

Mission Statement

Friends House Moscow is an initiative of Friends worldwide which seeks to encourage spiritual growth and the development of a civil society based on mutual trust and cooperation.

We aim to provide a stable and visible presence in the face of rapidly changing conditions as we express the unique faith and practice of the Religious Society of Friends.

We put this faith into action by working for social justice based on our fundamental belief of the presence of God in each individual.

Program Goals

- **Support spiritual seekers:** coordinated classes in Quaker spirituality, non-violence, good order, etc; sponsored a Quaker website in Russian; responded to inquiries about Quakerism; translated Quaker materials; supported spiritual retreats; and given practical assistance to the Monthly Meeting.
- **Support non-violent conflict resolution programs:** led in the development of AVP.
- **Respond to the needs of refugees:** sponsored tutoring, play therapy, and AVP in the refugee camps; established cottage industries in the relocation areas; and provided services to refugees in Moscow.

- **Assist in addressing the needs of other under-served groups:** sponsored projects for battered women, orphans, elderly individuals, disabled children and adults, and children with heart defects and mental disabilities.

- **Support alternatives to military service:** provided public education programs about the right to be a Conscientious Objector, legal counsel and support as young conscripts apply for this right, and modeled alternative service programs.

- **Support Restorative Justice:** sponsored the development and implementation of the Restorative Justice process in juvenile justice systems and its inclusion in the curriculum of secondary schools.

- **Promote awareness of environmental issues and encourage volunteerism:** combined these needs in projects that have repaired hiking trails, done clean up in parks, and planted trees in bombed areas of Chechnya.

- **Promote understanding between religious and ethnic groups:** sponsored programs training youth and teachers to recognize and respond effectively and non-violently to incidents of ethnic conflict.

- **Support effective communication and networking:** maintained connections with ecumenical and human rights groups; and supporting the development of friendships

and joint ventures between like-minded individuals.

Support

Friends House Moscow is an international project with a Quaker governing board and legal non-profit status in Britain and the US. With an annual budget of about \$75,000, it depends on regular donations from individuals, monthly and yearly meetings, and service organizations for financial support of its work.

Much love and labor has enabled a Quaker presence in Russia through times of economic, political, and social upheaval. You can become part of this history through your financial and spiritual support.

Inquiries, suggestions and/or **tax deductible donations** in US dollars may be sent to

Friends House Moscow
Support Association
P.O.Box 60253
Palo Alto, CA 94306

checks should be made payable to
**"Friends House Moscow
Support Association"**

or online by PayPal

History of Quakers in Russia

- In 1697, Czar Peter the Great was counseled by Friends about the condition of the serfs and the need for public education. He attended several meetings for worship while in England.
- A Quaker, Dr. Thomas Dimsdale, was asked by Catherine the Great to come to Russia and inoculate her and her grandsons against smallpox.
- When Catherine's grandson Alexander was the Czar, he attended meetings for worship in England, discussed the peace testimony with Friends and "fully assented" to it.
- In 1817 Alexander requested a Quaker engineer be sent to supervise work near St. Petersburg. Daniel Wheeler and his family answered this call and lived there for over 15 years, draining the bogs and modeling land reform and farming techniques.
- During the 19th Century a total of 8 Quaker delegations came to address the Tsar on matters of religious freedom and the cause of Peace.
- In 1854 a deputation of Friends, Joseph Sturge, Robert Charleston and Henry Pease, made a long and arduous journey to speak with Czar Nicholas I in attempts to prevent the Crimean War.
- From the 1890s through the 1920s Friends from Britain and America worked with refugees and other victims of the famines, wars, and relocations to create feeding centers, hospitals, orphanages, schools and cottage industries.

- Quakers maintained the last presence of any western religious organization in Moscow. Anna Haines left in 1926 and Doric White remained until 1931, a full 4 years after diplomatic relations were broken off.
- During the Soviet period many Friends visited the USSR in an effort to reduce the tensions between the east and west.
- Today several isolated groups meet to learn about and worship in the manner of Friends. Of these groups the oldest is Moscow Monthly Meeting, which is under the care of Friends World Committee for Consultation since 1996.

Our website contains past and current newsletters, lots more information and links to the Russian language site.

www.friendshousemoscow.org



Natasha and Sergei in the Moscow office

FRIENDS HOUSE MOSCOW



Providing a continuous
Quaker presence
with international support
and local direction

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on the web at

www.friendshousemoscow.org