

The Climbing Kiln

After years of worship here
The Quakers no longer see
The six-chambered climbing kiln
Next to their meeting house.

Yet its chimney pointing skyward,
The kiln is a marker seekers always see.
The wonder of it. A place of kindling, hope and fire,
turning clay to stone, to pot and bowl.

Where inspired potters feed flames 'round the clock.
Where the centered work of turning wheel meets searing heat.
Their hours at the kiln turn to days, stoking fires,
Chamber by Chamber, up, up the old pottery-filled climbing kiln.

The potters' labor kindles and inspires community itself.
It lives in spirit and purpose. All are renewed.

Cooling now...now cooled, the kiln leaves an ashen nest of pots and mugs
and bowls. Vessels of sustenance and strength
Gifts of fire, gifts of spirit.

How like the next-door Quaker meetinghouse and its worship are the kiln
and its firing?

Who witnesses the parable of the kiln?

Those who seek.



*Poem and photographs by Rick Seifert,
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