

# Memorial Minutes ~ 2018 ~

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NEW ENGLAND  
YEARLY MEETING OF FRIENDS

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Each of these minutes has been read aloud at each Friend's monthly meeting and quarterly meeting and at a meeting of the Yearly Meeting Permanent Board. Each time a minute was read, those listening learned something new about the different ways in which Friends live out their Quaker faith. Those who knew the remembered Friend in different contexts have had the opportunity to share, and perhaps to add, some telling memory. It is a rich and living process.

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**Phyllis Agard (1920–2016)**  
**Edward Baker (1949–2017)**  
**John Blanchard (1930–2017)**  
**Jean Blickensderfer (1946–2017)**  
**Mary Comfort (1935–2016)**  
**William Comfort (1933–2016)**  
**Georgana Foster (1928–2017)**  
**Paul Gardescu (1928–2017)**  
**Ann Levinger (1931–2017)**  
**George Levinger (1927–2017)**  
**Constance Sattler (1927–2016)**  
**Joyce Wilson (1948–2016)**

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**Phyllis Fairweather Agard**  
**September 14, 1920 – August 5, 2016**

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Phyllis Agard died at home on August 5, 2016, shortly before her 96<sup>th</sup> birthday. A memorial meeting was held at Mount Toby Friends Meeting on January 7, 2017.

Phyllis was born in West Hartford, Connecticut, on September 14, 1920, the daughter of Harold Davis Fairweather and Maude Agard Fairweather. She graduated from Hall High School in West Hartford, and earned a certificate in drafting and interior design from Pratt Institute in New York City. She grew up in a Methodist-Episcopal church in West Hartford, but found the structures and teachings there of little relevance.

She and Robert Mason Agard were second cousins and met at a family wedding in their teens. They courted from the time Phyllis was sixteen and married in 1942. During World War II, Phyllis and Bob lived in Washington, D.C., where Bob worked for the Library of Congress and Phyllis as a “Millie the Mapper,” drafting bomb targets for the War Department. After the war, the couple moved to Ripon, Wisconsin. Bob was the Ripon College librarian and Phyllis assisted with the resettlement of refugees from Europe, the beginning of a lifelong commitment to helping orient newcomers to the United States.

In 1949 Bob took a new job as librarian at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. Here Phyllis volunteered at the state mental hospital, playing her accordion and singing with patients. She was influential in the establishment of a new and much-needed program to connect with patients’ families. In Richmond, Phyllis and Bob continued their work with refugees, helping resettle more World War II refugees and then refugees from the Hungarian uprising of 1956. During the late 1950s, they hosted weekly dinner and English conversation sessions for a group of young Hungarian refugees in their home.

It was also in Richmond that Phyllis and Bob became involved with Quakers. They began attending West Richmond Friends Meeting (programmed) as the closest thing in Indiana to the New England Congregational Church of Bob's youth. Over time, though, they found themselves more comfortable with the unprogrammed group that met on campus. Later, in 1981, Phyllis wrote a "Spiritual Autobiography" for Mount Toby's Ministry & Worship Committee that expressed what drew her to Friends at that time:

*It seemed to me that Friends were more likely than people in other denominations I had known to have the sort of integrity where the things they said they believed, and the things they really did believe, and the things they did were all of a piece. I was sure the reason was the silent meeting. You can't go to meeting week after week and sit alone with your thoughts without sooner or later coming face to face with you as you really are. And if you don't like what you see, you don't have very many choices. You can leave and go to a church where ceremony and music and speaking will keep you diverted. You can look the other way and learn to live with it. Or you can go to work and try to change things (i.e., yourself).*

In 1961 Bob accepted a job at the University of Massachusetts Amherst library, and the family joined the Middle Connecticut Valley Monthly Meeting of Friends (the precursor to Mount Toby). Phyllis served on many Meeting committees, most notably, perhaps, as convener of the Religious Education Committee during the turbulent 1960s when she had three daughters in the active and politically focused Young Friends group.

In 1968 the family moved to Bennington, Vermont, where Phyllis continued her involvement in mental health, working as a volunteer paraprofessional at the Bennington Day Treatment Center. She also worked to remodel low-income housing operated by the local Council of Churches, and was eventually appointed to supervise maintenance and renovations. During their years in Vermont, Bob and Phyllis were members of the Bennington Friends Meeting. They continued to be active on committees and were co-clerks for many years.

In 1981, after Bob's retirement, the couple returned to Amherst and the beloved Lincoln Avenue house they had purchased in 1961. They served as co-clerks of Mount Toby and worked extensively with Cambodian refugee resettlement. They welcomed Chamnan Koy (Tan) into the family as a fifth daughter. In addition to her work with Mount Toby's Refugee Resettlement Committee over many decades, Phyllis's most lasting impact on Mount Toby may well be her creation of the Mount Toby Handbook. When she and Bob became co-clerks, she found it frustratingly difficult to find out what our policies and previous decisions were, so she went through all our back minutes and compiled the Meeting's decisions into a Handbook, which she continued to update for the next 20 years.

Phyllis was also active in New England Yearly Meeting. She served on the Prejudice & Poverty Committee, Mosher Book & Tract Committee, and the Committee on Aging. She served on Permanent Board for 10 years. Phyllis was always practical, interested in getting things done, and with little interest in abstract, theoretical discussions. In the “Spiritual Autobiography” mentioned above she sums up her underlying approach to religion:

*I don't see myself as a very “spiritual” person—whatever that may be. I'm sure there are people who would see me as agnostic, if not outright atheistic, because my concept of god doesn't agree with theirs, or because there are some matters I haven't felt I needed to come to a decision on. I can't distinguish between spiritual, emotional, mental, and social development—they are so intertwined that they are forever inseparable, and growth in any one area feeds the others. And physical conditions affect them all, and are in turn affected by them. I do the best I can at the time (or try to) and wait to see what comes next.*

After Bob's death in 2003, Phyllis sold the Lincoln Avenue house to her daughter Sukey and her husband, and designed her own apartment to be built onto the back of the house. She continued to attend meeting for worship regularly and was a calm presence among us for the subsequent 13 years. She left this world as she had wished, in her own home in her own bed. She is survived by her five daughters: Anne Agard, Ellen Agard, Jennette Agard, Susan Agard Krause, and Chamnan Koy Tan. We are grateful for her steady guiding hand for so many years.

APPROVED BY MOUNT TOBY MONTHLY MEETING, JULY 9, 2017

ENDORSED BY CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTER, OCTOBER 17, 2017

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**Edward Baker**  
**April 20, 1949 – October 29, 2017**

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With the late afternoon sun providing its soft light to the room, Edward Draper Baker Jr. passed away on October 29, 2017, after a valiant five-year battle with cancer. October was Edward's favorite month, and he was where he wanted to be, at home in Ashaway, Rhode Island, in the loving arms of his family.

The son of Edward and Anne English Baker, Edward was born on April 20, 1949, and grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with his three sisters. He earned a bachelor's degree in history from Juniata College and a master's degree from Pennsylvania State University. He spent summers working for the National Outdoor Leadership School in the Absaroka Mountains of Wyoming and later taught backpacking and rock climbing at North Carolina State University.

Edward met Carol Adair Pringle, the love of his life, at a contra dance when she finally had a waltz free. They were married for 29 years. Their family included daughters Sarah and Hannah of Boston, Massachusetts, son Andrew Yates and his wife Becca, and grandsons Davis and Quinn of Portland, Oregon. Edward loved his family deeply and cherished recent times with his young grandsons. Edward loved to dance, particularly contra dancing and swing, and enjoyed sitting around a table of friends enjoying home-cooked meals and conversation late into the evening, often accompanied by a glass of fine red wine or Kentucky bourbon.

Edward was sustained by his Quaker faith and its tenets of simplicity, peace, honesty, and integrity. He sought the Inner Light in each person he met, and his faith helped him through previous bouts with cancer. Edward's path to his Quaker faith began when he worked for a Quaker farmer outside Philadelphia doing odd jobs during his summers in high school, often hitchhiking to get to work. In college, he worked at a summer canoe camp in Maine, where once again his employer was a Quaker. Edward started attending Quaker meeting regularly in State College,

Pennsylvania, when he was a graduate student, eventually joining State College Friends Meeting. He transferred his membership to Westerly Monthly Meeting in Rhode Island after marrying and moving to Rhode Island.

Edward was a renaissance man who lived life deeply and fully. He designed and built his family home in Rhode Island. He loved building furniture, doing finish carpentry on the house, baking bread, cooking for family and guests, creating pottery and reading on the back porch on quiet mornings. He knew how to handle a blacksmith's tools. He loved building and nurturing the soil in his garden each spring with seaweed he harvested from the Connecticut shore and horse manure he collected from a friend's farm. After faithfully tending the garden until harvest time, he loved sharing its fresh produce or Carol's dill pickles or basil beans with others. Edward loved sitting through the flow, dynamics, and intricacies of Quaker process during New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) Sessions so much that he led others to love sitting through them too.

Edward loved all things historical, but especially those of New England. His professional life included positions as Farm and Garden Coordinator at Hancock Shaker Village in Hancock, Massachusetts. There he and his Percheron draft horse, Patience, tilled a 2-acre vegetable garden as well as logging cordwood to supply the wood stoves in the museum exhibit buildings. At Hancock, he also tended a flock of sheep, including birthing the lambs, often in the middle of the night in the dead of winter.

After he married, Edward moved to Rhode Island and worked as a Supervisor of Historic Interpretation at Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, Connecticut. Later he became the first full-time Executive Director of the New London County Historical Society in New London, Connecticut. While in Mystic and New London, he started vintage 19<sup>th</sup>-century-era baseball teams at both institutions, participated as both a ball player and later as an umpire, and enjoyed the camaraderie that they offered.

Especially important to Edward was his 35-year association with ALHFAM, the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums. He served on the Board of Directors, hosted the annual international conference and was an officer of the organization. He faithfully attended annual conferences all over North America, often making presentations alone or with colleagues, and relished his role as auctioneer at the annual auction. In retirement, Edward served as a volunteer secretary/treasurer in ALHFAM. Even as his health took a turn for the worse in his last days, he remained active in the association. He not only cherished the professional relationships he developed at these conferences but also considered some of his ALHFAM colleagues as his dearest friends.

Edward was so well-versed on such a wide variety of subjects that one could almost feel a bit intimidated at times in his presence. He excelled in most everything he did with a quiet, humble confidence. A Friend

once remembered picking up a piece of wood from his woodbox to place in a wood-burning stove. Edward noticed that the wood was locust and proceeded to talk knowledgeably to his friend for 10 minutes about the various properties and uses of locust wood.

Friends would always turn to Edward when a question arose about a detail of Quaker history. When faced with a question having to do with Quaker practice, the usual course of events was to listen to his perspective before making a decision. Edward would usually wait for others to share their thoughts, then unobtrusively raise his hand. He had a way of getting right to the heart of the matter, and with his vast knowledge of Quaker faith and practice, he provided insight that always made us feel confident we were proceeding on the right path.

Edward had a forceful and, at the same time, good-natured way of challenging one to be a better person and Quaker. When someone might want to step back, Edward had the ability to guide him or her into wanting to do more. His wise words, grounded presence, and mentorship were a blessing to those who came to him in a time of need. He had the rare kind of authority that allowed him to be both a friend and a boss. The Book of James contains a verse that says, “But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers” (James 1:22). Edward’s quiet, rested way of getting things done serves as an example of that verse for us to emulate.

Edward served NEYM long and well, starting as a member of the Board of Overseers (Board of Trustees) at Moses Brown School from 1996 to 2003, as recording clerk for part of that time. He served on Permanent Board of NEYM from 2001 to 2012. With his usual grace and good cheer, he served as clerk (2009 to 2012) of the body when the then-clerk moved out of the area unexpectedly. Even without a more typical period of transition, Edward stepped into the role immediately and seamlessly. He was an able administrator, attentive to details, yet projected an easy and accessible manner. Edward applied himself with immense self-discipline to Quaker process when faced with extraordinary administrative challenges, such as facilitating the decision to close the New England Friends Home, sell the property to an appropriate buyer, and establish the process to discern what to do with the proceeds of the sale. The money, realized years ago, to this day funds emerging ministry and witness among Friends throughout New England (and beyond) through the Legacy Gift Funds.

Edward’s heart led him to active roles on the Personnel Committee (clerk, 2003–2014; ex officio, 2014–2016), as Supervisor (2014–2016) to the NEYM Secretary, and very recently in leading the effort to hire a new Director of Friends Camp. Edward led the transition to full-time staffing for the Junior Yearly Meeting and Junior High Yearly Meeting youth ministries retreat programs. He was a quiet leader who chose his words carefully and used them sparingly. His wisdom was beautifully paired with a dry sense of humor, affirmed at times only by the twinkle in his eyes. The



legacy of his years of dedicated service helped shape NEYM and will live on through the administrative systems he created, and the people whom he hired and mentored and, indeed, loved.

Edward also served Westerly Monthly Meeting long and well, as clerk, recording clerk, member of Building and Grounds, and numerous stints on Ministry and Counsel. Edward continued to serve Westerly Monthly Meeting until the last weeks of his life. Though he was ill, he agreed in January of 2017 to serve a three-year term on Ministry and Counsel. He took the minutes of the monthly business meeting in October and was still offering sought-after guidance on Quaker practice two weeks before his death. He had been interested in doing more when he retired, not knowing then that managing cancer would turn out to be a full-time job. He did this job without being sad, without pitying himself, but by simply asserting that this was a challenge he had been given. As he stoically endured the final degenerative stages of his disease, he communicated simply with eye contact or a pat on the shoulder. We will always appreciate the gallantry he showed toward the end of his life.

At the memorial meeting, Edward's daughter Sarah read a poem Edward wrote in April of 2017, while sitting on his back porch, which captures the essence of his spirit:

***Not Knowing What to Expect***

*Not Knowing what to expect  
I would never pack light  
For trips to the West*

*Shoes were the worst;  
Of course I'd want my work boots  
Because that's who I am*

*But I'd also want my Bean  
Boots, in case of mud.  
And some slip-ons for around the house*

*I'd want some shoes easy to  
Put on and take off in the  
Airport (pack my pocketknife in the luggage).*

*Not knowing what to expect  
I'd want to pack my computer and some music  
And a book of puzzles in carryon*

*There's a trip I'll be taking soon  
Without an overhead bin I need to  
Unpack. I won't be able to take anything with me.*

*Still, not knowing what to expect  
It's hard to pack light  
For a trip to the unknown.*

Finally, at Edward's memorial meeting, a dear Friend quoted a line from Dawna Markova's poem "I Will Not Die an Unlived Life":

*...to live so that which came to [us] as seed  
goes to the next as blossom,  
and that which came to [us] as blossom,  
goes on as fruit.*

Edward Draper Baker lived in such a way as to bring seeds to blossom and blossoms to fruit. We are deeply saddened by his loss but, even more, grateful to have known him.

APPROVED BY WESTERLY MONTHLY MEETING, FEBRUARY 11, 2018

APPROVED BY RHODE ISLAND-SMITHFIELD QUARTERLY MEETING,  
MARCH 18, 2018

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**John Albert Blanchard**  
**October 15, 1930 – March 21, 2017**

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*Though I play at the edges of knowing,  
truly I know  
our part is not knowing,  
but looking, and touching, and loving,  
which is the way I walked on,  
softly,  
through the pale-pink morning light.*  
~Mary Oliver

Born on October 15, 1930, in Erie, Pennsylvania, John Albert Blanchard was the youngest of three children of Roy Osborne and Mary Eleanor (Hoke) Blanchard. At his memorial meeting on May 20, 2017, his sister, Dorothy Wiggins, remembered him as independent-minded from an early age. He was not one to stand passively by in the face of a perceived injustice, whether vigorously protesting as a very young boy his sister's impeding his will or as an adult refusing to acquiesce to racial, social or economic injustices. It was John's meditation practice to start the day quietly with his tea and by reading one of his favorite poets. It was also how he lived his life until the end: gently entering each day, taking time to listen carefully and to deeply appreciate what lessons could be learned.

After graduating from Pennsylvania State University with a major in horticulture, John became a conscientious objector during the Korean War and did his alternative service at a boys' home in Georgia. After two challenging years there, he resumed his plan to pursue a divinity degree, which he did at Vanderbilt University. This then led him to further language training at Cornell University in preparation for doing overseas missionary work for the Methodist Church. At Cornell he met and married Mary Alice Kesler and, following the training, together they went to Sarawak on the island of Borneo where they developed an agricultural ministry in a remote rural area, work that was both life-changing and frustrating. There, their two oldest children, Neil and Nathan, were born. John ultimately came to feel that the Methodist Church was insufficiently

sensitive to the cultural and agricultural realities of the local population and he became ever more aware of the ways in which the local people were being exploited by the larger rubber companies. After four years, John and Mary opted not to renew their commitment and returned to the United States.

They first returned to Ithaca, New York where their third child, Katherine, was born. Then John took a small Methodist parish in Columbia Falls, Maine, where he hoped to devote his energies as a pastor to addressing the economic and social needs of the community. The need to instead devote his energies to fundraising and recruiting new members of the congregation, however, led to his decision to step down as pastor so he could be freed to do what he really felt called to do. He and Mary built and started a laundromat in nearby Machias which allowed him to feel a more direct part of the community. While there, he nurtured his passion for cooperative economic systems and sustainable agriculture, visions that remained at the forefront of his work for the rest of his life.

After four years in Machias, the family moved to Framingham, Massachusetts, to live at an ecumenical communal house, but soon found that the house did not suit their needs. They searched for another spiritual home, first attending the local Methodist Church, then the Roman Catholic Oblate Center in Natick, before settling in at Framingham Preparative Meeting in 1972. In 1984, John joined Framingham Friends Meeting as a member.

John was devoted to living a life congruent with his deeply held values; he was never driven by personal economic gain. Once settled in at Framingham Meeting, for a period he worked with the New England Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee on developing economic alternatives for displaced workers. His energies were later devoted to learning as much as he could about sustainable living and renewable energy, and he sought to bring these values fully into his own life. He was drawn to the example of the worker-owned cooperatives of Mondragon, Spain, and shared this story as widely as he could, visiting the town later in life with Lani. He was involved in the fight against corporations having the same legal status as people, was active early on in promoting single-payer health care, was a steady presence on Natick Common witnessing for peace, and was active in supporting workers' rights. He continued to be involved in promoting sustainable agriculture and was the farmer for a year at Stearns Farm (community-supported agriculture) and was an active member of the Northeast Organic Farmers Association. As a strong promoter of renewable energy, John led the way at Framingham Meeting in using first an electric bike, then an electric car.

John had a rich bass voice and loved to sing. He was a member for more than 20 years of the Broadmoor Chamber Singers in Natick where he met his second wife, Lani Vance Eggert, whom he married in 1995. His

family circle then expanded beyond his own children to include Lani's children, Heather Eggert Honekamp and Don Warren Eggert, whom he warmly embraced and who in turn embraced him.

John served Framingham Friends Meeting on multiple committees including Peace and Social Concerns, of which he was co-clerk for two years, First Day School, Ministry and Counsel, and Nominating. He was also active on New England Yearly Meeting committees, serving on Peace and Social Concerns for six years, for two of which he served as clerk and co-clerk, and on the Racial, Social, and Economic Justice Committee for three years.

At his memorial meeting, there were many messages highlighting John's gentleness, sincerity and passion for peace and racial, social, and economic justice. We at Framingham Friends celebrate his undying spirit and remain inspired by the clarity of vision and purpose with which he lived his life.

APPROVED BY FRAMINGHAM FRIENDS MONTHLY MEETING,  
SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

ENDORSED BY SALEM QUARTERLY MEETING, OCTOBER 22, 2017

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**Jean V. Blickensderfer**  
**November 11, 1946 – June 16, 2017**

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Among Dover Friends, Jean was the flash of gold in the morning, a welcoming soul others naturally confided in, a faithful worker who eventually filled nearly every organizational position, from children's teacher and treasurer, to co-clerk and finally presiding clerk.

Raised Unitarian-Universalist in Methuen, Massachusetts, she came to Friends in the early '80s after she and her first husband, Dean L. Davis, had settled in Eliot, Maine, and were seeking the right church for a family that included daughters Thaedra May and Sarah Joy. They were quickly entrenched among us.

Jean was twice widowed. She married Dean the day after his graduation from the Maine Maritime Academy in 1967, and then managed their home during his long assignments at sea. During his interludes ashore, they built their own post-and-beam house on the banks of the Piscataqua River and could often be found boating, sometimes to visit other Quakers upstream, or on his motorcycle, which they rode to meeting in good weather. He died in a freak automobile collision in 1992, an accident his wife and daughters survived unscathed.

In 1998 she married Del Blickensderfer and worked as his partner at Del's Service Station until his passing from lupus in 2006.

Deeply grateful for the mentoring she received from seasoned Friends, Jean was a stickler for Quaker process and, over time, became the memory of the Meeting's business itself. She sought to walk a line between holding her tongue and being direct, when needed. A witness to the movement of Christ in our midst, Jean's infrequent vocal ministry could be powerful. Her skills as a professional typist assured the Meeting's minutes were of archival quality and, combined with her business-school training, led to the "Blue Books" for committees and their clerks detailing their responsibilities. She was particularly fond of drawing on the Advices and Queries from London Yearly Meeting's 1994

edition of *Quaker Faith and Practice* as guideposts for our own action. An avid knitter, she took comfort in seeing others do needlework during our business deliberations, their patience reflecting the work before us. In time, a midweek knitting circle became what she called a “wicked good” time of refreshment, nurture, and fellowship.

More pressing obligations had precluded her attending Yearly Meeting sessions, a “bucket list” item she resolved to achieve. All along, she warmly welcomed the wider world of Friends to Dover.

Other delights in her life were yoga, visiting with neighbors, shopping and dining with dear friends, walking the beach, doting on her Pomeranian, Sumi, and especially being with her grandson Jonah. His living in Albuquerque, New Mexico, did not prevent her from accompanying much of his childhood and youth, from celebrating birthdays and holidays to attending his piano recitals, to cheering him on in mountain bicycle races, whenever she could.

In all, her presence, generosity, and deep and lively spirit were a gift. With loved ones at her bedside through the final days of her cancer, she passed at age 70, peace and grace abundant

APPROVED BY DOVER MONTHLY MEETING, JULY 16, 2017

ENDORSED BY DOVER QUARTERLY MEETING JULY 31, 2017

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**Mary Connie Lyon Comfort**  
**1935 - May 21, 2016**

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Mary Connie Lyon Comfort died May 21, 2016, at home in Essex Meadows, Connecticut, at age 81. Mary Connie is perhaps best described as fierce. She was fierce in her intellect, in her clarity and communication, in her integrity, in her love of justice and, most importantly, in the love she gave to those around her.

She married William Wistar Comfort of Haverford, Pennsylvania, in May, 1957. She was clear and intentional in her role as Wis' wife and was a solid contributor and sustainer of Wis's career, supporting his lifetime of academic achievement and making his career possible. Together, they raised two children, Martha Wistar Comfort and Howard Comfort III.

Over their years together, Wis and Mary Connie lived in many places, including Cambridge, Massachusetts; Rochester, New York; Montreal, Canada; Athens, Greece; Florence, Italy; and Middletown, Connecticut. Mary Connie was an active contributor to her community wherever she lived in a wide variety of ways. She was part of an early feminist collective and helped to establish the first family planning clinic in Middletown, serving as its first director. She served as a corporator for Middlesex Memorial Hospital, she was the president of the Parent-Teachers Association for the Independent Day School, she established a 4-H club, she served as a career counselor at Wesleyan University, and was a technical advisor the Connecticut Council on the Humanities. In her last years with Wesleyan she directed the Honors College, supervising the Wesleyan Prose and Poetry reading series housed at the Russell House. She specifically added to her own obituary that in 1981 she finished the East Lyme Marathon in under four hours.

A "convinced" Friend, Mary Connie was active in Quaker meetings in Rochester, New York; Amherst, Massachusetts; Vassalboro, Maine; and Middletown, Connecticut. She served for many years as a board member



of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) New England Region, and as a member of the Permanent Board of New England Yearly Meeting.

As a member of Middletown Friends Meeting, she was known for her eldery and her direct style of addressing issues. She was a gifted writer, doing minutes, letters, State of the Society reports, and letters to AFSC. She raised challenging questions about other cultures and our own stances on issues, and she did pioneering work in education, social and cultural venues, and the arts, especially drama and theater. At the last meeting for business she attended, Connie was quite ill. Nevertheless, she took the minutes for the meeting with her oxygen machine running. Toward the end of the meeting, as we were off-topic and rambling, she said, "Just so you know, in 15 minutes your recording clerk is going to run out of oxygen, and you will need to close this meeting or find someone else to finish the minutes." Such was her dedication, clarity and wit.

Mary Connie was clear and direct in her vision and her speech and could recognize underlying truth. She often "called the question" and called us all to seek truth in a deeper way, personally and collectively. She performed true outreach to connect with new attenders as well as regular members. She affirmed others with absolute faith. Mary Connie was a force of nature, a force to be reckoned with, and capable of direct and forceful speech. She was a servant leader by example and recognizing gifts in others and encouraging them to express those gifts, even when they lacked confidence. She brought order out of chaos and nurtured the gifts of others, both of individuals and of the Meeting. We deeply miss her light, her truth, and her force.

APPROVED BY MIDDLETOWN FRIENDS MEETING, JANUARY 28, 2018

ENDORSED BY CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING,

FEBRUARY 4, 2018

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**William Wistar Comfort**  
**April 19, 1933 – November 28, 2016**

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Wis was raised at the nexus of Quaker tradition in America. His family, his community, and his education were all tied to Haverford College. His father had been head of the Classics department and his grandfather, for whom he was named, was a noted Quaker scholar and president of the college for 23 years. Wis attended the college as an undergraduate before going to the University of Washington for his PhD in mathematics.

Wis married Mary Connie Comfort in 1957, a woman who enjoyed dramatic moments and challenging orthodoxy. Their two children, Martha and Howard, were raised in the Middletown Friends Meeting until they left for school elsewhere. Wis and Mary Connie were married for 59 years, a marriage of contrasts and mutual benefit. Though Wis sometimes displayed a quiet irony about their differences, he clearly loved and appreciated this woman with her many talents and vivid personality.

As the weightiest Quaker in our Meeting, to whom we turned when faced with quandaries, he cautioned us against being too influenced by the forms of the Society of Friends. He made it clear that we should attend to the spirit of the tradition. He would also use his wry humor to point out the flaws in the endless discussions that Quakers are prone to in their search for unity. Sometimes these conversations are helpful and sometimes, he would indicate, they are not.

He was a member of the New England Yearly Meeting committee that revised the edition of *Faith and Practice* that was published in 1985. He served as clerk of the Middletown Friends Meeting several times, most recently relieving a clerk who was unable to serve her term because of health issues. He joked about his status as the “ad-hoc, pro-tem, pseudo, co-clerk” because he had never been formally nominated or approved. His willingness to serve in this way was characteristic of the humility with which he undertook his obligations.

Wis took time to think questions through, never answering in haste and often pausing as he sought the right words to express his thoughts clearly. He was a man of few words, but showed great wisdom gained in a life of reading, contemplation, and integrity. He was a truly humble human being, given neither to bragging about his accomplishments nor complaining about the physical ailments that became ever more evident in the last few years.

He was a tremendous intellectual, following his career path as a mathematician for five decades, even consulting on papers from his hospital bed in his last few weeks. In addition to the numerous publications that already bear his name, there will be a posthumous paper published that represents this collaboration.

He was also intensely athletic, as a runner and tennis player. He formed deep ties with many people, doing what he enjoyed and cared about, but at a level that carried forward over time. Many spoke at his memorial meeting about the kindness, care, and concern that he conveyed in every interaction. He had a devoted worldwide circle of friends and colleagues.

Wis played the trombone in various Dixieland groups in both Connecticut and Maine. He also performed vocally with a resonant bass. He was an enthusiastic participant in the pep band that played for Wesleyan football games. At our annual Christmas party, we all enjoyed his performance of carols with musical skill and verve.

Wis's memorial meeting was followed by a New Orleans tradition, a somber march from the Wesleyan chapel to the site of the reception. As his son and daughter led the mourners, a Dixieland band played sorrowful dirges that gradually became more upbeat—not a typical end to a memorial meeting in the manner of Friends. We were all quite sure that Wis would have enjoyed this departure from tradition. We walked with a slow pace and danced gently in celebration of a dear Friend who gave us deep counsel, steadfast support, and a chance to share the beauty and truth conveyed in music.

APPROVED BY MIDDLETOWN FRIENDS MEETING, JANUARY 28, 2018

ENDORSED BY CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING, FEBRUARY 4,  
2018

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**Georgana Falb Foster**  
**May 15, 1928 – July 2, 2017**

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Georgana (Gee) Falb Foster grew up in Elgin, Iowa, daughter of George Henry Falb and Myrtle Marie (Kerr) Falb, both second-generation immigrants. In sharing her spiritual journey at Mount Toby Meeting in 2001, she said she thought of it “in terms of the communities of Christian faith which I have been a part of. These nourished me and gave me the company of others who were trying to discover how they could have comfort and the companionship of others and then perhaps reach out to the world.”

In that talk she described some of these communities and how they nurtured her: a childhood in the Methodist Church in a small Iowa town, mentors in Campfire Girls, her college years with the Wesley Foundation and the Methodist student movement, her time in India with a cohort of Methodists who were short-term missionaries, and the sisterhood there of the feminist missionary women and a number of British universalist Quakers. It was also in India that she met “my life’s spiritual partner and lover, John Foster.” Finally came the community of several Friends meetings, mainly Mount Toby, which she helped found and where she worshipped for over 50 years.

She and John Foster married under the care of Providence Monthly Meeting (Providence, Rhode Island) in 1954. When they married, she became part of a long line of New England Quakers, one where, in John’s words, “women did things.” Gee joined Friends shortly after and began a lifelong interest in Quaker history, particularly the role of women in that history.

When they settled in Leverett, Massachusetts, in 1956 they quickly became active in the Middle Connecticut Valley Monthly Meeting of Friends and dedicated themselves to building a community for their children and the children of many local attenders from Amherst, Northampton, Greenfield, and other area towns. Even though Quaker

families lived far from each other, monthly gatherings and picnics were useful in helping them all come to the realization that a single meeting and a meeting space was their goal. The Fosters' two sons, Ethan and Joshua, were among the children who benefitted from the creation of a single Friends meeting in the Amherst area, as it developed into Mount Toby Monthly Meeting of Friends, the name it took when its meeting-house was completed in 1964.

Gee appreciated the gradual progress of building a Quaker community in the Amherst area and had a passion for relating this evolution to more recent members and attenders of Mount Toby Meeting. Eventually she wrote *The History of Mt. Toby Meeting, Volume 2: 1954–1990s*, continuing Helen Griffith's *History of the First Twenty Years of Mt. Toby Meeting (1939 to 1959)*, which expanded into *The History of Mt. Toby Meeting, Volume 1*.

Over the decades, Gee served Mount Toby Meeting on many committees: Meetinghouse, Ministry & Worship, Peace & Social Concerns, Trustees, and Newsletter. Her deep interest in Meeting history guided her in her later years in the work of the History and Records Committee in collecting and storing Meeting records. For the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mount Toby Meeting, she led the History and Records Committee in telling the story of the founding of the Meeting, to the delight of newcomers and old-timers alike. A parallel interest in the lives of individuals at Mount Toby led her to create a bulletin board where she regularly posted clippings with news of what both children and adults were doing in our wider communities. We appreciate the variety of ways she connected us to our history, to our activities outside the Meeting, and to each other.

She also nurtured our connections to the broader Quaker world. Her many years as the liaison to Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) and as an attender with John at FCNL annual meetings kept us abreast of political issues needing our action. She and John were also faithful attenders at New England Yearly Meeting (NEYM) Sessions and kept us informed of NEYM activities. Her presentations at NEYM on the history of Quaker women offered the fruits of her own research and experience among Friends.

Beginning in 1974, she served for six years as NEYM's representative to the Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) at a moment when the world body was increasing its awareness of Friends in the whole Western Hemisphere. FWCC–Section of the Americas was so named in these years, and the FWCC Triennial in 1976 was held in Canada. Gee was involved in planning a pre-conference to that Triennial in China, Maine, with the topic, "The significance of Rufus Jones."

Gee's work with Methodists in India led her to an awareness of the tradition of Hindu goddesses, which became a profound interest throughout her life. She was intrigued by their representation in statues and folk art, which she collected. To better understand the iconography and art history

of the items, she took a number of courses, eventually earning a second bachelor's degree with a self-designed program in the worship and depiction in folk art of the Hindu goddesses. Her senior project was an exhibit, "Faces of the Goddess: Folk Images of the Female Divinity in India," which was installed by Mount Holyoke College in 1988. Other items from her Hindu goddesses collection of folk art, now housed at the University of Iowa, have been displayed in seven museum exhibits.

Gee enjoyed the life of the Meeting in all its forms. She consistently participated in monthly meeting and provided her perspective on a wide range of agenda items brought forward for discernment. She enjoyed her role as "the memory of the Meeting" and shared her love for the community by telling stories from our history. In her messages in worship, she often provided an historical perspective to the issues of the day. Gee had an unforgettable personal style: without pretense, forthright, often opinionated, and warm.

APPROVED BY MOUNT TOBY MONTHLY MEETING, APRIL 8, 2018,

ENDORSED BY CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING, MAY 6, 2018

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**Paul George Gardescu**  
**December 5, 1928 – January 3, 2017**

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*When you respect the truth of the world, the truth of the world will work through you.*

Framingham Friends Meeting nestles into a glorious landscape of trees, shrubs, and open spaces created for and with us by our dear Friend Paul Gardescu. The vital natural environment and the simple building have brought gatherings and retreats from all over New England. Paul's stewardship of the physical setting was equally reflected in the community that he cultivated for over fifty years. We, in turn, have cherished him.

Born Paul George Gardescu in 1928 to Ionel Ion Stephan Gardescu and Pauline Scanlon, he visited his ancestral Romania several times. By his side was his wife, Betty Howlett Gardescu, whom he married at Friends Meeting at Cambridge in 1962. The couple has been a mainstay of our monthly meeting, sitting together on their customary bench without fail for decades, providing the fundamentals for potlucks and building improvements, and adding their terse wisdom with a few wry words when occasions warranted.

They started attending Framingham Preparative Meeting in December 1965. In 1979 Paul transferred membership along with others from Friends Meeting in Cambridge. He served as clerk from 1972 to 1975, and again from 1999 to 2002. He wrote the history of our building, Schoolhouse No. 7, and built delicate architectural models of the structure. There are touches of Paul everywhere. He designed and supervised construction of the addition, the space for the lift, the paving of the parking area, and he served on the committee for the kitchen addition. The seedlings he planted have matured, the Memorial Circle Garden has become our burial ground, and the witch-hazel tree, which blooms in February snow, has grown to accompany our worship.

Paul's contributions to New England Yearly Meeting date back over 40 years. From 1965 to 1970 he served on the New England Friends Home

Committee, including terms as recording clerk and committee clerk; from 1980 to 1991 he was on the Finance Committee, serving as clerk from 1986 to 1990; from 1991 to 2001 he was on Permanent Board; and from 2007 to 2009 he was on the Committee on Aging.

Paul had four children: Sana, born in 1955 by his first wife, Ruth; Sarah, born in 1963; Jon, born in 1964; and Stephen, born in 1966. When Stephen died suddenly in 1989, the members of our Meeting gathered around Paul and Betty with care. Paul himself broke our silence in the first meeting for worship after the tragedy. He rose to tell the story of how Anansi, the Spider of African myth, brought death into the world. "But, I give you something to help you with the grief," he said. "I give you community."

Paul understood the art of placement, and how things could thrive together. His career in landscape architecture went back 60 years. At his memorial meeting, colleagues from Sasaki Associates shared how Paul had inspired them personally and guided them professionally for decades. He retired early and turned his attention to hand planting around the meetinghouse and digging with the Wayland Archeological Group. We heard stories from many who were often amused, sometimes puzzled, and ultimately informed by his relentlessly incisive vision.

We came to appreciate Paul's way of stewardship. It was to honor the earth, to notice what existed that could be nurtured, celebrated, perpetuated and shared, and to allow it to flourish as it would. With people too, when he saw a need he responded with simple presence. From the early years of the Meeting, he accepted our disparate personalities. Margaret Welsh and Penelope Turton, our matriarchs, depended on him. Many of us were inspired by him. Some were healed. In the end, he was dignified and generous through the diminishment of Alzheimer's disease, sustained by Betty's care for him as the man of accomplishment she knew and loved.

For years they arrived at meeting early each week. He found a flower, stem or "weed" to arrange in his small handmade vase at the top of our stairs, and then took his place to set the roots of the worship that greeted us as we entered. That quiet presence didn't impose itself; it simply respected the truth of the world. Paul Gardescu's place is empty now, but we feel his legacy. It continues to accompany us in spirit and nourish us in the environment.

APPROVED BY FRAMINGHAM FRIENDS MONTHLY MEETING,  
SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

ENDORSED BY SALEM QUARTERLY MEETING, OCTOBER 22, 2017



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**Ann Cotton Levinger**  
**January 21, 1931 – June 21, 2017**

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Ann Cotton Levinger died on June 21, 2017, in Amherst, Massachusetts, with her family gathered around her. Ann was serenaded by George, her husband of 65 years, who sang “Let me call you sweetheart, I’m in love with you.” George was to die 12 days later.

A memorial meeting for Ann and George was held on September 9, 2017, at the Wesley United Methodist Church in Hadley, Massachusetts, under the care of Mount Toby Friends Meeting. The large hall was filled with family, friends, and fellow activists from across the country.

Ann was born in Laurel, Mississippi, on January 21, 1931, to William and Marjorie Cotton, who had moved there from the North. In her spiritual journey recounted to Mount Toby in 2014, Ann described herself as “a very much wanted baby” who, in turn, very much wanted the two sisters, Jane and Nancy, who followed. Of these early years, Ann said, “I think about the changes, growing up in a very rigidly segregated society. Each deviation from those boundaries seemed like a spiritual breakthrough.”

The story Ann tells of her life is full of revelation, beginning at age four in Presbyterian Sunday School, when she learned that God’s children were of many colors, and extending through the morning of her talk, when she and George delighted in “the wonderful squirrels and birds” at their backyard feeder.

Revelation is mixed with struggle. As a senior in college, Ann struggled with her anxiety about marrying a man with a different religious background. George’s Jewish family had fled Germany in 1935 to escape the Nazi regime. Love prevailed; Ann and George married in 1952, just as Ann was graduating from the University of Michigan with a dual degree in psychology and education. Ann and George found a common spiritual home in Quakerism, first in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and then in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, joining Radnor Meeting in 1957.

Ann taught fifth grade for several years before becoming the full-time mother of what the family has described as “four boisterous boys.” In recalling this period of her life, Ann joked that she “found the social norms of the 1950s most helpful.” Once the family moved to Cleveland, Ohio, in 1960, where George taught social research at Western Reserve University, Ann’s life became one of continuing community service and social activism. The issues in Cleveland included fair housing, civil rights, and the anti-war movement. Ann was in charge of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) Inner City Work Corps.

With George’s appointment as Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Ann and George moved to Amherst in 1965 and began their 52-year association with Mount Toby Friends Meeting. They took part in weekly anti-war vigils on the Amherst Common and Ann volunteered as a draft counselor, assisting young men who wished to apply for conscientious objector status. During this time, Ann returned to school, earning a doctorate in counseling from the University of Massachusetts School of Education in 1982 and becoming licensed as a clinical psychologist.

Ann served Mount Toby in many roles over the years. She served several terms on Ministry and Counsel/Ministry and Worship, as well as several terms on Overseers (now Care and Counsel). She was a member of the Refugee Resettlement Committee (later named the Cambodia Support Committee) from its inception in 1982 until her death. She served several terms on the Nominating Committee. She was a member of the Gay and Lesbian Concerns Committee and of the Draft Counseling Committee from its creation in 1982 until it was laid down. She was assistant clerk. She edited the newsletter and coordinated the Fall Fellowship Weekend. She served on several oversight and marriage clearness committees. She was a member of the Library Committee and of the History and Records Committee. In 1969, Ann urged the Meeting not to pay the telephone tax, since this tax supported the Vietnam War. The Meeting approved and for several decades did not pay the 'phone tax. In the early '70s Ann served as overseer for the Hampshire College Meeting for Worship. Until the last decade of her life, Ann regularly attended meeting for business.

Ann had a particular commitment to young children. She was on the Nursery/Child Care Committee for many terms. In 1977, she and Ruth Hawkins ran a series of parent training sessions based on the idea of systematic equality for all people, including children. In 2006, she was appointed to the Ad Hoc Committee on Safe Practices for Working with Youth, which helped Mount Toby develop explicit practices for ensuring the safety of the children. She co-authored an article in the Newsletter urging Friends to refrain from laughing when cute young children first got up the courage to say their names during introductions.

Friends remember Ann with great fondness. One person who worked with Ann on several committees says it was always very energizing to work with her on a committee. Another remembers her perpetual cheerfulness and good humor. Another notes that she was very active with Alternatives to Violence, going into the prison for years and hosted meetings at her home. She was loved, this person says, by the inmate trainers and participants. Another fondly remembers her climbing up to re-shingle the meetinghouse roof.

The Keeper of the Plantings writes the following: “The redbud that was planted five years ago in the center of the oval was planted after several years of gentle nudging by Ann—‘A redbud would really be nice out here’—despite the somewhat unsuitable soil. Friends can be reminded of Ann whenever they pass this beautiful small tree, especially when it blooms in late spring.”

APPROVED BY MOUNT TOBY MONTHLY MEETING, DECEMBER 10, 2017

ENDORSED BY CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING,

FEBRUARY 4, 2018

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**George Klaus Levinger**  
**February 5, 1927 – July 3, 2017**

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We share heartfelt remembrances of George Levinger, of one intimate in his care for Mount Toby Friends Meeting where we received his loving kindness. He was born February 5, 1927, to the Jewish Levinger family in Berlin, Germany. George's route to the United States was difficult. At eight, in 1935, with his family he escaped the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany, traveling from Switzerland to London, and at 14, to Ellis Island.

At 16, he entered Columbia University, followed by training in Japanese ("because I spoke German") to serve in the Army Counter-Intelligence Corps in Japan. He did graduate work at Columbia University and the University of California, Berkeley, and earned his Ph.D. in social psychology at the University of Michigan. He held professorships at Bryn Mawr College of Social Work and Social Research; at Western Reserve University in social work; and in 1967, at the University of Massachusetts psychology department, retiring in 1992. The internet has postings of many of his publications and academic activities.

George and Ann met in California in 1950 at the Lisle Fellowship, which promoted international understanding among young adults. After wending their way through several faith-related gatherings, they found the link between their Jewish and Presbyterian traditions in the Quaker meeting at Ann Arbor, Michigan, where simplicity, equality, dignity, and lack of formal doctrine led to their Quaker spiritual journey, spurring their commitment to nonviolence and social activism. They married on June 14, 1952.

During 52 years of living Quaker testimonies at Mount Toby, they helped resettle Cambodian people in Amherst and continued to expand those relationships. They joined the development of the Alternatives to Violence Project at the Somers, Connecticut, medium-security prison. George promoted means for low-income people to have affordable hous-

ing. He analyzed federal budgets with the National Priorities Project. In 1961, he had authored "The Use of Force in International Affairs," and into retirement continued to publish articles on the psychology of conflict and peace. He maintained a constant interest in Woolman Hill Quaker Retreat Center in Deerfield, Massachusetts, with his attention to board responsibilities and work projects.

It is possible to share interesting facets of George's international, professional, and academic background; however, it is his personal affections that remain. His pocket calendar was always handy to arrange sociable visiting. He loved to have conversation dates. George and Ann continually opened their home to guests of the Meeting and to others needing accommodations. At the Levinger's breakfast table, without getting up from his chair, George would turn pancakes on an adjoining grill, all the while fully attending to guests.

George presented his spiritual journey at Mount Toby on February 6, 2000. His spirituality emphasized "energy." He wanted his life to be an energetic search for meaning in his relationship with the world of humanity and nature. He believed that the world has an underlying community where we see God as the Light in all.

In June of 2017, George reprinted the chapter "Ann & I" from his 2011 memoir, *After the Storm* (2011), with a postscript "to honor Ann ... no longer her former self." In the original chapter, he wrote: "As I matured, I became calmer and more encouraging as a husband and father. I felt less driven than earlier. It was also helpful that I worked with female colleagues and graduate students, who pushed me toward a greater appreciation of gender equality, probably reducing struggles Ann and I might otherwise have had... . What counts in making a happy marriage is not so much how compatible you are, but how you deal with incompatibility."

Their family and retirement years included immersion in other cultures and the natural world. "In choosing most of our travels, we have emphasized activities like biking, camping, canoeing, and hiking or challenges to our intellectual capacities such as learning other languages or teaching in a different culture."

In his postscript, devoted to Ann, he wrote: "We had been close partners who took good care of each other, now I became Ann's main care giver with less and less return from her. Today Ann still smiles and repeatedly says she loves me, as I say to her. Hugging each other is still a great pleasure."

George died, at 90, in Amherst, Massachusetts, on July 3, 2017, 12 days after the death of his wife Ann, aged 86. Their memorial meeting on September 9, 2017, was attended by all four of their sons and their wives,

Bill and Tracy, Jim and Leah, Matthew and Cristin, and David and Angela;  
his brother Bernie; and many of their eight grandchildren.

APPROVED BY MOUNT TOBY MONTHLY MEETING, DECEMBER 10, 2017

ENDORSED BY CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING, FEBRUARY 4,  
2018.

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**Constance Sattler**  
**February 27, 1927 – April 12, 2016**

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A lady of gardening and music, strength and vulnerability, humor and outrage, with a fierce determination to fight for Quaker causes, Connie was strongly independent and willing to explore new experiences.

As a Jewish child growing up during Hitler's rise to power, she was sent as a 12-year-old with her younger sister out of Germany by train on the Kindertransport. Arriving in England, they were lodged with several different families where, in addition to taking care of her sister and adjusting to cultural differences, she found herself with numbers of other refugee children in the household. Years later she found her parents in South America and the family resettled in the United States.

She married Bill Sattler and they had two children: Valerie, who lives in Germany and plays cello in the Neurenberg Symphony Orchestra; and Walter, a gifted violinist who died when a young man. The family eventually moved from New York City to Moodus, Connecticut, where they farmed and raised sheep.

Connie played and taught violin. She studied music in Cleveland, Ohio, and New York City and taught in the public school system in Hartford, Connecticut. She traveled to Japan to meet Suzuki and learn his method for teaching violin to children, and later opened her own studio in Moodus. In addition, she played violin in a Gilbert and Sullivan orchestra and with the New England Chorale, and the viola da gamba with a Renaissance group. Her students continue to affirm that she was inspirational to them as a musician and as a person.

Connie brought passion and spirit to all of her endeavors. Many of the children she encountered—now adults—comment on the sense that she was magical and brought delight and spirit to their lives, whether that was through music, nature, or storytelling.

Mal Benjamin, Bill's college roommate, was her loyal friend for 67 years. After Connie's and Mal's spouses died, the two of them main-

tained their friendship. They commuted back and forth between Moodus and Philadelphia until Mal finally moved to Connecticut. Mal said their relationship was “pretty close to perfect” because they loved each other. Connie created wonderful flower and vegetable gardens in Moodus, and the Meeting enjoyed yearly picnics there. She also brought beautiful flowers to our meetings for worship almost weekly.

Connie’s Quaker activities included working with Dorothy Day on the Catholic Worker, picketing for peace, participating in American Friends Service Committee Connecticut programs, promoting Habitat for Humanity, starting a soup kitchen in Middletown, and working at Woolman Hill. At times she was the only one holding a vigil for peace in Middletown. One experience about which she was particularly proud was being arrested and jailed in New York City during a Vietnam War protest march. As the story goes, once when she and her son were on a crowded bus traveling past the women’s prison in New York, he piped up in a loud voice, “Hey Mom, wasn’t that where you were in jail?” evoking alarmed looks from the entire bus.

Middletown Meeting will greatly miss Connie’s participation and spiritual strength, along with her caring kindness.

APPROVED BY MIDDLETOWN FRIENDS MEETING, JANUARY 28, 2018

ENDORSED BY CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING,

FEBRUARY 4, 2018



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**Joyce Kay Wilson**  
**July 31, 1948 – October 7, 2016**

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Wilderness Friends Meeting lost a dear member on October 7, 2016, when Joyce Kay Wilson passed away at her home after an extended illness. She was surrounded by her devoted family throughout.

Joyce was born July 31, 1948, in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, the daughter of Walter Anderson and Ethel Lindberg Anderson. She attended Wheaton College in Illinois, majoring in education. Her enthusiasm and skill as a downhill skier brought her to Stowe, Vermont, for the first time and in 1970, she was hired (sight unseen) as a teacher in the Orange School District near Barre, Vermont. She and her college sweetheart, Lee, were married in September 1972, a marriage that lasted for the rest of her life.

Though Joyce had been involved in teaching children and later in adult education, she went on to become one of the first female Internal Revenue Service officers in Vermont and was employed as such for 25 years. For many of us, she put a thoughtful, gentle face on the IRS.

Joyce and Lee moved to North Shrewsbury from Starksboro, Vermont, 39 years ago and came to love the town for its people and its natural highland beauty. She was active in the local community, volunteering to serve at the Shrewsbury library and as treasurer of both the cooperative at Pierce's Store, where she was also an original board member, and the Shrewsbury Outing Club. She also served the town as an auditor for six years.

Joyce was a deeply compassionate person whose energy was invested in benevolent organizations both near and far. She was deeply committed to VAMOS (Vermont Associates for Mexican Opportunity and Support), which educates, feeds, and provides medical, dental, and psychological care for roughly 700 impoverished children and many of their mothers in Cuernavaca, Mexico. A visit there with one of her daughters was a dream she never forgot.

Locally, she participated in the Thresholds/Decisions Program for several years, going into the Marble Valley Correctional Facility in Rutland to reflect with prisoners who were nearing release about their past and present choices, and to help them in developing a workable plan for transitioning back into society. Some of them kept in touch with her long after they were released. She, in turn, found this work very meaningful, so that after the program at the prison ended, she volunteered at the Rutland Dismas House (a halfway community for convicts returning to society) to help to prepare a dinner once a month, participate in fundraising on the phone, and contribute in other ways.

Becoming acquainted with Kate and Art Brinton, who were among the founders of Wilderness Friends Meeting, had a significant influence on Joyce, and the Meeting became her Quaker home. She took spiritual sustenance from the Meeting, served as an anchor for it, and for a number of years served as clerk. She would faithfully show up for meeting for worship even when she would possibly be alone.

Joyce embraced and lived the Quaker testimonies of peace and simplicity, and she saw that of God in everyone. She believed that the core of Christianity, as she put it, “is compassion and seeing myself in other people. Quakers often quote George Fox, ‘Be patterns, be examples in all countries, places, islands, nations, wherever you come; that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them. Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.’ I just try to live and respond to others with compassion. That’s enough of a challenge for me. I have so many questions that I can’t begin to promote a particular belief.”

Most likely due to her deep connection to nature, Joyce seemed to have a sense of timing when we members needed a hike in the woods or a picnic in the hills. She seemed to know, correctly, that these outings would lift our spirits and bring us closer together. She was always kind, patient, and quick with a smile and word of encouragement for any and all. She led a life of genuine goodness and was a gift to all who were lucky enough to have known her.

In the last months of her illness, our Meeting members met for silent worship with her, Lee, and their daughters in her hospital room and then in her and Lee’s cheerful home, times that were uplifting, peaceful, and mutually fulfilling for all present.

She is survived by her husband, Lee; their three wonderful daughters, Hannah, Linnea, and Ingrid, and their husbands; and two grandsons, Matteo and Linden, in whom she took particular delight. Her brother, James Anderson of Arden Hills, Minnesota, also survives her.

APPROVED BY WILDERNESS FRIENDS MEETING, AUGUST 14, 2017

ENDORSED BY NORTHWEST QUARTERLY MEETING, SEPTEMBER 10, 2017





**NEW ENGLAND  
YEARLY MEETING  
OF FRIENDS**

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