



APRIL 29, 2019 • 7:30 TO 9:00 PM • THE BARN

“...a few exceptions...”:

Philadelphia Quakers and the Civil War

A lecture by George Conyne, Kenneth Carroll Scholar

As Kenneth Carroll Scholar in Residence, George Conyne is doing research for a book about Quakers during and after the Civil War, with particular emphasis on how meetings dealt with the conflict between those who upheld the peace testimony against participation in war and those who served in the Union Army. Before the war, most Quakers were hostile to abolitionists who justified violence as a means of freeing the enslaved; any resort to armed violence controverted the peace testimony. When war broke out, and Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers, Quakers of the Delaware Valley re-affirmed their opposition to all war and the taking up of arms. However, with 1863 came the draft, and a conscientious stand against war posed real-world consequences. Moreover, the same year brought the Emancipation Proclamation, and the moral call to arms grew stronger for those Quakers persuaded that only aiding the Union cause would bring freedom for those in bondage. Hear what George has found in his research about how Philadelphia Quakers — Hicksite and Orthodox — navigated this conflicted landscape and how their responses have affected the way Quakers through the years interpret the Civil War.

George Conyne was born and raised in Bucks County. He is a member of Wrightstown Friends Meeting. He holds an undergraduate degree in history from Haverford and a law degree from Tulane. He went on to earn his Ph.D. at Cambridge in 1989 and remained in England for most of his career. George taught American History, American Studies, and 20th Century British History in English universities, principally the University of Kent in Canterbury. George retired from teaching in 2018. He was active in Canterbury Friends Meeting, serving as assistant clerk and elder, until coming to Pendle Hill in January 2019 as the Kenneth Carroll Scholar.

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