



NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS QUAKERS

July 2017 (Updated November 2025)

Dear Friends in New England Yearly Meeting, Greetings from the NEYM Archives Committee.

As you know, the archives of Yearly Meeting, which include records created by your meeting, are now at the Department of Special Collections and University Archives (SCUA) of the UMass Amherst Libraries. SCUA staff members have completed a preliminary inventory of the collection that was transferred from the Rhode Island Historical Society and will soon start to more fully arrange and describe the records of each monthly meeting. They are now prepared to start receiving any materials that you are ready to send.

The enclosed collection policy, recently updated by the Archives Committee, can help you determine what records ought to be donated to SCUA. The policy is also available on the NEYM website (<https://neym.org/archives-policy>).

As we mentioned in the letter we sent in 2016, when monthly meeting records are donated to SCUA, in general they will go with a non-exclusive release and a shared copyright. That means that monthly meetings and SCUA will each be able to authorize researchers to read, quote, and reproduce the records independently, and of course, meetings will have full access to their own records. Monthly meetings might have some records that they do not own the copyright to, such as recorded Spiritual Journeys. Those records can still go to the Archives, but any researcher wanting to use more than brief quotes would have to track down the copyright holder for permission.

Any records that you send that were created before 1977 will be open for research. Any records that the monthly meeting deems to be sensitive may be restricted for a set period of time: you may indicate either 20 years or 40 years from the date of donation. Different time restrictions or restrictions on pre-1977 records may be negotiated with SCUA on a case-by-case basis.

Meetings may also decide to hold on to sensitive records rather than donate them. Some examples of sensitive materials include documents that include Social Security numbers, medical information, and personnel records. Financial records, minutes of certain committees, membership lists, and photographs of children may also potentially warrant restriction.

SCUA will be digitizing records but this effort will focus on pre-1945 records. SCUA will contact monthly meetings for permission before digitizing any records from 1946 onward.

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How to donate records to SCUA:

For a first-time donation, include a completed and signed Deed of Gift with your donation. This document serves as a cover letter, making it clear to SCUA staff what the donation is and who it is from. It also serves as a legal document, transferring ownership with shared copyright to SCUA. You should include a brief description of the materials either in that document or as an attachment. Any restrictions of specific materials should be noted.

For subsequent donations, please include a Transfer Form, which includes an inventory and your email address and SCUA will acknowledge your gift via email. There is no need to create a new Deed of Gift.

For physical records:

Materials and the Deed of Gift should be mailed to:

Danielle Kovacs, Curator of Collections
Special Collections & University Archives
UMass Amherst Libraries
154 Hicks Way
Amherst, MA 01003-9275

Please write "NEYM Records" on the outside of your package. If you have a large quantity of materials to donate, we may be able to arrange for them to be picked up.

Once received, Danielle will accession the new materials and add them to the physical collection. The finding aid for your meeting will be updated on a regular basis; meetings can expect to see their additions included in finding aid within six months.

For electronic records:

SCUA is happy to accept donations of digital files. Contact the Outreach Archivist at outreacharchivist@neym.org to discuss what you have and she will arrange for you to have access to a shared Google folder where you can put the files for SCUA to download. Please ensure that the filenames are somewhat meaningful. You can include a scan of your completed and signed Deed of Gift and Transfer Form. Digital files will be made available both onsite and to remote researchers outside of SCUA if there are no restrictions placed on the material.

The finding aid will be updated with the new acquisition of electronic records; however the records themselves will not be added to the digital repository immediately. They will be added periodically as part of a different work flow at SCUA.

If you have any questions about any aspect of this process, including what to donate and how to go about doing so, please contact the Outreach Archivist at outreacharchivist@neym.org. Danielle Kovacs can be reached at dkovacs@library.umass.edu or (413) 545-2784.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to have a role in preserving this great historical and spiritual resource.

In peace,

Carol Forsythe, Clerk, Putney Friends Meeting
Betsy Cazden, Providence Friends Meeting
Eileen Crosby, Mount Toby Friends Meeting
Donna McDaniel, Framingham Friends Meeting
Brian Quirk, Lawrence-Andover Friends Meeting
Nancy Slator, Mount Toby Friends Meeting