population emancipated by George Washington, were exempt from the requirement. However, they were subject to a new provision that required all free Black people to “register” annually with the County Court.

**1832**

**Alexandria Friends, William Stabler and Benjamin Hallowell, establish Alexandria Philosophical Society.** The society follows the example of the American Philosophical Society, considered the earliest “learned society,” founded by Benjamin Franklin and other Philadelphians in 1743. Hallowell would be elected to the American Philosophical Society in 1854.

**1832**

**Chalkley Gillingham moves to Burlington County, New Jersey.** Gillingham transfers membership from Frankford Monthly Meeting, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Chester Monthly Meeting, Moorestown, Burlington County, New Jersey, upon his marriage to Kezia Warrington. The Gillingham family and numerous others from Chester Monthly Meeting would later become the principal founding members of the Woodlawn antislavery colony.

**1833**

**American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS) founding Convention.** Chalkley Gillingham and his first cousin, Lucas Gillingham, serve as delegates to the American Anti-Slavery Society's (AASS) founding Convention, held in Philadelphia in December 1833.

**1833**

**Samuel M. Janney establishes Occoquan worship group as an "Indulged Meeting" under the care of Alexandria Monthly Meeting.** First meeting is held in Occoquan July 1833.

**1833**

**Alexandria Friend William Stabler is appointed clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.** Stabler serves as clerk through 1840.

**1838**

**Benjamin Hallowell and other Friends establish Alexandria Lyceum Association.** Lectures and debates are presented on selected topics, held at the Hallowell school's lecture hall. When Lyceum building is constructed the following year, Alexandria Library is located on first floor.

**1839**

**Jonathan Roberts enrolls in Alexandria Boarding School of Benjamin Hallowell.** Roberts remains through 1840, eight years before he and Abigail Haines Roberts, whom he would marry in 1842, become founding members of the Woodlawn antislavery colony with his purchase of Cedar Grove farm, a part of Woodlawn's "lower neighborhood," Accotink.

**1839**

**Samuel M. Janney transfers from Alexandria Monthly Meeting to Goose Creek Meeting and opens Springdale Female Boarding School.** Janney closes his unsuccessful cotton factory in Occoquan and returns to his birthplace, Loudoun County. He opens Springdale Boarding School for girls. In addition to providing much needed educational opportunity for girls from a large geographic region, Janney can finally avoid slave-produced goods by purchasing food and supplies only from free labor sources. [*Memoirs of Samuel M. Janney*; Asa Moore Janney and Werner Janney, *Ye Meetg Hous Smal: A Short Account of FRIENDS in Loudoun County, Virginia, 1732-1980* (Lincoln, Virginia, 1980).]

#### 1840s:

**1841**

**Chalkley Gillingham becomes Friends minister.** Chester Monthly Meeting appoints Josiah Roberts to inform Chalkley Gillingham of his acceptance as an acknowledged minister of the Society of Friends.

**1841**

**Chalkley Gillingham travels and preaches with Lucretia Mott.** Accompanied by Catherine Truman, Lucretia Mott travels with Gillingham, "a new minister" for five weeks, throughout nineteen counties in central and western Pennsylvania [Gillingham Journals; Margaret Hope Bacon, *Valiant Friend: The Life of Lucretia Mott*, 116.]

**1842**

**Jacob Haight, a Quaker dairyman from Dutchess County, New York, purchases Richard Bland Lee's Sully plantation in Fairfax County, Virginia.** Haight's success in reclaiming and farming former plantation land in Fairfax County is used by antislavery activists to promote Northern settlement in Virginia.

**1844**

**Samuel M. Janney urges Northern Quakers to relocate in Northern Virginia to demonstrate farming productively without slave labor.** Samuel M. Janney corresponds with antislavery leader Isaac T. Hopper, stating, “. . . the time has come for the discussion of slavery in Virginia.”

Janney publishes anonymously in northern journals, citing Dutchess County, New York, dairy farmer Jacob Haight and others as examples of successful model of application of sustainable farming methods, which, if widely adopted and demonstrated by northern settlers, would make slavery-dependent plantations obsolete.

**1846**

**Alexandria, District of Columbia, is retroceded to the Commonwealth of Virginia.** Alexandria's return to Virginia is championed by pro-slavery interests as a way to avoid subjecting the city to laws, then anticipated to be passed in the District, that would outlaw the slave trade. Retrocession sets back efforts by Friends toward eliminating the slave trade in the District of Columbia, which then included Alexandria. The measure would finally be achieved in Washington, D.C., in 1850, but the slave trade remained legal in Alexandria. William Stabler, son of Edward Stabler, records in 1846 the ongoing loss of membership as Friends leave Alexandria for western non-slave states and territories, or to Friends' communities in Loudoun County, Virginia, and Sandy Spring, Maryland.

**1846**

**Northern Friends purchase the Woodlawn plantation tract.** With the purchase of the 2,000-acre tract, the Woodlawn Quaker settlement is established as an intentional antislavery colony. Quakers from Northern states introduce Northern farming practices, converting to small farms thousands of acres of plantation lands in and around Mount Vernon, portions of which George Washington's heirs continued to operate as plantations employing enslaved labor. In addition to Quakers, Northern non-Quaker allies and Northern Virginia free Black farmers purchase and begin cultivating farms surrounded by slavery-run plantations. The colony's goal is to demonstrate sustainable agricultural methods to slaveholding neighbors, and thereby influence them and others throughout the South to abandon slavery. The colony gave life to the vision of Samuel M. Janney to bring about a peaceful end to slavery. The goal was embraced by the colony's founders, including Chalkley and Kezia Gillingham, Thomas and Sarah Wright, and younger co-founders, Benjamin Hallowell-educated Jonathan Roberts and Warrington Gillingham.

**1847**

**Northern Friends transfer their memberships to Alexandria Monthly Meeting and establish Woodlawn Worship Group.** Numerous transfer requests begin to be received in 2<sup>nd</sup> month 1847. Over the next decade, transfers from Chester Monthly Meeting in Moorestown, New Jersey, alone, would number twenty-eight adults and twenty-four children, for a total of fifty-two individuals. These families grew and were joined by Friends from other meetings in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York.

**1848**

**Petition to allow education of free African Americans.** Alexandria Friends join with Virginia Quakers from Berkeley, Frederick, Jefferson, and Fairfax meetings, petitioning to change the law prohibiting the education of free African Americans.

**1848**

**Margaret Hallowell of Alexandria Monthly Meeting is appointed Clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting Women Friends.** She serves through 1862 (three years after her transfer to Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting in 1859).

### **1848**

**Mary Willis Farquhar revives Alexandria Monthly Meeting School for Girls.** Mary, sister of Margaret (Farquhar) Hallowell, teaches in the “old” Meetinghouse on the west side of South St. Asaph Street. After her marriage to Richard S. Kirk of Sandy Spring in 1850, she transfers to Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting. She and her brother, William Henry Farquhar, a former student of Benjamin Hallowell, teach for many years at Fair Hill Boarding School in Sandy Spring.

### **1849**

**Woodlawn Worship Group is established as an Indulged Meeting under the care of the Alexandria Monthly Meeting.** Initially held at the Woodlawn plantation home where incoming settlers lived until their homes were constructed, meetings for worship and a school are subsequently housed in the miller’s cottage, located at the site on Dogue Creek where George Washington’s deteriorated gristmill stood awaiting repairs.

### **1849**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting’s Washington Preparative Meeting becomes an Indulged Meeting.** One month after Woodlawn’s acceptance as an Indulged Meeting in March 1849 (as requested in February 1849), Alexandria Monthly Meeting acknowledges the marginal condition of the Washington Preparative Meeting by reducing its status to that of an Indulged Meeting.

### **1849**

**Elizabeth Newport visits Woodlawn Friends.** With Thomas and Sarah Wright, Elizabeth (Ellison) Newport, noted Friends minister of Philadelphia, also holds prayer meeting with local slaveholder William McCarty, hoping with her gentle approach to influence him to free his slaves. She would later, in 1861, be among Friends who appealed to President Lincoln to declare universal emancipation. Newport traced her embrace of Quakerism to her childhood when she lived for a time with relatives in Alexandria and was exposed to the ministry of Edward Stabler.

### **1849**

**Warrington Gillingham enrolls in Alexandria Boarding School.** Warrington, son of Chalkley and Kezia Gillingham, enrolls as a boarding student in Benjamin Hallowell’s Alexandria Boarding School. He continues his studies through 1852, one year before he and his parents and siblings would relocate to their Woodlawn farm, Vernondale.

## **1850s:**

### **1850**

**William Stabler of Alexandria Monthly Meeting is appointed clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.** Stabler, son of Edward Stabler, serves as clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting through 1851.

### **1851**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting appoints a property committee to construct Woodlawn meetinghouse.** The initial meetinghouse, designed to be doubled, was built between 1851 and 1853 on a lot from the Woodlawn tract donated by Chalkley and Kezia Gillingham.

### **1851**

**Woodlawn Quakers co-found the Washington Valley Agricultural Society.** The Society, organized December 1851, elects local slaveholder Dr. Richard Chichester Mason president. The remaining officers are Woodlawn Friends: Paul Hillman Troth, vice-president, Jonathan Roberts, Secretary, and Thomas Wright, Librarian.



**1852**

**Benjamin Hallowell of Alexandria Monthly Meeting is appointed Clerk of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.** He serves through 1867 (eight years after his transfer to Sandy Spring in 1859).

**1853**

**Alexandria Meeting School Report.** Alexandria Monthly Meeting reports enrollment of children in Alexandria Monthly Meeting families: “6 schools taught by Friends with 21 Friends; 47 children of suitable age.”

**1854**

**Friends participate in Fairfax Agricultural Society.** The pre-existing Fairfax Agricultural Society reorganizes and elects Chalkley Gillingham District 3 Vice President. [“Fairfax Agricultural Society,” *Alexandria Gazette* 5/20/1854.]

**1854**

**Southern Methodists dedicate Mount Vernon Chapel, built on plantation land neighboring the Woodlawn free Black settlement.** The Chapel would be destroyed during the Civil War. In 1882, its lot would become the location of the independent African American church, Woodlawn Methodist Church, when Woodlawn Friends assist in securing the land to enable a larger church to replace the first Woodlawn African American church and school, built in 1866.

**1856**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting Friends join as trustees in support of Springdale Boarding School.** Fairfax Quarterly Meeting Friends, including Alexandria Monthly Meeting Friends Benjamin Hallowell and Chalkley Gillingham, become trustees in support of Samuel M. Janney’s Springdale Boarding School. [“Chalkley Gillingham Trustee Friends Boarding School” *Friends Intelligencer*.]

**1856**

**Incorporation of Alexandria and Accotink Turnpike.** Woodlawn Quakers enlist slaveholding neighbors in financing and construction of Alexandria and Accotink Turnpike, a major road-building enterprise intended to benefit the local agricultural economy.

**1857**

**Woodlawn Friend Jonathan Roberts surveys free Black community of Gum Springs.** Roberts, who had studied surveying with Benjamin Hallowell, assists Gum Springs founder West Ford in dividing Gum Springs among his four children. These lands would continue to support African American residences, churches, schools, and business enterprises in the years before and after the Civil War. Gum Springs would become a place of refuge for freed people and for Woodlawn’s African Americans who would be displaced by Fort Belvoir military installation.

**1859**

**Last Alexandria Monthly Meeting disownment of a member for involvement in slaveholding.** Noah Glover’s membership is revoked for his continued refusal to relinquish the practice of hiring enslaved labor. Noah and his family relocate to Anne Arundel, Maryland, the following year.

### **1860s:**

**1860**

**Woodlawn Preparative Meeting is established in 1860.** First meeting for business is held November 29, 1860.

**1860**

**Total number of Alexandria Monthly Meeting members (Alexandria, Washington, D.C., and Woodlawn) is one hundred eighty-five.**

**1860**

**Fairfax Quarterly Meeting meets at Alexandria meetinghouse for the last time before the Civil War.** In November, the *Alexandria Gazette* reports spoken ministry of Loudoun Friends attending Quarterly Meeting: Samuel M. Janney and Jesse Hogue, (Goose Creek Monthly Meeting), Miriam Gover and Louisa Steer [Schooley] (Fairfax Monthly Meeting).

**1861**

**Quakers vote against Secession.** Fairfax County elects delegates to the Virginia Secession Convention of 1861. In May, at Woodlawn's Accotink Precinct, Quakers and other northerners vote in the majority against Secession. Accotink, the Quakers' town center, is one of only three of Fairfax County's fourteen precincts to reject Secession.

**1861**

**Chalkley Gillingham records the concerns of Woodlawn Friends at the outset of the Civil War:**

“ . . . on first day the 21<sup>st</sup> day of 4<sup>th</sup> mo we held a Conference at the house of David Walton (in the afternoon) to take into Consideration what course we should pursue in the agitated and distracted state of things, with rebel soldiers coming and encamping all around us to make an attack the City of Washington as soon as they could get their force together & we felt we were in great danger with our families exposed to the marauding and merciless soldiers whose business it was to tear down & destroy the government, & we being of northern birth, would be more likely to be objects of their vengeance . . . . [Gillingham Journal 4/21/1861.]

**1861**

**Alexandria Meetinghouse on corner of St. Asaph and Wolfe streets is requisitioned as hospital.**

From May 1861, and throughout the Civil War, the Alexandria meetinghouse is used by the Union Army as a hospital for sick and wounded Union soldiers.

**1861**

**Woodlawn founding member Jonathan Roberts flees to Alexandria when his life is threatened under an arrest order issued by General G. T. Beauregard.** Warned by a friend that his life was in danger from Confederates camped nearby, Roberts makes a conscientious decision to offer his assistance to Union authorities on July 6, 1861, the evening of his flight from his Cedar Grove farm, south of Woodlawn in the neighborhood of Accotink.

**1861**

**Jonathan Roberts guides Union troops to Battle of First Bull Run (Manassas), July 19, 1861.**

Although a pacifist, Roberts agrees to assist the Union Army as a scout and guide, explaining to the commanding officer that he would not bear arms. “I told him I was a Quaker and that Quakers did not fight.”

**1862**

**Chalkley Gillingham records the suspension of “Friends Meeting of any kind” at the Alexandria meetinghouse.** On March 14, Gillingham writes, “The Friends of Alexandria are all carried away with the spirit of the Southern rebellion, with only an exception of a couple of families – it is doleful for Friends to become rebellionites . . .” He notes the suspension in “the middle of sixth month [1862],” adding “the Preparative meeting being dropped also.”

**1862**

**Union picket guard occupation of Woodlawn meetinghouse.** Occupation necessitates meeting in the residences of David Walton and Chalkley Gillingham. At other times, with few exceptions, meeting for worship at the meetinghouse continues throughout military occupation, sometimes with soldiers in attendance.

**1863**

**Reports from Alexandria Meeting cease between December 1863 and December 1864.** Women's Meeting of Woodlawn Preparative assumes responsibility for keeping minutes for Woodlawn Meeting.

**1863**

**Emancipation Proclamation is issued for seceded states on January 1, 1863.** Subsequent proclamations issued in 1864 would apply in Union held territory of Alexandria and Fairfax County.

**1863**

**Death of West Ford.** Ford dies in July, having established an enclave at Gum Springs for his free-born descendants and others whose parents' or grandparents' freedom predated the requirement to leave the state of Virginia within one year of emancipation. The community would soon be joined by a flood of new residents fleeing slavery, and those emancipated by proclamation.

**1863**

**Jonathan Roberts is seriously injured.** In summer 1863, during a scouting expedition, Jonathan's horse stumbles and falls on him, resulting in lifelong disability from wounds that would not heal. No longer able to work as a scout and guide for the Union Army, he would hold several offices, including Sheriff, Justice of the Peace, and Chief Justice, during the Union and Reconstruction governments.

**1864**

**Baltimore Yearly Meeting convenes "Meeting for Sufferings."** To consider acts and choices made by Friends to aid the military, or the prosecution of war, a "Meeting for Sufferings" of Baltimore Yearly Meeting is conducted by appointed ministers and elders, including Woodlawn's Chalkley Gillingham. A memorial is issued advocating commending "the Christian duty of dealing with offenders in the spirit of meekness and love . . ."

**1864**

**Meetings for worship are held at Alexandria residence of Dr. Edward Walker Janney.** In his autobiography, Samuel M. Janney states that in 1864, during the period when the Alexandria meetinghouse is occupied by the Union Army as a hospital, the home of Dr. Edward Walker Janney (Samuel's half-first cousin) becomes the meeting place for Alexandria Friends. Dr. Janney, who would later practice medicine in Baltimore, ministers to Union soldiers at the Alexandria meetinghouse, African Americans at the Contraband Hospital, and among Alexandria Freedmen's Aid Workers.

**1864**

**Loss of membership among Alexandria Friends causes the Alexandria Preparative Meeting to become re-designated Alexandria Indulged Meeting.**

**1865**

**Alexandria meetinghouse is relinquished by the Union Army.** Julia Wilbur, New York Quaker working to assist freed people in Alexandria, records First Day, 1<sup>st</sup> Month 29, 1865, as the date when meeting for worship is resumed at the Alexandria meetinghouse.

**1865**

**Chalkley Gillingham of Woodlawn counsels war resisters Cyrus and Edwin Blackburn of Baltimore Monthly Meeting.** The Bedford County, Pennsylvania-born brothers had continued to resist military service after being drafted into the Union Army. Gillingham accompanies the young friends to Washington, D.C., “to endeavor to get them released, which was done for the time being . . .” [Gillingham, *Journal*, March 1, 1865.]

**1865**

**Chalkley Gillingham records the end to the war:**

5<sup>th</sup> mo. 1, 1865

early in the last mo. the rebellion was brought to a speedy close by the capture of the Commander in Chief of the Rebellious forces (R. E. Lee) & his whole army, which was quickly followed by all the Minor Generals and their armies – and pretty soon after this Jeff Davis, their pretended President was also captured, together with most of their leading men.

**On the same day, Chalkley pens the subsequent devastating turn of events:**

On the night of the 14<sup>th</sup> of last mo. the President of the U.S. – A. Lincoln – was assassinated by order of the leading rebels . . . . The Country was thrown into the utmost sorrow & mourning at this diabolical act of the rebels. . .

**1865**

**Woodlawn is selected as location of a “freedmen’s village.”** In June of 1865, General George B. Carse, Superintendent of the Freedmen’s Village of the War Department’s Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen’s Bureau) paid a visit to the Woodlawn neighborhood, scouting for a location for displaced emancipated bondpeople whose numbers were overwhelming the accommodations for freed people on the confiscated Arlington Plantation of Robert E. Lee. In his report of his visit, Carse noted that many in the vicinity of Woodlawn and its town center at Accotink “belong to the Society of Friends . . . and they seem to be very favorably disposed towards the colored people in some instances loaning them agricultural implements and assisting them in various ways . . . they believe from fifty to one hundred families could settle in the neighborhood of Accotink and by industry and economy make for themselves and families a comfortable living.” [Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands.]

**1865**

**Freed people begin resettling at Woodlawn.** Freed people make their homes among free Black long-term residents at Woodlawn and Gum Springs. Chalkley Gillingham is appointed superintendent of two schools for African Americans authorized by the Freedmen’s Bureau: one located at Woodlawn, one at Gum Springs.

**1865**

**Friends, with neighboring farmers, organize the Woodlawn Horse Company.** The cooperative organization adheres to protocols to discourage and protect against horse thefts and guerilla raids by former Secessionists and Confederates. Established in October 1865, the group evolves as the century progresses, and eventually develops into a multi-faceted equivalent of a cooperative benevolent society. Because of its benefits to the Mount Vernon area, the organization has been credited with preventing local influence of the Ku Klux Klan, then active in other parts of Virginia.

**1866**

**Chalkley Gillingham is empaneled to serve on Grand Jury convened to indict Jefferson Davis for treason.** In its “true bill,” the Grand Jury, with Gillingham as foreman, indicts the former president of the Confederate States.

**1866**

**The first Methodist Church to be governed exclusively by Woodlawn’s African American Methodists is built.** The church and school are constructed on land from the Woodlawn tract purchased by William Holland and other church trustees from neighboring Quakers for \$40.

**1866**

**In accordance with Baltimore Yearly Meeting guidance, Alexandria Monthly Meeting appoints committee to receive acknowledgments regarding military service.** As recommended by the Yearly Meeting in recognition of individual conscience, any such acknowledgments would not be recorded.

**1866**

**The Woodlawn Agricultural Society, or Farmers’ Club, is organized by Friends.** Monthly meetings are held, and the group begins holding an annual agricultural fair. The association becomes an ongoing source of cooperative and educational endeavors with neighbors. Members state that they consider their organization to be a Peace Society.

**1867**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting restores Indulged Meeting status to the Washington Meeting.** The meeting had been classified as a Worship Group due to reduced membership.

**1867**

**Fairfax Quarterly Meeting asks monthly meetings to contribute to the expansion of Woodlawn Meetinghouse.** Alexandria’s membership does not revive after the exodus early in the war. Consequently, the small Woodlawn meetinghouse is doubled to accommodate visitors from Fairfax Quarter’s Monthly Meetings who gather at Quarterly Meeting time, and Friends at Woodlawn become the principal surviving worship community of Alexandria Monthly Meeting. By 1869, Gillingham would state, “In the religious capacity our community is flourishing. The Quarterly Meeting has been held now on two different years at Woodlawn . . . .”

**1867**

**Alexandria Friends serve with African Americans on the first racially integrated Grand Jury in Virginia.** Quakers Jacob Troth and John Hawxhurst are among eighteen white men to serve with six African American men selected, including their neighbors, George Seaton of Alexandria, and George Simms of Accotink. The indictment of Jefferson Davis by the Grand Jury headed by Chalkley Gillingham as foreman – one year earlier – had resulted in Davis’s imprisonment at Fortress Monroe awaiting trial. With no formal charges filed after one year, Davis is released on \$100,000 bond. His bond is paid by wealthy northerners, including Cornelius Vanderbilt, Horace Greeley, and former radical abolitionist Gerrit Smith, who declared, “The work, now, of the conquering North should be not to punish but to comfort; not to open wounds afresh, but to perfect their healing. . . .”

**1868**

**Chalkley Gillingham records the first First Day School at Woodlawn:**

10<sup>th</sup> mo, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1869 – Last winter we established a First Day school which is attended by Friends and others, young and old. Increases in interest as it progresses. It is held at the close of Meeting at 11 o’clock A.M. & continues for about one hour.

**1868**

**Woodlawn Quakers become active in the newly formed regional agricultural society, Potomac Fruit Growers Association of Alexandria & Fairfax County.** Members include Woodlawn Friends Samuel Brinton Walton, Thomas Shepherd Wright, and Chalkley Gillingham, who serves several terms as president between 1872 and 1878. Wright's new bride, Emma Maria Mason, a Methodist, is among the women accepted into membership. Friends frequently host the association's meetings at the Woodlawn meetinghouse. The organization becomes racially integrated in 1869 when Rev. Samuel William Madden, the first Black minister of Alfred Street Baptist Church of Alexandria, is unanimously elected as a member. In 1864, at the direction of President Abraham Lincoln, Rev. Madden had been appointed Hospital Chaplain of the Freedmen's Hospital in Washington, D.C. (later Howard University Hospital).

**1869**

**Alexandria Friends of Woodlawn become active in local politics in concert with African American neighbors.** Jonathan Roberts is elected Chairman of the Radical Republican Party of Fairfax County. As threats against his life increase in the aftermath of the war, Roberts transfers with his family from Alexandria Monthly Meeting to Marietta Monthly Meeting, Iowa. Originally formed by Baltimore Yearly Meeting, the Marietta meeting's membership included Friends who had joined the western migration from Fairfax Quarter before the Civil War.

**1869**

**Woodlawn Friends participate in President Grant's Peace Policy program to improve conditions for Native people in the West.** Participation is arranged by Benjamin Hallowell and other Friends of both Hicksite and Orthodox yearly meetings. Samuel M. Janney is appointed Superintendent of the Northern agencies assigned to the Hicksite branch. Jacob Troth of Woodlawn is appointed U.S. Indian Agent at the Pawnee Agency in Genoa, Nebraska. Several Woodlawn Friends and their families were among many more from Fairfax Quarter to make the journey to join Troth in his work at the agency.

### 1870s:

**1870**

**Virginia Constitution of 1870 prohibits slavery and enfranchises African American male residents.** In addition, it creates free – but segregated – public schools; establishes rights of inheritance to formerly enslaved people; and establishes the secret ballot. These and other reform measures are agreed to as conditions for return of the Confederate State of Virginia to the United States.

**1870**

**Woodlawn Friends are supporters of African American leaders of Gum Springs.** Friends support election of John West Ford (grandson of West Ford, the community's founder) and Lovelace Brown as president and vice-president, respectively, of the Radical Party of Mount Vernon Township, Fairfax County, in August 1870.

**1870**

**A school is established under the care of Woodlawn Preparative Meeting.** The school, held in Woodlawn meetinghouse, is a precursor to the public school authorized by the 1870 Constitution.

**1870**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting is composed of one preparative and two indulged meetings.** Woodlawn Preparative Meeting consists of twenty families and parts of families, with a total of seventy members. Alexandria Meeting, an Indulged Meeting, is a branch of Woodlawn Preparative with seventeen families and parts of families totaling forty-two members. Washington Meeting is also an Indulged Meeting, a branch of Alexandria Monthly Meeting with seven families and parts of families, in all eighteen

members. [Levi K. Brown, *An Account of the Meetings of the Society of Friends: Within the Limits of the Baltimore Yearly Meeting, Time of Holding the Same, and Means of Access Thereto*, T. E. Zell, Society of Friends, 1875.]

### 1871

**Use of progressive, sustainable agricultural methods introduced by Quakers results in an increase in the value of farmland at Woodlawn.** Value increases from \$12.50 when purchased in 1846 to \$100 per acre fifteen years later in 1871. Friends improved yields per acre through enrichment of the soil with a variety of manures, and the application of fertilizers such as marl, lime, ground, and guano from a variety of birds and fish. They controlled erosion by using plows capable of deep plowing to modify the water retention characteristics of the soil over the long term.

### 1876

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting reports twenty-six school-age children; three under Friends' teachers; one meeting school.** Identical statistics are reported in 1880.

### 1876

**Woodlawn women form the Woodlawn Housekeepers' Club.** Declining the invitation to join the Woodlawn Agricultural Society, the women choose instead to participate in social and educational activities during the monthly meetings of the Woodlawn Farmers' Club. The women define their roles in farm management as: "all that pertains to good housekeeping. The dairy. The care of Poultry. The care of bees. The care of fruit. And also designs of farm-houses, dairies, and poultry houses, etc." Its first officers are elected in January of 1876. The scope of the group's activities would expand to include study and discussion of women's rights advocacy.

### 1876

**Woodlawn Friends participate in Universal Peace Union.** In 1876, Jacob Troth becomes a member of the Universal Peace Union, working with Quaker suffragist and peace activist Lucretia Mott, a co-founder and vice-president of the organization, and Chalkley Gillingham, one of four representatives to the Union appointed by Baltimore Yearly Meeting in 1875. Troth is vice-president of the organization in 1879 when the Washington *Evening Star* reports on his visit to President Hayes in furtherance of establishing an international arbitration system aimed at promoting universal peace and preventing war. Under the auspices of the Universal Peace Union, the Woodlawn Chapter of the organization becomes designated the Virginia Peace Society.

### 1878

**Jonathan Roberts succeeds in obtaining a pension for his service as a scout and guide for the Union Army.** Although never a member of the Union Army, Roberts' role as "a scout in the United States service" is acknowledged in the passage of *An Act Granting a Pension to Jonathan Roberts* on June 15, 1878. The meager amount of \$18 per month was equivalent to that of a private (equal to \$533 in 2022 dollars). The Senate report for the legislation notes that he was forced to leave his farm, and continued:

"Being loyal to the Union, he soon attached himself to the Union Army, and from his thorough knowledge of the country he was assigned to duty as a guide and scout under the direction severally of Generals Slocum, Franklin, Heintzelman, and others in the Army of the Potomac. It was clearly shown that his position was one of great peril, and that he rendered high and important service to the Union Army; that while under orders and in pursuit of the enemy, he was thrown from his horse against a rock and crippled for life. He is nearly sixty years of age, and a confirmed cripple."

**1879**

**A committee of Alexandria Friends forms to plan new larger meetinghouse to replace the Washington meetinghouse at 18<sup>th</sup> and I (“Eye”) streets NW.** *Friends Intelligencer* reports that Samuel M. Janney of Goose Creek provides encouragement and advice to the committee, among whom were Alexandria Friends Robert F. Roberts, Chalkley Gillingham, Edward Shoemaker, Bernard T. Janney, and Henry Janney.

**1880s:**

**1880**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting holds first meeting at the Eye Street meetinghouse.** Samuel M. Janney delivers the first sermon. The geographic focus of Alexandria Monthly Meeting shifts again with construction of the Eye Street meetinghouse (80 ft. x 150 ft), “a large and substantial building” strategically located in the nation’s capital. At 12,000 square feet, the building far exceeded the capacity of the Woodlawn meetinghouse, at 24 ft. x 36ft or 864 square feet – after its doubling. The associated school building (40 ft. x 80 ft) would accommodate one hundred pupils. Initially rented to a girls’ school, it would become Sidwell Friends School.

**1882**

**Meetings are discontinued at Alexandria meetinghouse as attendance had continued to decline.**

**1882**

**Woodlawn Friends assist African American Methodists of Woodlawn in effort to build larger church.** Having outgrown their 1866 structure, Woodlawn Methodists build a second, larger church. Quakers Paul Hillman Troth and Warrington Gillingham assist in securing a more commodious site for the new building by negotiating with the Southern Methodist owners of the former site of the Mount Vernon Chapel. In exchange for the Chapel lot at Woodlawn, the Friends offer a lot in Accotink village to the Southern Methodists, who establish and build the Accotink Methodist Church.

**1883**

**The schoolhouse portion of the Eye Street meetinghouse is leased to Thomas Sidwell for a Friends’ day-school.** The 24-year-old teacher is sponsored by Eli Lamb, headmaster of the Baltimore Friends School, where Sidwell began his teaching career, through the auspices of Baltimore Yearly Meeting. The new independent school, which begins as a “Friends Select School,” would grow to a capacity of two hundred students. It is conducted by Thomas Sidwell for fifty-three years.

**1887**

**The Alexandria meetinghouse property at southwest corner of St. Asaph and Wolfe Street is sold.** Trustees: John Ballinger, James W. Roberts, Warrington Gillingham, Edward Walton. Minutes state that the meetinghouse “has been sold and the income is applied to the improvement of the other property in use.” One family remains in the Alexandria Meeting, said to be “living in the country.”

**1888**

**Woodlawn Circle of the King’s Daughters is established.** Records of the King’s Daughters state, “The Woodlawn Circle of Accotink, Fairfax County, was started in the spring of 1888. They looked after the needy and poor; and there were many calls for help at that time. They visited the sick, and aided the Alexandria Hospital.” Inspired by Edward Everett Hale (1822-1909) and the “Lend-A-Hand” movement of the 1870s, the Order of the King’s Daughters was formed in New York City in 1886.

**1888**

**Woodlawn Housekeepers’ Club dedicates its program to Lucretia Mott (1793-1880).** The women record their admiration for “how widespread was her influence for good . . . .”



## 1890s:

**1890**

**Woodlawn Housekeepers' Club dedicates its program to Suffragists.** Rebecca Ballinger presents biographies of Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902).

**1891-1892**

**The *National Tribune* publishes "The Quaker Scout" memoirs of Jonathan Roberts.** The articles appear in three installments, covering the pre-Civil War, Civil War, and Reconstruction periods of Jonathan's experiences as a Woodlawn Friend.

**1896**

**The Orthodox Irving Street meetinghouse of Washington, D.C., is destroyed by fire.** Alexandria Monthly Meeting (Hicksite) offers its "Eye Street" meetinghouse, where separate Orthodox meetings would be held until the meetinghouse could be rebuilt. Orthodox Friends would continue to meet at Irving Street until 1947.

## 1900s:

**1900**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting reports 109 members at Woodlawn and Eye Street meetings.**

**1901**

**Woodlawn Young Friends' Association is formed.** Changes in Quaker thinking about community outreach and inclusiveness at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century resonate with Woodlawn Friends. Friends General Conference is formed in 1900 (after a series of preliminary conferences) to unite the Hicksite yearly meetings. Henry W. Wilbur, and others who had joined him in establishing Friends General Conference, sees the need for nurturing Quaker youth and other non-Quakers who may be inspired by the prospect of applying Quaker ideals to the changing modern world. Adults of all ages join in the formation of the Woodlawn Young Friends' Association, hosting and encouraging the participating girls and boys whom they deem the religious and civic leaders of the new century. The first "regular meeting" of Woodlawn Young Friends' Association is held December 22, 1901. Surviving Meeting records indicate that the Woodlawn Association was still active as late as 1914.

**1901**

**The Woodlawn Literary Society holds its first meeting.** The meeting is held at Medway, the Woodlawn home of Warrington and Mary Ann (Roberts) Gillingham on December 27, 1901. Their son, Reuben Roberts Gillingham, is elected the Society's first president.

**1902**

**Virginia adopts Constitution of 1902.** Virginia's Jim Crow era Constitution of 1902 reverses African American enfranchisement gains that had been introduced in the Reconstruction era.

**1903**

**Mount Vernon Circle of the King's Daughters establish Sherwood Hall.** In 1903 Sherwood Hall is built on Sherwood Farm of the Ballinger family of the Woodlawn Meeting. The chapel-like building houses community functions, including a Sunday School that serves the children and adults of the neighborhood. The Superintendent of the Sunday School is Woodlawn Friend Joseph Norman Gibbs (the younger, 1855-1933), who takes part in the instruction along with several female teachers. A building fund is established, and by 1903, the building is completed. Trustees of the Mount Vernon Circle of the King's Daughters are owners of the building. It would be used for meetings and social gatherings of the

Mount Vernon Grange and other civic groups, and by attendees of a variety of classes including African American adults and children of nearby Gum Springs, until the 1940s.

#### **1904**

**Woodlawn African American men form Woodlawn Chapter of the Association of True Reformers.** The benevolent society had been founded in 1875 in Richmond, Virginia, by the once enslaved Methodist minister William Washington Browne. It was heralded by W.E.B. Du Bois as “probably the most remarkable Negro organization in the country.” The deed to the chapter’s lot is notarized by Quaker neighbor, Warrington Gillingham, in 1904.

#### **1906**

**Celebration of 30-year anniversary of Woodlawn Housekeepers Club.** Minutes record that Rebecca N. Ballinger is appointed Historian of the organization.

#### **1910s:**

#### **1910**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting reports 131 members.**

#### **1911**

**“Friends Club” is established in Washington meetinghouse.** As reported by *Friends’ Intelligencer* early in 1911, “in response to growing interest in Friends,” Guion Miller conducted a “Friends Club, a ‘new and nonsectarian’” group that met “in the new ‘Friends’ Parlor’” at the Alexandria Meeting’s Washington, D.C., meetinghouse on I (“Eye”) Street.

#### **1917**

**Quaker and African American farms and residents are displaced by Camp A.A. Humphreys.** Establishment of the military installation (later named Fort Humphreys) consumes Quaker and African American farms and homes on the Woodlawn meetinghouse side of Woodlawn Road. Many African American residents relocate to the opposite side of Woodlawn Road, near the Woodlawn Methodist Church; others relocate to Gum Springs.

#### **1918**

**Influenza epidemic causes meeting cancellations.** Alexandria Monthly Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> month meeting and Fairfax Quarterly Meeting are not held because of Influenza epidemic, which would take the lives of many throughout the U.S. Meetings resume the following month.

#### **1920s:**

#### **1920**

**Jean Evelyn Sutton is born September 20, 1920, in Washington, D.C.** In 2022, Jean (Sutton) Ward is the oldest living member of Alexandria Monthly Meeting as of July 2022:

Jean has been a member of Alexandria Monthly Meeting for 88 years, being a birthright Quaker under her parents’ membership in Alexandria Monthly Meeting, where they worshipped at the meetinghouse in D.C. at 18th and I streets. She can recall being there in the 1920s, sitting on the floor when she was quite young, looking at a book. She grew up in the I (Eye) Street Meeting, as it was called, being aware of, but seldom attending, worship or events at Woodlawn, the other location for AMM at that time. [*Sharing our Stories* by Judy Riggan. Prepared by Judy Riggan, from notes of a phone interview with Jean Ward in February 2012 and the assistance of Rachel Messenger and Martha Claire Catlin.]

#### **1925**

**Woodlawn Friends of Alexandria Monthly Meeting, with neighbors, become trustees of Woodlawn Circle of King’s Daughters, and construct Woodlawn Community House.** The building is located

across Richmond Highway from Woodlawn Meetinghouse. Initially planned for the rear portion of the meetinghouse lot, where building materials had already been assembled, plans changed when a neighbor offered to donate land immediately outside the entrance to Fort Humphreys (formerly Camp A.A. Humphreys), and adjacent to the open fields used for Woodlawn's annual agricultural fair.

### **1927**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting defends right to conduct marriages without ordained minister.** Upon challenge to its marriage procedures by the Clerk of the Fairfax County Circuit Court, the Meeting investigates Virginia law. The Meeting's report cites the Code of Virginia 1919 §5081; Code 1887 §2221, confirms Friends' rights for marriages to "be solemnized by the persons and in the manner prescribed by and practiced by" the Society of Friends. The Meeting directs a copy of the report to be sent to Fairfax Quarter monthly meetings for their information.

### **1930s:**

### **1936**

**Friends Meeting of Washington is formed by Alexandria Friends and others as an independent meeting, not associated with Hicksite or Orthodox branches.** Alexandria Friends meet once a month for Meeting for Business in an office they maintain in the new independent Friends Meeting of Washington meetinghouse building on Florida Avenue. Meetings for worship are resumed at Woodlawn after needed repairs to the property are made. Some of Alexandria Monthly Meeting's Washington members transfer their membership to Friends Meeting of Washington and others hold dual membership in Alexandria Monthly Meeting and Friends Meeting of Washington.

### **1937**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting leases its Burial Ground property to the City of Alexandria.** Lease of the property, for a term of 99 years for one dollar, is intended to enable its use as a public library. Despite pressure from African American Alexandrians, the City refuses to integrate the library. In 1939, African American protesters are arrested as they conduct a peaceful sit-in at the library. They bring suit against the City, which results in the Court requiring the City to provide equal facilities for African Americans. The City still refuses to integrate the library, and instead establishes the separate, smaller Robinson Library for African Americans. The building would later house the City's Black History Museum, established in 1987. The Meeting would renew the lease with the City in 1993 for an additional ninety-nine years in exchange for a boundary increase to enlarge the property to encompass a portion of the burial ground whose burials were discovered to be located outside the original property line.

### **1937**

**Alexandria Monthly Meeting minutes of August 8, 1937, report the Eye Street Meeting property is sold.** Loans to Sidwell Friends School (\$20,000) and to the National Council for the Prevention of War (\$10,000), an organization referred to as the "child of this Meeting," are approved. A portion of the proceeds from the sale are reserved to ensure there would continue to be a meetinghouse for Alexandria Monthly Meeting.

### **1938**

**Meeting for worship is held at Eye Street for the last time in February 1938.** Alexandria Monthly Meeting makes plans to revive the Woodlawn meetinghouse as Alexandria Monthly Meeting's place of worship. The following year, the Meeting's Ministry and Oversight Committee chooses Woodlawn as its venue for monthly meetings, and the Social Services Committee serves lunches at the meetinghouse after worship. Throughout the next decade, Property Committee reports detail progress on extensive repairs to the meetinghouse and grounds, but note delays, at times, attributable to a "labor shortage and scarcity of materials."

**1939**

**Woodlawn Home Demonstration Club houses its “small library” in the Woodlawn meetinghouse.**

**1940s:**

**1940s**

**Expansion of Fort Humphreys to become Fort Belvoir during World War II overtakes hundreds of acres of remaining lands of Woodlawn’s African American and Quaker communities.** African Americans relocate and construct a new Woodlawn United Methodist Church building in Gum Springs. Woodlawn meetinghouse and burial ground and the African American Woodlawn Methodist cemetery survive as inholdings within the boundaries of the military installation.

**1942**

**Woodlawn meetinghouse is revived as a venue for monthly meetings for business.** Alexandria Monthly Meeting for Business decides to include Woodlawn meetinghouse in rotation with the Florida Avenue meetinghouse, where Alexandria Monthly Meeting continues to keep a business office and library while repairs are made at Woodlawn. Thanks to the efforts of both its Virginia and Washington members, and the diligence of the Meeting’s Woodlawn residents and Property Committee throughout the transition following the sale of the Eye Street meetinghouse, Alexandria Monthly Meeting is not laid down or absorbed into a larger meeting community but continues to live on in its historic Woodlawn meetinghouse.

**1950s:**

**1950**

**Alexandria Friends agree to use of Woodlawn Meeting Burial Ground, as requested by an “All Friends Committee” of the Washington Meetings.** Groups of Friends from Woodlawn and Washington, D.C., meetings come together for workdays to clear burial ground of overgrowth. A burial policy, including a provision for “stones to be simple and in keeping with existing” is adopted by the “Committee on the Cemetery at Woodlawn.” Throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, Washington Friends are among those buried at the Woodlawn Burial Ground.

**1953**

**Celebration of 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Woodlawn meetinghouse (constructed 1851-1853).** Despite considerable work on the Woodlawn meetinghouse and property beginning in 1950, the gathering of approximately one hundred sixty people results in partial collapse of the meetinghouse floor because of termite damage. Heart pine floors are installed.

**1954**

**Woodlawn meetinghouse is saved by Fort Belvoir Fire Department when a chimney catches fire.** Friends express appreciation in a letter to the Commanding Officer and rebuild both chimneys.

**1960s:**

**1965**

**First Day meetings for worship resume on a weekly basis after additional repairs to Woodlawn are completed.** Work on meetinghouse includes addition of insulation, wiring for electricity, roofing, painting, and repairs. Although one of the two original wood stoves would continue in occasional use until the 1980s, electric wall-mounted heaters are installed for improved heating. Attendance averages fifty worshippers at first, but it declines over the next few years, and the meeting reverts to holding worship only once a month.

## 1970s:

**1971**

**Woodlawn Meetinghouse is designated a historic site within the Woodlawn Historic Overlay District, established by Fairfax County.** Designation of the meetinghouse property, along with its neighbor, Woodlawn Plantation, a National Historic Landmark, affords the meetinghouse ongoing protections and technical assistance from the Fairfax County Architectural Review Board.

**1975-1978**

**Woodlawn meetinghouse addition is constructed.** Horace Buckman and Jim Winder of Alexandria Monthly Meeting construct an addition to the meetinghouse, with kitchen and restrooms, for First Day school, common meals, and library. Funds are raised to purchase a second-hand piano. Introduction of indoor plumbing is accomplished through arrangements with Fort Belvoir. Meetings for Business are held at Woodlawn from this time forward. Potomac Half-Yearly Meeting is invited to be held at Woodlawn in May 1977 and May 1980. Friends Committee on National Legislation is invited to hold its retreat at Woodlawn in October 1978.

## 1980s:

**1980**

**Bookshelves are constructed in meetinghouse addition to accommodate the Meeting's library.**

**1981**

**Evelyn Bradshaw (1915-2011) begins regular publication of Alexandria Friends newsletter, "Among Alexandria Friends."**

**1985**

**First Day meetings for worship resume on a weekly basis.** Although Alexandria Friends living in Washington, D.C., continue to attend Friends Meeting of Washington, increased attendance, including families with children, revive weekly meetings for worship at Woodlawn, with monthly potluck meal and Meeting for Business.

**1986**

**Virginia State Supreme Court upholds Quaker marriage procedures.** As had occurred in 1927, Alexandria Monthly Meeting's right to solemnize marriages in accordance with the practices of the Society of Friends is challenged by Fairfax County officials. The Meeting brings its case to the Virginia State Supreme Court to contest the County's requirement for bond to be posted when a marriage officiant is not an ordained minister. Notwithstanding this provision of Virginia law, which was enacted after 1927, the Court confirms the exception for longstanding Quaker practice.

## 1990s:

**1990**

**Alexandria Friends and African American neighbors celebrate historical ties to Woodlawn Methodist Church.** African American families who had relocated to Gum Springs after their Woodlawn homes and church had been overtaken by Fort Belvoir join with Friends in planning and participating in shared worship and fellowship. The celebratory event, "A Happening: Inseparable Legacies – The Gum Springs and The Quaker Communities," is held at the Woodlawn United Methodist Church, rebuilt in Gum Springs in 1941.

**1990**

**Fredericksburg Worship Group is formed.** Friends living in the Fredericksburg area form a worship group under the care of Alexandria Monthly Meeting, through a committee consisting of Tom Fox, Mark

Jacobson, Evelyn Bradshaw, and Floyd Magor. The Worship Group meets initially in the church building of Fredericksburg's Unitarian Universalist Fellowship and later, at the Campus Christian Center of Mary Washington College.

#### **1994**

**Alexandria Friends participate in Woodlawn Reunion.** The National Trust for Historic Preservation sponsors a reunion of Gillingham and other Woodlawn Quaker descendants, both local and those scattered across the country. The reunion event celebrating Quaker roots at Woodlawn is held at the National Trust's Woodlawn historic site adjacent to the Woodlawn meetinghouse and includes tours of the meetinghouse by Alexandria Friends.

#### **Mid-1990s**

In recognition of the joy experienced by Friends at the monthly common meal, Betty Maddox (1931-2005) proposes that the fellowship of a common meal be enjoyed every First Day after worship, a tradition that is embraced and would continue thereafter. Betty's contributions to the Children's Religious Education program are also vital during this period, as more children of all ages were becoming a vibrant part of meeting life.

#### **2000s:**

#### **2000**

**Reflecting an increase in membership that began in the 1980s, Alexandria Friends number one hundred thirty-one.**

#### **2005**

**On November 26, Tom Fox (1951-2006) is abducted and held captive by Iraqi insurgents.**

Alexandria Friends hold a prayer vigil at the Woodlawn meetinghouse for Tom and three other members of the Christian Peacemakers Team on November 27. Tom would lose his life the following March. A memorial stone in honor of Tom and his sacrifice is subsequently placed in front of the Woodlawn meetinghouse, where Tom had worshipped, given impromptu tours, and shared fellowship for many years.

#### **2008**

**Historic Horse Shed on Woodlawn meetinghouse property is reconstructed after its destruction and deterioration following Hurricane Floyd in 1999.** Fairfax County Architectural Review Board assists in applying zoning provisions for reconstruction of an historic structure that would retain its original form and materials. Once reconstructed, the horse shed would provide shelter for children's picnics, musical programs, and other outdoor events, with the enclosed portion to be used for storage. A Horse Shed celebration event following its completion evolves into an annual Homecoming Day gathering welcoming current and former Alexandria Friends, their descendants, neighbors, and others. The tradition would continue in years ahead.

#### **2009**

**Woodlawn Meetinghouse is listed on National Register of Historic Places.** The meetinghouse is recognized in its listing by the National Park Service as an intact, rare pre-Civil War example of a wood-frame house of worship built in traditional Quaker Plain Style. Recognition of the historical significance of the meetinghouse and burial ground, confirmed by its listing on the National Register, qualifies the property for protections against federal actions planned by the U.S. Army and Federal Highway Administration.

2010s:

**2011**

**Deed of Easement is granted from Alexandria Monthly Meeting to Virginia Board of Historic Resources for protection of Woodlawn meetinghouse property in perpetuity.** Protections and technical assistance from the State would prove valuable in preserving the historic integrity of the meetinghouse property, and in opposing threats, including, notably, that posed by the planned widening of Route One to within close proximity of the meetinghouse. Support from state and county historic preservation officials helps to redirect planning. The major highway widening project would consequently be redesigned and constructed as a bypass that would avoid encroaching on the setting of the Woodlawn meetinghouse property.

**2014**

**HVAC installed in Woodlawn meetinghouse.** Aging electric wall heaters installed in the 1960s become hazardous to use. The Meeting commissions historic preservation specialists to design and build a system of heating and cooling that would not harm the integrity of the historic meetinghouse and would not introduce unnecessary noise during meeting for worship.

**2014**

***Reflections of a Quaker: A Blank Slate Theology, by Warren L. Treuer (1925-2017), is published.*** The collection of essays and meditations represents Warren's Adult Religious Education offerings over thirty years. Proceeds are dedicated to the American Friends Service Committee.

2020s:

**2020**

**COVID-19 pandemic prompts closure of Woodlawn meetinghouse.** In March, in-person meetings for worship and business are temporarily discontinued, in response to the COVID pandemic. Meetings begin to be held virtually.

**2020**

**Structural repairs to meetinghouse.** During the months following closure of the meetinghouse, Woodlawn meetinghouse repairs are undertaken. Structural integrity of the building's front foundation is reestablished, and the failing meetinghouse front porch is restored. Advance coordination with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources Easement Office and Fairfax County Board of Architectural Review for their review of the meetinghouse projects facilitates approval by building and zoning authorities.

**2021**

**Woodlawn Meetinghouse reopens.** In-person meeting for worship resumes with evening worship on Christmas Eve.

**2022**

**With precautions, Alexandria Friends resume First Day worship at the Woodlawn meetinghouse.** Virtual meetings for worship and business also continue.

*Martha Claire Catlin*

*Historian, Alexandria Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends*

*7/18/2022*