

# Memorial Minutes ~ 2025 ~

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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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**Adele MacVeagh Clurman Bourne (1936–2025)**

**Erica Brinton (1948–2022)**

**Karen Sheila Levy Cadbury (1945–2024)**

**Andrea Cousins (1941–2024)**

**Anne Willoughby DiMase (1933–2023)**

**Carla Lurie Dowben (1932–2024)**

**Muriel A. Farrar (1949–2023)**

**Eden Parker Grace (1968–2023)**

**Rudman J. Ham (1931–2022)**

**Ruth Ann Hawkins (1923–2023)**

**Julie Heagney (1945–2023)**

**Elizabeth Kincaid-Ehlers (1933–2024)**

**Christopher McCandless (1946–2024)**

**Jean Margaret McCandless (1943–2024)**

**Donna Lee Bowen McDaniel (1934–2024)**

**Rose Law Miller (1920–2021)**

**Rhoda Elsie Mowry (1940–2024)**

**John Preston (1926–2023)**

**James Ramsey (1946–2020)**

**Jack Shepherd (1937–2022)**

**Sarah Howe Spencer (1949–2023)**

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**Adele MacVeagh Clurman Bourne**  
**March 22, 1936-January 11, 2025**

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On January 11, 2025, Providence Monthly Meeting of Friends lost a vivacious, beloved member of our community, Adele MacVeagh Clurman Bourne, who passed away after living a full 88 years. In a full circle gesture, we celebrated Adele's memorial service on her birthday, in the company of her family and beloved twin brother, Charlie. We learned that Adele was a "surprise" daughter to her parents, whose father famously exclaimed upon her birth, "Well we pulled that one out of our hat!" Throughout her life, Adele was affectionately known as "Rabbit" and now we understand why. With that auspicious beginning, our dear friend Adele made her debut into the world.

Adele would go on to become a gifted educator of literature and theatre arts, poet, playwright, and lifelong ferocious social justice activist. Her life was abundant with theatrical performance, literature, nature, and art. Adele was known for her prodigious intellect, intense interpersonal focus, and laser-sharp wit. As one Quaker shared, Adele had pluck, engaging full throttle in life with all its complexity. In the latter part of her journey, when she utilized a walker, she maneuvered with characteristic purpose and precision. Indeed, Adele was a force to be reckoned with, and she channeled that force for good in the world.

Adele was born and raised in the Episcopalian tradition in Bedford, New York, in a family whose father served on Franklin D. Roosevelt's War Production Board and whose uncle and grandfather were US ambassadors. When the family moved to Webster Groves, Missouri, for her father's work, Adele founded her activist passion as a junior high-schooler when she worked alongside her mother and other members of the Emmanuel Episcopal Church to desegregate Webster Groves schools.

Adele's activist career was fueled by her education at Bryn Mawr College, with its historically Quaker roots and emphasis on equality of all people. She was further galvanized in 1963 by her attendance at Martin Luther King Jr.'s *I Have a Dream* speech. Adele honed her work for peace and justice as a member of Moorestown, New Jersey, Friends Meeting and was always the first to join a protest, spearhead a letter-writing campaign, or care for a family in need. When she re-settled and joined Providence Monthly Meeting, she quickly engaged as an active and steadfast member of the Peace and Social Concerns Committee.

Adele was especially valued as a source of advice and support to others as they pursued their particular social justice activities. One member recalls Adele, well into her 80s, making the trek to Boston and reveling in vigils to help preserve a children's hospital garden. Although the garden was sacrificed, Adele took the time to write in her bold cursive to offer words of solace: "Even though the outcome wasn't what you hoped, your efforts brought integrity to the process and that matters." Indeed, Adele mentored many a soul, wrote poetry, and turned to the arts to advance the pursuit of social justice.

Adele served as a devoted, attentive member of the Pastoral Care Committee. She enjoyed reaching out to others in our community in need of encouragement with telephone calls, handwritten cards, visits, flowers, and meals. She was a good listener and made people feel special. She was comfortable connecting with others and engaging in conversation, and ever-generous with her time and resources. She accepted people for who they were and refrained from judgment. She remembered people's names and made note of newcomers and those who might be isolated, lonely, bereaved, or hungry. She was attuned to the human condition and took joy in serving the needs of others. At her memorial service, there were messages from her neighbors at Wayland Manor, who recalled her kindness, open door and warm hospitality, and sharing of food.

Adele had a remarkable energy and wholeheartedness that animated her and influenced those around her. She easily connected and made friends with those across the generations. She was funny, bold, quotable, classy, and entertaining. She spoke her mind, often eloquently, and served as a role model for many, including her grandchildren, who took pride in their grandmother's perennial youthful optimism and perspective. Adele could at once be serious yet lighten the moment with her quick wit, smile, and willingness to share of her own experiences. At a recent Christmas program, drawing on her background in theatre, she delivered a reading with verve and com-

passion that uplifted those present. Adele was comfortable in her own skin, upheld the dignity of all people, and envisioned a world of fairness and opportunity for all. She made good on this vision through her educational and social justice endeavors, everyday kindness, humor, and nonjudgmental, positive regard for others. She embodied Quaker principles and testified to them throughout her life.

Adele is survived by her loving twin brother, Charlie, and her sister Priscilla; her daughter, Margaretta, and son, Andrew, and their partners; vibrant grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and an extended family of nieces, nephews, and cousins. Adele generated joy, made the world a better place, and she will be remembered for brightening our Meeting and our world.

PROVIDENCE MONTHLY MEETING JUNE 8, 2025

SOUTHEAST QUARTER JUNE 15, 2025

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**Erica Brinton**  
**October 14, 1948 – January 27, 2022**

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Hanover Friends Meeting's long-time member, Erica Brinton, passed away quietly in her modest home in Norwich, Vermont on January 27, 2022.

Erica was a community activist, avid bike commuter, faithful Christmas Revels actor, loyal shape-note singer, cheerful Morris and contra dancer, dedicated Registered Nurse, and famous cook for each and every potluck supper where, like at all activities, she was a cheerful presence. But most of all, Erica was a friendly face to everyone she met.

Erica was born on October 14, 1948, and raised in a Quaker household in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and graduated from George School. After spending every childhood summer vacation at her parent's hillside farm, "Wenlock Edge" in Ludlow, Vermont, it was Hanover Friends Meeting's good fortune that she decided to relocate permanently to New England. After graduating from Russell Sage College with a BS in nursing, she took a job at Mary Hitchcock Hospital and settled into the Upper Valley so she could spend her free time back at Wenlock Edge.

From the time Erica moved to the Upper Valley, her life became a tableau of community happenings. Her life was filled year 'round with events that drew people into her circle. In the spring, she'd be inviting people to walk a local trail. Summer would be a time to help weed community gardens. Her apple-cider mill would be grinding away on sunny autumn days. And winter would be filled with Revels rehearsals and contra dances.

Erica wore her Quaker values on her sleeve. She attended every vigil against war and injustice that she could. She volunteered in the Meeting's First Day School program, served as Presiding Clerk and on a number of its standing committees, as well as the AFSC-Vermont

Committee, and regularly attended her faith's quarterly meetings. To expand her circle of friends beyond northern New England, she joined a religious delegation to visit a Quaker church in Havana, Cuba, where she taught New England folk dances to gales of laughter and much hand-clapping and toe-tapping. Now, years later, Cuban Quakers still fondly invoke memories of "Erika" with warm smiles.

To allow her more time for civic engagement, Erica traded in her full-time nursing job for a part-time job at Kendal at Hanover where, once again she made lifetime friends.

Erica Brinton's life was cut too short by medical challenges. But she will be carried in the hearts of all who knew this person who exuded the divine presence with such grace and charm.

HANOVER FRIENDS MEETING, MARCH 16, 2025  
northwest Quarterly Meeting, June 7, 2025

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**Karen Sheila Levy Cadbury**  
**June 3, 1945 – March 27, 2024**

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Friends at Midcoast Monthly Meeting in Damariscotta, Maine give thanks for the many ways Karen Cadbury served the Meeting. She worked on the Finance Committee and the Pastoral Care Committee; she taught First Day School and served as co-clerk; she was the spark that created and secured grant funding for the Meeting's innovative Outreach and Peace project. Karen was energetic and bright—her only sibling, Melaine, described her as “a trooper.”

Karen Sheila Levy Cadbury was born in 1945 in Baltimore but spent her early years in Texas, her father's home state. Karen would refer to her father's Jewish background saying she was raised “never to hate.” In her teens the family moved to Baltimore, her mother's home area. When Karen was sixteen her mother died. Karen became “like a mother” to Melaine and carried on. She finished high school and enrolled at the University of Maryland. Soon she met David Frederick Cadbury, a student at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA). They became a devoted, hard-working couple, sharing a love for birding, ocean sailing, and art for 49 years. David's family was from a Quaker background; Karen would say that her transition to Quakerism was natural. David and Karen moved to Philadelphia and joined Central Philadelphia Meeting, participating there for two decades.

Melaine spoke of a time Karen took her to a civil rights demonstration in Baltimore, saying Karen was “always thinking about people's rights and different cultures.” Gradually Karen built a career working for organizations that supported these rights and cultures. She worked in the development office for the University of Pennsylvania and at the university's Museum, where she developed programs that brought Museum exhibits and experts to Philadelphia public school classrooms. She served as staff for the Policy and Legislation Commit-



tee of the Peace Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, constantly encouraging Friends to contact their U.S. Senators and Representatives about important federal legislation. She developed considerable expertise on what was happening in Israel and the Middle East, an interest she continued throughout her life. Meanwhile their two children, Benjamin and Rachel, were born.

A Friend said of Karen and David: “David and Karen together were an inspiring model of supporting and living with each other through all of life’s challenges.” When David had a heart attack at age 45, they decided to move to Maine where David’s family had summered in the past. Karen got a job with College of the Atlantic and soon set up Cadbury Consultants, continuing her work for non-profits.

A Friend spoke of how hard Karen worked at her job but also reached out with caring to people around her. Another Friend said “Karen was one to bounce back. I was in awe of her anchored trust that the best will prevail. Even in her last days, Karen was imagining ways to share and connect people.” Karen lived out Quaker testimonies in her many work endeavors and brought her professional organizing and finance skills to Friends’ Meetings and organizations.

Karen had a way with words whether listening or communicating. If there was a misunderstanding among Friends she would make personal phone calls and write letters to offer an ear or loving support. As she was transitioning from a demanding career load, she joined a writers’ group and began to write a mystery.

Said a member of Midcoast Meeting, “I will miss her way with words that made Quakerism live for me in a special way. She was a brilliant woman who gave so much to the Meeting.”

MIDCOAST MEETING OF FRIENDS, SEPTEMBER 15, 2024

VASSALBORO QUARTERLY MEETING, NOVEMBER 2, 2024

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**Andrea Cousins**  
**July 25, 1941 – January 27, 2024**

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Andrea Cousins moved to Leverett in 1990, and a year later, at age fifty, somehow found her way alone to the Mount Toby Meeting for reasons she could never recall. She liked the silence. For the next thirty-three years until her death in January 2024, she was a steady and steadying presence, sitting in her customary seat in the south-east corner, and, on occasion, blessing the meeting with succinct, thoughtful messages that expressed her characteristic honesty and humor, and sometimes just the inspiration she found among the wildlife of her garden.

Andrea was the oldest child of Norman Cousins, the eminent writer and international peace advocate. Her mother, Ellen, a force in herself, stayed home, where she grew, and promoted, organic vegetables, while mainly supporting her husband in his important work. This division of labor later gave Andrea mixed feelings about the institution of marriage.

Andrea and her three younger sisters grew up in New Canaan, Connecticut. Her father and mother were both of Russian Jewish heritage. Their household was so completely secular that during most of her childhood Andrea was unaware of any Jewish background. She happily attended a progressive and preppy Connecticut private school until, in her teens, she was reluctantly transplanted to a public school to be more in accordance with her father's political views.

Her younger sisters were important to Andrea throughout her life. Sarah moved to Israel, became an Orthodox Jew, and the mother of six children. Candis lived in California, married and had a son, and is, like Andrea, a psychotherapist, confirming their especially close bond. To Andrea's enduring sadness, Amy developed schizophrenia, and died from its complications at age 43.

When Andrea entered Sarah Lawrence College, she was happy to find that many of the most interesting women there also had Jewish backgrounds, and she was able to embrace that part of herself while never accepting any particular theological belief. Later, she would explain her wish to be part of the Quaker community without becoming a formal member of it, as part of her lifelong disinclination to be defined by a faith.

When Andrea was invited by the meeting to describe her “Spiritual Journey,” she discovered from the enthusiastic overflow attendance, and to her great happiness, just how much she was loved. She had thought of herself as an outsider. It was entirely characteristic of Andrea’s intellectual rigor—“opinionated,” according to her own description—that she was unable to fully accept the talk’s title. She said she did not know what “spiritual” meant, and that “journey” suggested a spurious coherence. She settled for “Life Story.”

Andrea’s early adult life coincided with the era’s civil rights activism and the African independence movement. She was a member of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, and was close to Tom Hayden, a founder of the SDS. She also traveled to Guinea in West Africa, but did not feel she had found her own place in the world. Partly to overcome a lasting grief from the break-up with a longstanding boyfriend, Andrea went to Algeria to undertake doctoral research in Social Anthropology for a Harvard degree. But this did not prove to be her vocation, and shortly after moving to Leverett she went into psychoanalysis, first as a patient and then as a practicing therapist, with a clinical doctorate. She discovered that this was what she was always meant to do. She practiced psychotherapy and psychoanalysis with great satisfaction, continuing even after she was diagnosed with lung cancer. Many people benefitted from Andrea’s care, and she felt entirely fulfilled in her work. She said that as she gained experience as a therapist she became quieter and quieter.

The qualities that made Andrea a natural psychotherapist also benefited the Mount Toby meeting. Apart from her contributions to the Meeting for Worship, Andrea served on the Hospitality, Nominating and Care and Counsel committees, and was a member of a number of “Friendly 8’s” groups, smaller gatherings that examined inner life and its relationships with the outer world in intimacy and depth. Andrea’s welcoming presence, and the honesty, insight, and wit she brought, was a central compelling force in these long-lived groups.

Andrea had a talent for friendship but sometimes expressed regret that a partnership in something like a marriage had not been for her. Love, however, did not elude her, and she found great satisfaction in

a long relationship with a like-minded man that she chose to treasure by holding it privately to herself.

When Andrea was diagnosed with lung cancer, she immediately knew that it was serious. She decided to continue working and attending meeting as before. When she finally became house-bound, she still enjoyed the conversation and the poetry she had always loved, even when, in the last months, she was drifting in and out of sleep. Her close friend from Meeting, Ken Hoffman, in particular, did much to ease the way of her final months, and after her death, Pam Tinto did much to mindfully close Andrea's beloved Leverett home and distribute her belongings among her friends. Andrea is buried in the Mount Toby Meeting burial ground.

Andrea leaves behind her younger sisters Candis and Sarah, and many nieces and nephews, and their children. Also, her best friend, Ann Bookman, and many other friends, including, locally, John Bollard and Margaret Lloyd, and Olivia Bernard, and a community of Friends from the Meeting that had been such an important part of her life.

MT TOBY MONTHLY MEETING, MARCH 9, 2025

CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING, MAY 4, 2025

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**Anne Willoughby DiMase**  
**February 12, 1933 - October 11, 2023**

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On October 11, 2023, Providence Monthly Meeting of Friends lost a cherished member, Anne Willoughby DiMase, who passed away at the age of 90 years. Anne became a member of Meeting upon turning 70 years. She reflected with her membership Clearness Committee that she still had “a lot to offer” and wished to belong to our community. Indeed, over the last two decades, Anne has graced our Meeting with her kindness, warm embrace, and enduring optimism of humanity.

Anne had a presence, a warm smile and, as one member described it, “eyes that danced.” She would often sit on the back bench of the meeting room, welcoming and, in her role as Membership Recorder, tallying those who entered the Meeting room. Another member recollected feeling a great sense of comfort seeing her in this familiar role, thinking “Anne is here. All is well. All she greets will be made to feel welcome.” Her presence lent a steadiness, a valued constancy to Meeting for Worship and to the broader life of the Meeting.

Anne had Light. Quakers speak of “Inner Light” which Anne had in abundance. She also manifested “outer light,” a smile that lit up and enlivened a conversation. Her genuine interest and concern for others served to lighten whatever burdens they might be carrying. One felt listened to, heartened, and affirmed in Anne’s presence with her gentle approach and acceptance of all people. She could also be funny and was known for her witty quips. She was sought out for her natural gift of bringing meaningful life experiences to bear that offered guidance and reassurance to others. She was approachable and inviting during coffee hour, and balanced matters of a serious nature with a light touch.

Anne believed deeply in justice, compassion, and equality for all people, values informed by her deep faith and studies of Christianity, Buddhism, and Vedanta Hinduism. In keeping with her eclectic prism of perspectives and practices, Anne was a pacifist and supporter of the civil rights movement. For many years Anne served on the Peace and Social Concerns Committee, making valuable contributions and staying abreast of current social justice issues.

Anne was often accompanied at Meeting on Mother's Day by her beloved daughter Sherrie and grandson Shane. They made a family tradition of attending the annual Christmas Eve candlelight service at Saylesville Meeting House. Anne enjoyed the fellowship and cookies afterwards—and she was always eager to catch up with young people home for Christmas holiday. One of her favorite holidays was Valentine's Day and she extended a warm invitation to her friends at Meeting to join at her home for cookies and hot chocolate. She wasn't a fussy entertainer, insisting that "store bought cookies are just fine." She placed the emphasis on connecting with people and relationships, rather than formalities, creating a home that was appreciated as a lively hub of joy in times of celebration, and a welcoming place of comfort in times of difficulty.

Born in Worcester, Massachusetts on February 12, 1933, Anne lived most of her life in New England. She graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a degree in Early Childhood Education. She then won a fellowship for graduate studies in Human Development and Human Relations at Merrill Palmer Institute in Michigan. A lifelong learner, Anne also studied Anthropology at Brown University and Social Work at Rhode Island College.

Anne's life spoke with her good works devoted to children. She was passionate about early childhood education and as one member noted, "she never seemed to age...she was forever young." True to her ideals, Anne spent years advocating for higher standards in this field, especially for disadvantaged students and those with special needs. During her early years she served as director of a school for disabled children in Springfield, MA and taught third grade in Dedham, MA and later in Cincinnati, OH. After returning to Rhode Island, she taught at Meeting Street School in Providence. She went on to found and teach at the East Greenwich Cooperative Nursery School. Anne served on the East Greenwich School Committee, where she advocated for individualized educational programs for students. Later, she taught at the John Hope Day Care Center, where she began a parents' group and practiced social work at the John Hope Settlement House. She also directed several Head Start programs and day care centers

in Lima, Ohio, and Glendale, California. With remarkable energy, she established and directed a new infant-toddler center and preschool in Middletown, Rhode Island, while directing day care programs at Child and Family Services of Newport County. Anne was a visionary and gifted educator who improved the lives of many.

When Anne reached standard retirement age, not one to be idle, she took a position at the American Automobile Association. There she continued in her diligent, calm, and cheerful manner to assist travelers in Providence. She finally (and reluctantly) settled into her well-deserved retirement at the age of 80. Wherever Anne worked and lived, she was a source of support and guidance, and she stayed in touch with many of her mentees throughout her life.

Anne loved poetry and history, particularly hearing the stories of those who came before her. She also loved music, particularly the jazz of her youth and the folk music of the 50s and 60s. Spending time in nature brought a special joy to her.

Anne is survived by one son, Daniel, three daughters, Debora, Laura, and Sherrie, and nine grandchildren. She was also blessed with dear friends that she cherished, many of whom spoke at her memorial service. Anne's good works and relationships live on, and our lives are enriched for having known her.

PROVIDENCE MONTHLY MEETING, JUNE 9, 2024

SOUTHEAST QUARTERLY MEETING, JUNE 16, 2024

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**Carla Lurie Dowben**  
**January 18, 1932 – January 9, 2024**

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In January, we lost our valued member Carla Dowben. In April 2014, she had transferred her membership from Acton Friends Meeting (Concord, Massachusetts), where she had been a member since 1962. While at Providence she provided an important presence at online Meetings for Worship during covid, and she served ably on Ministry and Counsel Committee until the time of her death. A memorial service for her was held at the Providence meetinghouse on February 24, 2024.

Her husband, Robert, had died in 2019, and losing him had shaken her faith, but she found renewed meaning and purpose at Meeting, plus an opportunity to serve, and she attributed her restored faith to the support of the Meeting community. In gratitude, she donated many of her household and personal possessions to Meeting for a yard sale that was held June 8, 2024.

Raised in a Jewish household, she began attending Friends meeting in Philadelphia while in law school at Temple University, where she was the only woman in her class.

Later, in Chicago, Carla's sense of social justice exemplified itself in the kinds of cases she took. She worked for the Cook County Legal Aid Society and made a living defending the poor and recent immigrants from Europe. She was particularly empathetic to women's roles in the social order of the day. In one case, she obtained the release of a woman who had been wrongly incarcerated in a mental facility by demonstrating the false claims of the husband. Another case made it all the way to the Supreme Court.

In Dallas she was particularly interested in protecting people in the health care system, and she taught medical ethics in the medical



school there. She was a champion of women's rights and access to healthcare for all marginalized individuals.

Carla was instrumental in starting Acton Friends Meeting. While there, she took on the role of defending the legal rights of patients confined to mental hospitals. Many in the Acton meeting provided aid to her cause, networking with legislators and others. She contributed to the closure of several institutions for developmentally delayed individuals in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Carla loved nature, especially flowering plants, which she shared generously from her "Monet" garden. Her generosity was legion with her caregivers and their families. She had a great sense of humor, and her close friends considered her "a hoot." Her attitude was to keep evolving and growing throughout her life, and this will continue to serve as an inspiration for us all.

PROVIDENCE MONTHLY MEETING, JUNE 9, 2024

SOUTHEAST QUARTERLY MEETING, JUNE 16, 2024

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**Muriel Farrar**  
**January 8, 1949 – June 16, 2023**

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Every person who contributed to this minute used the same words to describe Muriel: kind and gentle.

Also: thoughtful. Muriel made sure we had snacks for hospitality after meeting. Muriel made sure we had a seasonal wreath on the front door, made sure we all got some of the snowdrops from Shirley Leslie's home, made sure there were flowers in the meetinghouse yard. She was ready with a hug, an offer of help, a small gift. She could show up unexpectedly on your birthday with food from Taco Bell and a small cake—with candles!

Born January 8, 1949, in Keene, New Hampshire, Muriel earned her Masters of Education at the University of New Hampshire and taught first and second grade at Hilltop Elementary School in Somersworth, New Hampshire. She later served as Assistant Principal at Milton Elementary School and dedicated her time to teaching students studying for their GED and HSET at the Strafford County Jail through Dover Adult Learning Center.

Muriel was much loved and valued in our meeting. She served as clerk for several years, including taking over as pastor for a time after Gonic's part-time pastor stepped down. Muriel took on so much more than the traditional clerk's role. She took on tasks large and small to care for both our building and our small community of Friends by providing hospitality, ensuring repairs were completed, and much more. In addition, she served as liaison to the Greater Rochester (NH) Interfaith Council, coordinating the annual CROP walk for hunger relief and hosting interfaith services. She helped to organize an ecumenical Women's World Day of Prayer service which was prepared by a sister meeting in Cuba. Muriel was active in USFW, served as treasurer for Dover Quarter, and as a member of the Yearly Meeting Finance Committee, including a term as clerk.

Toward the end of her life, Muriel suffered with dementia and was not able to attend meeting. We miss her gentle presence, her loving messages in worship, her singing, and so much more. During her memorial meeting we learned from her friends and family the many other ways that Muriel is missed.

Muriel is survived by her husband, Don Foster; her daughter, Alaysha Duncan; her grandchildren, Khairi and Ka'Marah; and her sister, Judith Glidden.

GONIC MONTHLY MEETING, JULY 14, 2024

DOVER QUARTERLY MEETING, SEPTEMBER 29, 2024

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**Eden Elizabeth Parker Grace**  
**November 23, 1968 - May 27, 2023**

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*On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”*

- Revelation 22:2 NRSV



Eden Grace was a generous, fearless, and profoundly ecumenical public Friend who dedicated her life to a transformative ministry of reconciliation. Eden truly did walk cheerfully over the earth, greeting that of God in everyone she met, listening deeply to them, and sharing in response her Christian faith, progressive values, historical study of Quaker and Christian theology, and unshakeable message of encouragement and love. Consistently and indefatigably, Eden brought her reconciling approach and capability to every organization and challenge.

**Life and Education**

Eden Parker was born on November 23, 1968, in Cambridge, Massachusetts to Lisa Frederick Parker and Lawrence (Larry) Parker. She and her sister, Wendy, grew up in Concord and Belmont, Massachusetts. She was a resident of Ocean Park, Maine, when she died.

In 1991, Eden married James (Jim) Thurston Condict under the care of Beacon Hill Meeting, both adding the surname Grace to their names. They had two sons, Isaiah Grace and Jesse Grace. They also joyfully accepted the invitation for Jim to be a known donor for some dear lesbian friends to become the biological father of M Stefan Walker and Serafina Walker. Later, Achieng Agutu and Justin Campbell each came to live with the Graces as teenagers and became part of the Grace family, along with remaining part of their families of origin. Eden and Jim opened their house in Medford, Massachusetts, to friends who

needed temporary housing, and had guests frequently stay with them when they lived in Kenya and Indiana. In Maine, they welcomed both individual guests and Quaker groups for retreats. Eden reveled in entertaining friends and extended family, and found that she was called to the ministry of hospitality.

Eden graduated from Concord Academy in 1986 and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in theater from Brown University in 1992. She received a Masters of Divinity from Episcopal Divinity School in 2001, along with an International Mission and Ecumenism certificate from the Boston Theological Institute. In the fall of 2022, Eden started a PhD program with the University of Birmingham (UK) through the Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, intending to write a thesis on “Decolonizing Quaker Mission.” From 2020 to 2022, Eden and Jim cared for Eden’s mother, Lisa, at their home in Maine, until Lisa’s death from Corticobasal Degeneration. This choice removed Eden from much of her work in public ministry. As her sister Wendy recalls, “It was a huge sacrifice for her, and another example of her incredible generosity and service to those she loved.”

### **Quaker Journey**

#### *Beacon Hill Meeting and New England Yearly Meeting*

Eden discovered Quakerism at the age of 13, when a school friend brought her along to a First Day School Committee meeting at Cambridge Friends Meeting; that friend remembers that Eden was eager to make a good impression and dressed up in heels and makeup for the occasion. After participating in the meeting’s lively program for middle-school-aged children, Eden became part of the New England Yearly Meeting Young Friends program and remained actively involved in NEYM from then on. Among other roles over her lifetime, she served as co-clerk of the Yearly Meeting’s Young Adult Friends group from 1988 to 1989; as presiding clerk of Permanent Board from 2003 to 2004; and as a member of the New England Yearly Meeting Faith & Practice Revision Committee from 2020 until her death in 2023. From 1993 to 1996, Eden joined the NEYM staff as an administrative associate. At NEYM’s 2009 annual sessions, she delivered the Bible Half Hour messages, beginning with the themes of Jubilee as rest and restoration, and concluding with Jesus and the prophetic tradition.

During their honeymoon in 1991, Eden and Jim attended the Friends World Committee for Consultation World Conference of Friends in Chavakali, Kenya, where they heard a powerful message from Miriam Were calling on Friends to turn to Christ to heal the divisions among us. This message, supported by other parts of the conference, had a profound impact on Eden and started her on a journey of

Christian faith that continued and grew. It was a turning point that set the stage for her subsequent study of theology, passion for Christian unity, and vocation as a Friends' minister.

In 1992, Eden and six other NEYM Young Adult Friends formed the Free Grace Undying Love Full Gospel Quaker Choir Sing and Be Saved, an a cappella group that was to become another demonstration of her spiritual gift of kinship. When it came to comfort with singing about Jesus, the members of the choir reflected the full diversity of Friends in New England, but Eden's confidence preaching the Gospel—even before her career as a public Friend was underway—helped the group learn that sometimes Friends could sing words that they couldn't say.

Why and how did this living witness come to encourage and then initiate the ministries of reconciliation for which she is remembered? In many ways, Eden's remarkable witness can be traced to the beginning of her Quaker journey. Not long after joining Beacon Hill Friends Meeting in 1990, she began identifying as a Christian Friend in the heart of this unprogrammed, historically non-christocentric Quaker meeting—sharing the joy of her growing faith which was not inconsistent with her feminism, her bisexual identity, and her regard and respect for the faith journeys of others, but in fact undergirded and supported these qualities. During the years of Eden's presence in the meeting, she was part of a core of Friends who were both openly gay or bisexual, and also openly Christian. These Friends' solidarity with each other was inextricable from their deep loyalty to the meeting as a whole, and from their care for the exacting traditions of unprogrammed worship; they were a great light among us, and a source of support to Eden as she began to explore her calling.

Over time, as Eden became recognized as a leader, she drew on her own life and faith as examples of God's power to reconcile. Her courageous witness in each place she called home required sacrifices but yielded rich rewards, as her living testimony to our capacity to be one united Quaker movement kept hearts open to her message in many unlikely places.

Yet even as Eden traveled and her ministry far from Boston deepened, her active relationship with her home meeting dwindled, due to several factors—among them her own uneven care for the regular communication and visits that would have kept her better connected; BHFM's lack of unity to formally record ministers, which foreclosed this option for Eden and was a source of lasting sorrow for her; and Friends' diminishing ability, in our meeting as in others, to fully staff committees. Nevertheless, there were times when Eden's ministry was

a direct and welcomed gift to her home meeting, and also times when BHFM provided real support to Eden and the Grace family.

#### *Friends United Meeting*

When Beacon Hill Meeting received a letter from another Friends meeting with very different social values, Eden volunteered to help draft a response. This kindled an interest in reconciling differences among Friends, and led her to become involved with Friends United Meeting (FUM). Eden was a member of the FUM General Board from 1993 to 2002, serving on its Finance Committee, contributing to FUM's review and reaffirmation of its ecumenical commitments, and facilitating the creation of the Ecumenical Relations Task Group.

In 2004, Eden and Jim moved with Isaiah and Jesse to Kisumu, Kenya, to found FUM's Africa Ministries Office together with John Muhanji as the director. As FUM field staff, Eden had a special heart for the most vulnerable. She was instrumental in establishing the Girl Child Education program in Turkana and Samburu, to enable girls to complete their secondary education and increase their life skills for themselves and their future families, instead of early marriage. When a meeting of Kenyan Quaker leaders was about to be canceled due to post-election violence in 2007, Eden strongly encouraged them instead to meet and repurpose the meeting to discern their response to the violence and resulting trauma. Out of that meeting was born the Friends Church Peace Team, which has since trained thousands of Kenyans in Alternatives to Violence, Healing and Rebuilding our Communities, trauma healing, nonviolent social change, transformative mediation, and more.

Eden closely supervised the administration of the Friends Hospital in Kaimosi and worked with the Friends Lugulu Mission Hospital on building staff housing and other projects. She was an ambassador for FUM throughout East Africa. She worked tirelessly to plan and host mission trips and conferences, and attended to the physical and spiritual needs of foreign visitors to Kenya, she and Jim often hosting them in their home.

From 2013 to 2020 Eden served as FUM's Global Ministries Director based in Richmond, Indiana. In this role, she encouraged and nurtured new leadership in FUM, especially by women, and maintained and expanded FUM's ministry of spiritual renewal and service to marginalized people. One volunteer recalls, "After returning from years in Kenya to her position in global ministry at FUM, Eden developed a compelling vision of the unfolding future of the Religious Society of Friends around the world and in North America especially."

### *West Richmond Friends Meeting*

When the Graces returned to the U.S. and made Richmond, Indiana, their home, they became active in West Richmond Friends Meeting and remained so after they moved to Maine in 2020. Friends there recall that “she had a broad sense of what worship could be ... and so she cared for every aspect of meeting for worship at West Richmond. She gave significant vocal ministry, both in prepared messages and out of the silence; she lent her soprano voice to the choir; and she served on our Worship Committee. Particularly in that group, she encouraged us to expect more from ourselves and from God in our time together: to truly seek the presence of the Divine, and not to be satisfied with routine.” She gave special support and encouragement to young women exploring a call to ministry, or who might be nudged in that direction, and helped oversee the Richmond Young Friends youth program, in which Jesse found spiritual community and encouragement.

### **Ecumenical Eden**

#### *Friends Committee on National Legislation*

From 2018 until shortly before her death in 2023, Eden served in governance roles for the Friends Committee on National Legislation, whose work she loved and championed. She is particularly remembered for diving in on a revision of the organization’s bylaws, a form of service that became something of an Eden specialty. FCNL’s general secretary during this period remembers: “Eden had a spiritual presence, a force of energy that could be both serious and playful — her energy attracted people to her. Eden’s love of God and her ability to convey how God loves humans inspired us. She was a woman of faith who made Quaker life more vibrant for all those who knew her.”

#### *Massachusetts Council of Churches*

While studying at Episcopal Divinity School, Eden took courses in constructive theology at Andover Newton Theological School, missiology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and an independent study in Orthodox theology at the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Studying at these various schools both resulted from and reinforced her interest in ecumenism.

In the late 1990s, Eden joined the board of the Massachusetts Council of Churches, where she worked with dedication alongside staff and volunteers and studied the history, theory, and practice of the ecumenical movement. This involvement helped open the way for her later involvement with the World Council of Churches.

#### *World Council of Churches*

Eden was an appointed FUM delegate to the World Council of Churches 1998 Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe. In a 2001 keynote



address, she described what occurred at the Harare Assembly when 5,000 worshiping Christians from all over the world were gathered under one enormous tent. Tears began to flow “as our bodies moved together, and we were seized by the Holy Spirit” and “we became the body of Christ.” Only then came their “baptism by fire” as a fierce thunderstorm began to shake the tent itself. This was Eden’s “... point of no return for me on my personal quest for a vision of the reconciled Christian Church.” Among the many threads of Eden’s life, a bright one connected this transformative experience to her role, years later, as FUM Director of Global Ministries, where her work with Friends in East Africa—who have long struggled with deep cultural, tribal, and theological differences—became a proving ground for her steady, wise, and encouraging leadership. Friends back home in New England, too, were blessed by Eden’s powerful encounter in Harare for years afterward through the quality of her participation in Quaker business of all kinds; she never forgot that vision of unity, and was often able, through both silent prayer and spoken ministry, to help those worshipping with her to glimpse it too.

At the Harare Assembly, Eden accepted appointments to the WCC Central Committee (1998–2006) and the Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the WCC (1999–2001), where she gained a nuanced understanding of Orthodox ecclesiology and ecumenical concerns. She used this understanding to help negotiate successful resolutions to issues raised by the Orthodox member churches, especially in the areas of worship and decision-making. In decision-making, the WCC had been using Robert’s Rules of Order, whereas the Orthodox churches had always used a consensus-based approach. Eden contributed to this work a Quaker perspective on voteless decision-making and helped to shape the final proposal from the Commission for the WCC to adopt a consensus-based process, which was approved at the 2006 WCC Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

At the 2006 Porto Alegre WCC Assembly, and again at the 2013 Assembly in Busan, South Korea, Eden was the minute-taker whose job was to capture the emerging consensus in decision sessions, typing on a computer whose screen was projected on monitors where the thousands of attendees could see every keystroke. In the editing following the sessions she often discussed issues with delegates to formulate clear language for dissenting opinions to the satisfaction of the individuals and churches involved. Sometimes this responsibility required listening and questioning to draw out the nature of the dissent, as well as counseling individuals in distress.

## **Influence and Legacy**

As one Friend summed up simply, “the gift of her presence was awesome. When you were with Eden, you knew that she was fully present with you and seeing things in you that perhaps you had not yet seen yourself. She taught seekers how to be better seekers, she taught students to be better students, she taught choirs to be better choirs, she taught preachers to be better preachers, she taught leaders to be better leaders.”

One of Eden’s longtime FUM colleagues recalled her personal strengths and challenges: “She was fiercely protective of her family, friends, and anyone vulnerable. She encouraged and empowered women and carried great hopes for the Religious Society of Friends, especially her beloved yearly meeting. Eden was challenged to balance her powerful intellect and personality with her tendency to overwork, sometimes frantically, and could occasionally be unconsciously critical of others. She occasionally described herself as a ‘bear’ or ‘bull’ when regretting saying or doing something that others found aggressive. Yet as a mother bear, she was protective—of people, matters of justice, good institutions, and meaningful work. And her bullish side also provided moral courage and strength of personality to make a difference in situations where others might be silent or still.”

Eden was a published author and sought-after speaker who delivered keynote addresses and prepared messages to dozens of gatherings of Friends. Much of this work is preserved online, available to seekers and scholars. Her final publication, *On Earth as it is in Heaven: The Kingdom of God and the Yearning of Creation*, was the basis of the 2019 Swarthmore Lecture, and is a synthesis of many themes from her life’s work: acknowledging the frightening scale of the world’s injustice and need; explaining, with erudition and clarity, the applicability of Friends’ core tenets to today’s challenges; lifting up the examples of diverse other ministers; and above all, calling us to surrender our fear and instead trust utterly, joyfully in God.

Eden’s early spiritual life was nourished by her yearly meeting and the wider world of Quakers. Her gift for leadership and vision were grounded not only in Friends’ practices and traditions, but also in the beloved communities that surrounded her. The values of equity and justice in the testimonies Eden learned and witnessed in all these communities surely influenced the hope expressed in her Ph.D. proposal to “decolonize Quaker mission,” a major piece of work she was just getting started on at the time of her death. She planned to trace the roots of settler colonialism in the Kenya mission and explore how we

might strive against the internalized “colonialism” that prevents God’s intended right relationship between people and peoples.

All who had the good fortune to hear Friend Eden’s spoken ministry know that she was a praise giver! In her warm and generous spirit, we, too, say Hallelujah! Thank you, thank you, thank you to the Divine Inspirer who both liberated and guided her to serve.

BEACON HILL FRIENDS MEETING, DECEMBER 15, 2024

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING PERMANENT BOARD FOR SALEM

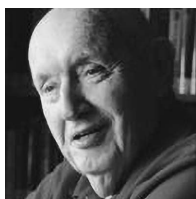
QUARTERLY MEETING, MARCH 1, 2025

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## Memorial Minute for Rudman J. Ham

### July 22, 1931 – January 24, 2022

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Rudman J. Ham was a longtime member of Wellesley Friends Meeting, who served the Meeting as Presiding Clerk at least once, and contributed to the life of the Meeting in countless other ways.

Many words have been used to accurately describe Rud—dignified, wise, gentle, dedicated, warm, and quick with his wonderful sense of humor. He was a conscientious leader. When Rud retired from Children's Hospital, one of the physicians told him to never let retirement get in the way of his work. Rud's life demonstrates that he took this advice to heart.

He was born in Dover, New Hampshire on July 22, 1931, to a Quaker family who were members of the Dover monthly meeting. He was a proud alumnus of Westtown School in West Chester, Pennsylvania. After graduating from the University of New Hampshire he registered as a conscientious objector with his draft board. He did his alternative service with the International Volunteer Services (IVS), helping bring livestock and farming assistance to a Kurdish village in Northern Iraq.

He and his wife, Ruth (Alden), raised a family of five children in Natick, Massachusetts, spending summers in Wells, Maine. Ruth passed away after a long illness in 2000. Subsequently he met and married Judie (Beard) under the care of Wellesley Meeting. He frequently remarked that he had the good fortune to marry two wonderful women.

Rud's entire professional career was at the Boston Children's Hospital, where he retired as Vice President of Operations in 1995. He loved to recount how he applied the Quaker principles of consensus to the many projects that he shepherded to completion. During and following his career at Children's Hospital, Rud took on numerous volunteer leadership responsibilities. Rud was a member of the Fidelity

Non-Profit Management Foundation Board from 1979–2015. He was a founder, board member, and the first Chair of the Fidelity Charitable Board, serving from 1991 until 2010. In recognition of his invaluable service, he was named Trustee Emeritus in 2010. Rud served on the board of the Lincoln and Moses Brown Schools in Providence, Rhode Island, as a representative of the New England Yearly Meeting. He was a founder of the Board of Trustees for the Fenway High School, a public pilot school in Boston. He also served on the boards of the Martha Eliot and Dimock Community Health Centers in Boston.

Locally he served on the Middlesex Savings Bank Board of Trustees where he established the Middlesex Savings Charitable Foundation. He also served on the boards of the Bacon Free Library, the Foundation for MetroWest (formerly Crossroads Community Foundation) and the Natick Historical Society. Rud was instrumental in starting the Natick Community Organic Farm Advisory Board and served as both a member and Chair. He was previously a member of the Natick Center Associates and The Center for Arts in Natick boards, and served on the Leonard Morse Hospital Building Committee.

During his final illness small groups from Wellesley Meeting gathered weekly to worship with him at the residences that provided his care. Rud passed away quietly at the Mary Ann Morse Nursing Home on Monday, January 24, 2022. Rud woke up that morning singing and in good cheer—exemplifying how he lived his entire life of 90-plus years.

WELLESLEY FRIENDS MEETING, JANUARY 12, 2025

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING PERMANENT BOARD FOR SALEM

QUARTERLY MEETING, MARCH 1, 2025

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Ruth Ann Hawkins  
August 10, 1945 – October 13, 2022

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Ruth Ann (Elsaesser) Hawkins was born in Paterson, New Jersey, on October 25, 1923, and died on October 10, 2023, fifteen days before her 100th birthday.

Ruth's formal education included an undergraduate music education degree with a German minor at New Jersey College for Women in 1948. She began her professional career teaching music to all grades in Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey. She was an accomplished violinist, playing in several orchestras and string quartets. During the summers, she directed a Girl Scout summer camp. Wanting to grow in her professional development, she attended the graduate program in social work at New York University. During this time, she attended a Fellowship of Reconciliation conference at the Westbury, New York, Quaker meetinghouse. Here, she met her future husband, Bruce Hawkins, who was an instructor in physics at Yale.

Ruth and Bruce were married on June 3, 1957, and moved to Oberlin, Ohio. Ruth worked as a clinical social worker in Elyria and gave birth to two daughters, Judith (Judy) and Patricia, born in 1959 and 1961, respectively. For many years, the Hawkins family enjoyed sailing, with the ultimate experience being a cruise on a square-rigged ship in the Leeward Islands in 2010. Other family activities included a love for the outdoors and singing Girl Scout songs, folk songs, and holiday carols, which Ruth accompanied on the piano.

Ruth grew up Presbyterian, and while in Ohio from 1957 to 1961, Ruth and Bruce were Methodists but participated in activities associated with Oberlin Quakers.

Ruth and Bruce settled in Northampton in 1961, when Bruce received a position in the Physics department at Smith College. They started attending the Mount Toby Friends Meeting, with Ruth becom-

ing a member around 1965. A group of Quakers in Northampton, Massachusetts, became a worship group under the care of Mount Toby in 1991. The first meetings of the worship group met in Ruth and Bruce's living room. They were among the founding members when the worship group became the Northampton Friends Meeting in 1994. Ruth was less interested in Quaker theology or mysticism but grounded in instinctual respect for others, working tirelessly for peace and justice.

Once both of Ruth's daughters attended preschool, Ruth was employed by the Holyoke, Massachusetts, YWCA and organized several annual peace and social justice high school conferences at Elms College. She was later employed as a school adjustment counselor in the Northampton, Goshen, Westhampton, and Southampton, Massachusetts, school districts. She introduced a personal safety curriculum in the late '70s and '80s, which helped children recognize and reject inappropriate attention. She led parent education classes based on Alfred Adler's ideas, finding his perspective more community and family-oriented than other early psychological thought. She also utilized her social work skills within the Quaker meeting, empathetically supporting parents with kindness and integrity.

Ruth lived her faith, led by her Quaker spirituality and tenacious optimism. She let her life speak through continuous outreach, organizing, and activism. The core of her spiritual commitment evolved while coming of age during World War II. Having both Protestant and Jewish German relatives, she identified with the profound horror and senselessness of war. In 1948, she participated in a youth hostel group that traveled through post-war Germany, observing the devastation of war. After leading several hostel groups through North America, North Africa, and Western Europe, she served on the board of American Youth Hostels. She filled a seat vacated by Norman Rockefeller Jr, who said, "It's in your hands now, Ruth."

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Ruth was a volunteer recruiter for the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in Ohio. Upon moving to Northampton, she revived the local chapter and recruited Frances Crowe to follow her as president. Ruth also co-founded the thirty-year-old and still vigorous Northampton peace vigil, where she would hand out leaflets on the cold and sunless side of the street.

During the late '60s and early '70s, Ruth and her daughter Patricia attended anti-Vietnam war protests at Westover Air Force Base. On one occasion, Ruth was arrested and detained for blocking the gates with the encouragement of her daughter by her side.

In the mid-80s, Mt. Toby became a Sanctuary Meeting, welcoming two undocumented refugees from Guatemala. Later, other fam-

ily members came to join the original two. The support committee included members from many local religious organizations, and Ruth became one of the most active members. Twenty years later, when the last refugee obtained a green card, Ruth was still actively engaged with the family. This family viewed Ruth as a “most generous, generous person.” The youngest family member, a son, regarded Ruth as a grandmother and was a pallbearer at her burial.

Ruth was a long-time member of the Mount Toby Peace and Social Concerns committee and an active participant in the Western Massachusetts American Friends Service Committee. Along with Frances Crowe, also a member of Mount Toby, Ruth influenced the meeting by keeping matters of peace and justice at the forefront.

Ruth served on several marriage clearness committees, including for two women in 1991 at the Mount Toby Meeting when same-sex marriages were still not legally sanctioned.

Ruth spent countless years with the organization of Social Workers for Peace and Justice (SWPJ). She edited the newsletter, served on the state board, and helped students organize an annual high school conference sponsored by SWPJ.

In her retirement, she continued activism with the Northampton peace vigil and sang with the Raging Grannies. On one notable occasion, just before a congressional vote on the Iraq war, the Raging Grannies sang in front of Congressman Neal’s home; he came out and conversed with the group, not making any commitment regarding how he would vote. Two days later, he voted against the war.

After years of receiving Bruce’s loving care in their home, Ruth spent her twilight months at the Atrium in Agawam, supported by Bruce, her daughters, and the Northampton Friends Meeting. She was buried at Mount Toby, surrounded by many old and new friends.

Ruth is sadly missed by those who had the privilege of knowing her. She was a beloved member of Mount Toby and Northampton Friends Meetings and throughout the Pioneer Valley.

NORTHAMPTON FRIENDS MEETING, SEPTEMBER 8, 2024

CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING, OCTOBER 5, 2024



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**Julie Heagney**  
**September 6, 1945 – July 5, 2023**

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Julie Heagney was born in Madisonville, Kentucky, where her father's family, rooted in the South, were from. She grew up in Carbondale, Illinois, where she also attended college, graduating third in her class at Southern Illinois University. By her reckoning, her early years were quite parochial and imbued with a racist perspective that for the rest of her life she sought to reject. Following college, she moved east and began her journey away from her roots toward an understanding of the hard lessons of racism that her southern Illinois childhood had left her with. That journey ultimately brought her to membership in the Society of Friends and a second career as a teacher of English as a Second Language and director of Framingham's Literacy Unlimited program.

Julie was ever a seeker, rarely satisfied to simply accept the unacceptable. She was also resilient in the face of the many obstacles life presented, resting always in her compassion and love for her family and community. When her PhD in English Literature from Boston College did not lead to the academic position she would have expected, she reinvented herself and used her writing skills first in Vermont and then in Massachusetts in state government planning. Not satisfied with this path, she eventually opted for early retirement and returned to graduate school to get a Masters in linguistics, which then opened the door to the second career she came to love. Along the way, she married Terry and together they adopted Rafa as a young boy from El Salvador. Rafa was a gifted soccer player and so Julie became the quintessential soccer mom, supporting him in his athletic pursuits. When Rafa married and had two sons with his then-wife, Julie warmly embraced his wife and her daughters by a former marriage, as well as her two grandsons, providing the stability and security they needed. Even after Rafa and his wife parted ways, Julie remained invested and

involved with her former daughter-in-law and her step-granddaughters, all of whom spoke poignantly of the love they felt for and from Julie at her memorial meeting.

Julie's capacity for love and compassion was generously shared with Framingham Friends Meeting where she had many roles. She served as presiding clerk of the meeting as well as clerk of the Peace, Justice and Earth Care Committee for many years. She also served on Ministry and Counsel where she was also clerk, was very active on the Working Group on Racism and was the meeting's representative to the Framingham Interfaith Community Association for several years. She served on the New England Yearly Meeting's Puente de Amigos Committee supporting the "bridge of love" between New England and Cuba Yearly Meetings. Beyond her service, Julie was a good friend and caring confidante to many members of the meeting who found in her a generous and kind heart.

Her journey into Quakerism deepened with her participation in the Nurturing Faithfulness program in 2017–2018. Then she experienced the "cracking open that allows the Light in" which deepened her sense of the mystery of the Divine and which sustained her as she approached her end far too soon last July. In her final years she was a gentle and attentive participant in a faithfulness group formed as part of this program, generously sharing her life with the other participants, and likewise sharing her deep wisdom.

Julie was and remained a seeker. As she faced the reality of her impending death, understandable fears and doubts arose. There were so many things left undone in her life. She had started a memoir she wanted to finish, but more important, she wanted to be sure that Terry, Rafa, and her grandchildren were going to be okay. One of her final requests was that we rehome an exotic frog for her. At the end, she was still thinking of others, concerned for their welfare, wanting to be sure they were okay. Ever the writer, she wrote farewell notes to her family members. It was that generous love and her wish to live from that loving place that we have all missed in the months since she died. That love for her family, for her community and for all creation is what defined her life and is her legacy.

FRAMINGHAM FRIENDS MEETING, APRIL 21, 2024.

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING PERMANENT BOARD FOR SALEM

QUARTERLY MEETING, SEPTEMBER 28, 2024

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Elizabeth Kincaid-Ehlers  
October 2, 1933 – January 7, 2024

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*GIRLS DON'T DO THAT*

*That refrain clanged with menace  
over my youth*

*“Girls don’t do that.” Well  
I did. And was not sorry, am not sorry, only  
pissed that “NO” was everywhere.  
Wearing bluejeans? Taking  
physics? Wanting to study  
rocks? Girls did that.  
So there.*

(Excerpt from Elizabeth Kincaid-Ehler’s poem “Girls Don’t Do That”)



Elizabeth was a complex and complicated person as reflected in the diverse range of her academic and professional accomplishments and interests. Even for those who knew her well, she remained a bit of an enigma, but had a strong voice, unassuming presence and clear, often boldly worded convictions. In many ways her life experiences are captured in her poems, described by her publisher as “a rich variety of moods ranging from despair to hope, resignation to determination, fury to love. And always there is that wry (and sometimes rueful) wit at play”

Elizabeth was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where she spent her early years. She later attended the University of Michigan. While there, she received a Hopwood Award in poetry. She left the University during her junior year to marry William Howe Rueckert and moved with him to Troy, New York. She returned to Ann Arbor to complete

her B.A. the following year. While raising her four sons and following her husband's career moves, she also managed to earn an M.A. from the University of Illinois and a Ph.D. from the University of Rochester.

Following the end of her marriage in 1979, Elizabeth moved to Connecticut as a visiting writer-in-residence at Trinity College and decided to settle in the Hartford area. Here she continued a variety of teaching assignments that had initially begun at the University of Illinois, Rochester Institute of Technology, the University of Rochester, and Eastman School of Music. After her writing residency at Trinity College, Elizabeth taught part-time at the University of Connecticut and as a visiting writer in several Connecticut public school systems. At one school, a 5th grader interviewed her for the school newsletter and although she had been introduced as Dr. Kincaid-Ehlers, in her published interview, she was called "Dr. Kinky Waller." In Elizabeth's words, her irrepressible alter ego had finally been named and she thereafter wrote many poems under that name.

In the mid-1980s, Elizabeth followed another one of her many callings and retrained as a psychotherapist. She maintained an office at the Hartford Family Institute where she continued to assist her clients well into her eighties. She was a religious skeptic who questioned the existence of a Christian God while also being a skillful practitioner of Gestalt Therapy, which embraced and incorporated deep spiritual components.

Throughout her life Elizabeth was an accomplished writer, who, according to family legend, began making poems when she was three, engaging her mother as amanuensis. She occasionally sent her poems out into the world and eventually published three books of collected poems with Antrim House Books. In addition, her poetry and literary and psychological essays appeared in numerous collections, academic journals, and books.

Elizabeth read her poems at the inaugural Sunken Garden Poetry Festival at the Hill-Stead Museum and gave countless other poetry readings over many years. She enjoyed her regular meetings with a long-time group of poets who both sustained each other's work and gave each other a hard time. She received numerous awards for her writing, including the North Country Poetry Prize and a Pushcart Prize.

In addition, Elizabeth was a talented musician who played the piano and dulcimer and had a particular fondness for bluegrass music and opera. She hiked, skied, and loved to travel, making two cross-country driving trips as well as visits to Alaska, Europe, New Mexico, and Hawaii. She lived in Italy (traveling across the Atlantic alone at age 22 on a cargo ship), England, Canada, and throughout the United

States. But the one place that mattered most to her was the Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence River, where she had a house on Stave Island to which she returned every summer until she could no longer get in and out of the boat.

Elizabeth's introduction to Quakers was in England while participating in a peace march in London during the 1970s. She first attended a Quaker meeting, Hampstead Meeting, around this time. Sometime later, while at Cambridge University for a year-long post-doctoral assignment in poetry, she attended Cambridge Friends Meeting at Jesus Lane, where she became a member. After she found Hartford Meeting in 1990, the meeting became a place of great comfort and fulfillment for her. Over many years, she regularly occupied the same rear spot along the western wall of the meetinghouse, and at times could be overheard offering her opinions or sharing a running commentary about the messages and announcements of various Friends. She participated in the meeting's book club and provided a great service by proof-reading the meeting's newsletter for a number of years. This was a task for which she was well-suited as she had a keen eye for punctuation, word selection, and formatting. She valued her participation in several creative listening groups, the most recent on Zoom.

Elizabeth was a fighter who survived polio as a child and then cancer twice as an adult. She transformed her anguish at the latter into her third book of published poems titled *How Do I Hate Thee?* While she did not suffer fools lightly, her acerbic wit and occasionally sardonic comments belied deep compassion and a burning desire to see peace and justice prevail. Even as a child, she was moved by issues of social justice and felt called to activism. She became a lifelong advocate for the environment, civil rights, women's rights, and peace, participating in many protests, sometimes as an individual by simply holding a sign on a street corner and sometimes as part of a group.

The advent of covid was a reminder to Elizabeth that her world was shrinking and she uneasily reconciled herself to her new reality, limited not only by the pandemic but increasingly by her mobility restrictions. Her presence with us in worship, although generally quiet, is much missed.

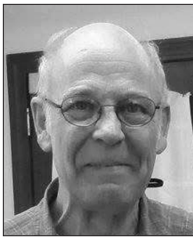
HARTFORD MONTHLY MEETING, JUNE 16, 2024

CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING, MAY 4, 2025

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**Christopher McCandless**  
**September 10, 1946 – March 22, 2024**

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We grieve the loss of our friend, Christopher McCandless, even while we celebrate his presence among us and the ministry he shared with us.

Christopher grew up in an active, devout Quaker family, educated in the practical and the mystical reality of Quaker thought and practice. He helped to build and tend the family homestead in the Eastern Pennsylvania woods, where his family intentionally lived below the poverty line as war tax resisters. Throughout his life, he lived into the importance of family, the importance of community, and the loving presence of the Divine in daily life.

Christopher's life of service began early. In 1965, at 18, he helped register voters in the South and supported the building of a community center in Canton, Mississippi, returning in 1967. Those experiences shaped him: he reflected on being schooled there in racial equality, humility, respect, and the visceral impacts of white supremacy and its disruption until his final days. A conscientious objector to the Vietnam War, he counseled others about the draft in Chicago and in the Bay Area. He searched for and encountered "that of God" in everyone whose path he crossed. His theology embraced loving others; his vision was of joyful communion. He found a fierce, brilliant, and committed partner in building community in Jean Margaret (Watson) McCandless, his partner in activism, service, and leadership for over 55 years. They imparted these values to their children, in turn.

Christopher had many talents. He used those gifts not to bring attention to himself but to bring together community and to celebrate the presence of Spirit in our midst. A pastor among unprogrammed Friends, he ministered to his community, nurturing curiosity, and insistent on the full participation and joy of children, young people, and

people with disabilities. A mentor to many, he consciously offered a model of gentle, engaged fatherhood. His strong singing voice, his memory and care for the details of our lives, his skills as a carpenter were all fodder for service. He approached clerking Yearly Meeting sessions or fixing a broken window in the meetinghouse with the same joyful zeal, drawing others into service with him.

Like his father before him, Christopher's witness was to "speak truth and do truth." He was stubborn in his own faith while embracing the differences of understanding alive in the Religious Society of Friends. He believed that the Christ Spirit could manifest in anyone, in any place, of any faith tradition, and lived actively into that belief. He was a welcoming, loving presence—often the first person to greet a newcomer to meeting, always eager to enter in deep conversation. He held and freely shared the historic memory of our meeting and the wider world of Friends. His calm, competent manner, his centered presence underlined a love and respect for each of us and for our community.

Christopher asked that his memorial minute might simply read, "he was of some use." We would say more. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Matthew 25:21.

BURLINGTON MONTHLY MEETING, MAY 19, 2024

NORTHWEST QUARTERLY MEETING, JUNE 2, 2024

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**Jean Margaret McCandless**  
**(July 26, 1943 - April 27, 2024)**

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Jean often shared this “Old Quaker Prayer,” adapted from William Penn, with Friends who were grieving:

*We seem to give her back to thee dear Lord, who gavest her to us. Yet as thou didst not lose her in giving, so we have not lost her by her return. For what is thine is ours always; and life is eternal and love is immortal, and what we sometimes*

*call death is only a horizon, and a horizon is nothing but the limit of our sight.*

A fierce advocate for peace and justice, champion of the vulnerable and disadvantaged, skilled therapist, mentor and guide to many individuals and families, coalition and community builder, Jean Margaret McCandless died peacefully at her home across from the meetinghouse in Burlington, Vermont, on April 27, 2024.

Born to labor activist Ben Segal and city planner Ruth Urice, Jean was adopted at birth by their friends, educator George Watson and social worker and feminist theologian Elizabeth Grill Watson, newly convinced Quakers who were attracted to the peace and social justice testimonies of Friends. Jean grew up immersed in Quaker thought and action: Elizabeth and George went on to become leading lights of 20th century liberal Quakerism through their writing and activism, leading workshops, traveling, writing and speaking amongst Friends. George became an educational leader at several colleges and universities, including Friends World College, and Elizabeth a respected author and minister.

During Jean’s childhood, the family settled in the majority African-American Hyde Park neighborhood in Chicago, where Jean and her brother John were the only white children in their elementary class.



White flight enabled the Watsons to buy Frank Lloyd Wright's Heller House. The children were taught to tell visitors that the house was "the flowering of his prairie style." They skated on salt down the long hallways and once spread toothpaste on the banisters. As a conscientious objector during World War II, George's draft board assigned him alternative service as a janitor in a psychiatric ward, despite the fact that he was a father with three children under age 5. Elizabeth spent the war as a staff member for Jane Addams' Hull House, modeling engaged community work while of necessity bringing the children with her. Afterward, Elizabeth drew on her experience to offer input into the curriculum, as secretary of the newly formed University of Chicago School of Social Services Administration. Jean later received her Master's degree there.

Her parents' lives and work served as patterns and examples to Jean: their commitment to making education broadly accessible, to service, social work, justice—and to ongoing revelation, throughout their lives, to care for all who are children of God. Her early years were steeped in Quaker thought and action, learning the essentials of equality, justice, hospitality and love. The local chapter of the Committee on Racial Equality gathered in the family's basement.

As a young woman, Jean attended Scattergood Friends School, where she loved to dance and tumble and edited the school paper. She successfully led the campaign to convince her parents to adopt three German sisters, the three Watson sisters' penpals, after the girls were orphaned in their teens. After an English degree from Grinnell College, she obtained her master's in Social Work Administration from University of Chicago School of Social Services Administration. She met Christopher McCandless through their active leadership in Young Friends of North America during the sixties and early seventies, organizing national gatherings and workcamps. Sparks flew, initially over a disagreement on a point of Quaker doctrine and practice. They married in the shadow of the 1968 Chicago Democratic Convention's protests.

Jean created beautiful stained glass panels, sometimes installed alongside Christopher's fine woodworking. Some of her work still hangs in her home. With Christopher, she took part in civil disobedience, acting as a marshal in civil rights and peace demonstrations, and helping to organize humanitarian aid to North Vietnam, though it was Christopher who helped to deliver Thanksgiving dinner to American Indian Movement members during their occupation of Alcatraz Island. The bond the two formed, the family they created together, grew ever stronger as time passed and they advocated for their children and community.

Much of Jean's calling in the world—her ministry—was in fierce advocacy and service, centering the wellbeing of the marginalized and amplifying their voices and power. Jean worked with children, families, and elders for over 60 years. In her professional life she developed and ran statewide programs that supported foster children, the elderly, people with disabilities, farmers, and farmworkers. She was stalwart in providing safety, space, and support for those who had been abused or underserved. As the first executive director of the Burlington-area shelter for survivors of intimate partner violence, Jean gave out “dragonslayer awards” to those who had taken on particularly daunting challenges. She herself insistently integrated creative, trauma-informed approaches to build capacity for self-advocacy and independence in her own family and in her work.

A tireless coalition-builder, in the last dozen years of her career Jean worked to integrate agricultural medicine into Vermont's system of primary care by creating and leading the Vermont Farm Health and Safety Coalition. She insisted that the Coalition include those serving the wellbeing not just of farmers, but also of farmworkers. That and other cross-fertilizations the coalition fostered broadened and deepened services and safety for those working in Vermont agriculture. The trainings she designed and delivered with nationwide experts inform the backbone of the Milk with Dignity Code of Conduct, an equitable labor code that protects hundreds of Vermont farmworkers each day.

In our Society she worked tirelessly to support children's and adults' learning and inclusion, both in our monthly meeting and in New England Yearly Meeting. She loved our meeting's library, frequently rolling out selections of books before worship to tempt worshipers, as well as being the moving force behind a delightful and expansive Children and Family bookstore at Yearly Meeting Sessions. She served on and clerked many Yearly and monthly meeting committees. Whether as Session's clerk, co-coordinating Yearly Meeting anchor groups, sitting on Permanent Board, offering workshops with Christopher throughout the Yearly Meeting on youth and adult religious education, facilitating the inclusion of children with special needs at Sessions, or redistributing Quaker resources in her co-leadership of the Legacy Gift Committee, Jean always had an eye on providing places where Spirit could thrive.

We have an enduring image of Jean's hospitality, even during the pandemic, as her memory was failing. At the close of meeting in the parking lot on cold winter mornings, wool hat pulled snugly, she would be smiling broadly while handing out hot cider and encourag-

ing conversation. As in the Psalm she helped First Day School children to dramatically act out:

*If I take the wings of the morning,  
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;  
Even there shall thy hand lead me,  
And thy right hand shall hold me. (Psalm 139:9-10)*

We grieve Jean's passing even as the echoes of her presence continue to reverberate. Jean's ministry lives on—in our library, in our First Day School, and whenever we share food and a bit of conversation after worshipping together. We are so grateful for her; we are so blessed. Her passing, so soon after Christopher, reunites their combined energies, restored undimmed in a joyful burst into the universe. May we draw on it to help sustain our own fierce commitments to nurture communities in the service of peace and justice.

BURLINGTON MONTHLY MEETING, MAY 19, 2024

NORTHWEST QUARTERLY MEETING, JUNE 2, 2024

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**Donna McDaniel**  
**(October 28, 1934 – July 9, 2024)**

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Donna Lee Bowen McDaniel was born in Chicago, Illinois, in October 1934 and lived her childhood in Jamestown, RI, from where she took a ferry to high school in Newport each school day. She graduated magna cum laude from Tufts University with a major in history and then went on to Boston University where she earned a Masters in Education in guidance and counseling.

As a young adult, she worked with the US Department of Defense schools in Germany and Japan, where she developed her life-long love of travel and immersed herself in other cultures. Returning to the US, she raised her two sons and pursued her love of writing as a journalist with the *Middlesex News* and the local *Southborough Villager* newspapers.

In the late 1980s, while accompanying her younger son in support of his own spiritual exploration, she found a home among Friends at Framingham Meeting. She soon became active on numerous committees at the meeting and eventually became an important link to the wider Quaker world when Friends General Conference invited her, along with Vanessa Julye, to write a book on Quakers and their relationship with African Americans. *Fit for Freedom, Not for Friendship: Quakers, African Americans, and the Myth of Racial Justice* was published by FGC in 2009 and remains an important reference, not only for Friends with our complicated history, but also as a window into the tortured history of race relations in the US.

Donna was a Renaissance woman: a journalist, teacher, counselor, musician, active participant in two choirs (international traveler with one of them), leader of musical ventures at Christmas and other events at our meeting as well as being a loving and proud mother and grandmother to her sons and grandchildren.

Beyond her many accomplishments, Donna had a large and generous heart. She approached life with a deep passion and intellectual curiosity. When she felt called, she would anchor herself in her deep commitment to justice. She was honored in 2013 as an “Unsung Heroine” by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women, both as the first woman on the Select Board in Southborough and for her devotion to that community.

Donna was justly proud of the research she and Vanessa Julye did in writing *Fit for Freedom*. Quakers had long rested on the laurels of some members who were early leaders in the abolitionist movement; however, long ignored was the way we nonetheless continued to reflect the prevailing white supremacy of the time and were not open to fully embracing African Americans as members of our meetings or educational institutions. *Fit for Freedom* opened our eyes to our historical complicity. Donna’s eyes were similarly opened in the process and she would admit that she emerged a changed person because of her intimate exposure to this painful history. The legacy of this book continues to resonate today as Quakers explore ways to be more honest and open about our continued complicity in white supremacy culture.

Donna’s openness and transparency were what made her so loved in our meeting; her smile would brighten a room. She embraced the meeting as her second home and, in turn, we embraced her as she shared her life and struggles with us. It was hard not to feel a sense of reflected pride in her accomplishments, because she allowed us to feel part of them. As life brought on changes that required her to leave her home in Southborough and move closer to her son and family in Boston, we missed her generous heart and grieved at the losses she faced.

Donna led with her heart, and the love and pride she felt for her sons and their families were a constant in her life. At her memorial meeting in August 2024, there were many expressions of appreciation for her accomplishments. Most moving, however, were the expressions of love that were felt for her, a love that will be her most enduring legacy

FRAMINGHAM MONTHLY MEETING, MARCH 16, 2025

NEW ENGLAND YEARLY MEETING PERMANENT BOARD FOR SALEM

QUARTERLY MEETING, MAY 10, 2025

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**Rose Law Miller**  
**September 8, 1920-June 7, 2021**

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Rose Law Miller, a beloved and devoted Friend who shone her light of love in the world, died on June 7, 2021; she was one hundred years old. Born in Pullman, Washington, Rose was raised in the Methodist faith, and later came to Quakerism by convincement in 1960. She was a long-time dedicated member of the Radnor Friends Meeting in Villanova, Pennsylvania, and was revered by those who knew her.

The decision to leave Radnor Friends and move to Kendal-at-Hanover in New Hampshire was necessitated by her husband Harry's need for long-term care. Rose had grown deeply into her Quaker faith during her time at Radnor and had immersed herself in her community there. The move to Hanover presented challenges as well as opportunities.

Rose's feelings of loss about leaving Radnor Meeting gave way to her innate joy in life and love of people. She allowed the Spirit to open her to that of God in this new spiritual context, in the people, in the interactions, and in this meeting's journey. Rose gave herself to this opening of spirit, a gift to her and to our Meeting.

This turned out to be an immensely rich time of growing into her new faith community and in turn, being deeply treasured by these new f/Friends. Rose became a loyal attendee at Hanover Friends Meeting where she participated fully in worship, Meeting for Worship for Business each month, planning for renovations of the meetinghouse, and other activities. Rose found herself being loved and at the same time loving her new spiritual home. This phase of her life stretched into decades as we were blessed by her longevity.

Rose was a living testimony of the power of love to be equally present in agreement as well as in disagreement. Her honesty and tenden-

cy to be outspoken empowered her willingness to address controversy. She listened deeply, and also understood when it was best to yield to the larger sense of truth held by those present. She was influential to many in her warm, welcoming greeting and outreach to those of all ages.

As Rose settled into the community at Kendal, she became increasingly involved in various projects and activities there. She advocated for the inclusion of others and reached out to newcomers and those she did not know well. Her creativity was appreciated as she chose paintings and artwork to decorate the many hallways. In her later years, she became a faithful attender of the Quaker worship group at Kendal. She served as clerk of the worship group for a number of years, initiated having meetings for business, and always warmly reached out to encourage and welcome new attenders.

Rose's many involvements with progressive political causes are a testimony to her living faith in action and her deep Quaker values, love of justice, commitment to the integrity of women, and her care for the community. She was active in the AFSC-New Hampshire Office, ACLU, Planned Parenthood, and other progressive causes. She "let her life speak" boldly in her many endeavors.

Rose loved her family and often spoke of their whereabouts and involvements. She is survived by her son Todd Miller and his wife Suzanne Gordon; her daughter Sarah Morenon and husband Pierre; son Bruce Miller and wife Loraine Michaelson; and five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

We miss Rose's warm, loving nature and the sparkle of light and love in her eyes. She remains close in our hearts.

HANOVER FRIENDS MEETING, JULY 24, 2022

NORTHWEST QUARTERLY MEETING, SEPTEMBER II, 2022

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**Rhoda Elsie Mowry**  
**(December 19, 1939 – January 8, 2024)**

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On Sunday mornings at Smithfield Meetinghouse, sunshine streaming through the wavy glass of the windows creates a beautiful pattern on the walls. The sacred dance of light spoke to Rhoda Mowry's heart throughout her lifetime. From her favorite pew, she witnessed this weekly gift from the Divine, finding in it a message of God's presence that sustained her faith. When our historic windows required repair, Rhoda's devotion to this simple beauty moved us to ask that each antique glass pane was returned to its exact position, preserving the precise quality of light that had nourished her spirit for so many years.

The windows were important to Rhoda, and Rhoda was essential to Smithfield Friends. A Friend whose roots ran deep in our Quaker soil, she embodied the calm and constant presence that anchors a Meeting community. Born into a historic Rhode Island Quaker family, whose legacy lives on in street names, historic taverns, and conservation areas throughout our state, Rhoda carried forward generations of faithful witness with quiet dignity and unwavering commitment.

Her service to our Religious Society spanned decades and crossed every level of Quaker organization. At Smithfield Monthly Meeting, she served with distinction as Clerk of the Meeting and Clerk of Ministry and Counsel, shepherding us through seasons of growth and challenge with patient wisdom. Her leadership extended to Rhode Island Smithfield Quarterly Meeting, where she served as Clerk, and to New England Yearly Meeting, where she contributed faithfully to the Permanent Board for many years. Rhoda took particular joy in welcoming newcomers to our Meeting, extending the warm hospitality that draws seekers into our circle of worship. Her friendship enriched countless



lives throughout New England Yearly Meeting, and she remained an active and cherished member of the United Society of Friends Women.

Proud of Smithfield's programmed tradition, Rhoda supported our pastoral ministry and regularly participated in gatherings that strengthened bonds among programmed Meetings. Her commitment to this form of Quaker worship reflected her deep appreciation for the many ways the Spirit moves among Friends.

Rhoda Elsie Mowry was born in Woonsocket to Stanley Mowry, Sr. and Dorothy Lapham Mowry, and throughout her life she maintained strong ties to her hometown community. After graduating from Woonsocket High School in 1957, she pursued higher education with characteristic determination, studying at Boston University from 1957 to 1960 before earning her nursing degree from the University of Maine at Augusta in 1978. Later, driven by a calling to serve others in new ways, she returned to school at Rhode Island College, completing both her bachelor's degree in 1992 and master's degree in 1993 in social work.

Her professional life reflected her deep care for human wellbeing. As a registered nurse, she served patients at Roger Williams Hospital and other healthcare facilities with compassion and skill. Transitioning to social work, she brought the same dedication to her roles at East Bay Mental Health Center and St. Joseph's Hospital's partial hospitalization program, where she helped individuals navigate mental health challenges until her retirement.

Beyond her professional and spiritual commitments, Rhoda embraced life with enthusiasm and curiosity. She was an accomplished bridge player who delighted in the game's strategic challenges. Her adventurous spirit made her the perfect companion for spontaneous journeys. She would happily set aside her plans to embrace an unexpected opportunity for exploration. In quieter moments, she found creative expression through watercolor and oil painting, and she approached cooking with the same attention to detail that Julia Child advocated, finding joy in preparing memorable meals for family and friends.

Rhoda's legacy lives on in her beloved family: her children, Deborah Wood-LaSalle and her husband James of Coventry, and Frank Stanley Wood of Waterville, Maine; five grandchildren, Alexandria, Anastasia, Adrianna, Taylor, and Samantha; two great-granddaughters, Elizabeth and Charlotte; and many nieces and nephews who treasured her presence in their lives. She was preceded in death by her brother Richard Mowry. Her brother Stanley Mowry Jr has subsequently passed away this year.

As we remember Rhoda Mowry, we give thanks for the light she brought to our Meeting and to all who knew her. Like the morning sunshine that painted patterns on our meetinghouse wall, her faithful presence illuminated our community with steady warmth and gentle beauty. As Friends, we hold her memory in the Light, grateful for the gift of her life among us.

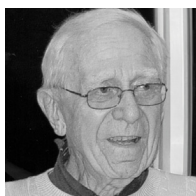
SMITHFIELD MONTHLY MEETING, JULY 6, 2025

SOUTHEAST QUARTERLY MEETING, JULY 7, 2025

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**John Preston**  
**December 15, 1926 – March 6, 2023**

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John Preston was a big man, with an even bigger heart and spirit.

The youngest of three brothers, John grew up in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, which was then a country town. He spoke fondly of being raised by the whole village and embraced by the community. His early education was in a three-room school.

In the Depression era, young people sought jobs beyond their family chores. John worked as the janitor of the Congregational church and loved the privilege of ringing the church bell on Sunday morning. He also cared for an elderly couple, bringing them groceries and firewood and checking on their welfare.

After graduating from high school in Springfield, John went on to Wesleyan University and then to Andover Newton Theological Seminary. He was ordained in the Congregational Church and moved to North Dakota, where he served three small rural churches. He loved the people and the open country, often visiting in barns when he made pastoral calls. After ten years in pastoral ministry, he was a campus minister at the University of North Dakota for the next decade. Then came ten years of high school teaching, finding engaging ways to present lessons in history and English, plus directing school plays. The next decade was as director of the Foster Grandparent Program, working with seniors and special needs children. Then came the great leap back to New England to work at Woolman Hill in Deerfield, where he and his wife Mary Ellen shared the great variety of tasks entailed in managing a Quaker retreat center. Occasionally John would be asked, “When did you leave the ministry?” His answer was: “I left a paid church position, but I never left ministry.” The next decades of volunteer work were also ministry, as John worked with immigrants teach-

ing English and then was “Mr. John” helping in kindergarten classes. He lived his ministry.

John began worshiping at Mount Toby when he and Mary Ellen settled at Woolman Hill. He found a home among Friends and soon became involved with committee work. He was very clear that he had found his spiritual home when he asked for membership.

John and Mary Ellen hosted a Friendly Eights group in the small Red House they lived in on Woolman Hill, somehow magically creating space for all in the group to fit. John provided wise spiritual and practical support to many of us through a variety of challenging life transitions. In addition, John was a core regular attender of mid-week worship at Woolman Hill up until the last few months of his life.

In whatever he took on, John carried a ministry of time and attention that opened to meaningful connections with the oldest to the youngest among us. When he served on Nominating Committee, first as a regular committee member and later as Assistant Clerk of the meeting, he took the extraordinary step to visit us in person, affirming our gifts and learning more about our interests, in the rare context of a warm spaciousness. As he looked for the best in us, he nurtured and drew it forth. He was a welcoming presence on Fellowship and Hospitality, and later in life was a magnet, as he sat on a high stool near the refreshment table drawing us in to hear our news and share lively conversations.

John brought a depth of spirit, curiosity, organizational skills, and kindness to his service on Ministry & Worship, Trustees, and AFSC Program Committee. His love of history made him an asset to History and Records, and Library committees. John’s love of music led him, along with others, to introduce singing before morning worship. His gift for language found expression in his poetry, as well as in the Bible study he and others led before meeting for several years. Notes he recorded as part of a 2002 gathering to reflect on our process for oversight of ministry have been helpfully providing guidance for decades.

John had a wide definition of family. He created an apartment for his parents in his North Dakota home and cared for them in their last years. He rejoiced in the birth of his four children and was always interested in the wonderful directions their varied talents took them. When John married Mary Ellen, he enthusiastically embraced her five children and was soon “Dad.” Grandchildren and great-grandchildren were a joy. John’s sense of family expanded far beyond as a beloved “family of choice” joined his circle. He embraced nearby friends whose children called him Grandpa John. His dogs and cats were treasured

too—and he delighted in hearing about our non-human companions as well.

John's community and family were built on love as he took us all in as part of that ever-growing family. With Mary Ellen, he hosted a huge "family" Thanksgiving for many years, first at Woolman Hill Retreat Center and later filling the Mt. Toby meetinghouse. The whole meeting, along with our families, neighbors and friends—especially those who did not have somewhere else to go—were invited to join in this annual welcoming potluck feast celebration.

John loved to garden and to share his pride and joy in the lush purple irises, multi-hued lilies, pink fragrant peonies, and other blooms that painted a living canvas across his yard wherever he lived. In the garden beds, as with people, he planted perennials—relationships that lasted, with roots that deepened over time. This was also true of John's spiritual journey with God, through his time as a professional minister, then as a Quaker. He invited us into that journey with him as he offered Bible study sessions before worship, or simply shared his searching questions and what he was learning with us.

Right up to the time of his death his spiritual life was vital and he was ever eager for more.

On March 6, 2023, John Preston died peacefully in the comfort of his home. Even as his physical energy diminished, he remained as mentally alert as ever, reading, listening to music and lectures, and carrying on deep conversations. On his last morning, he spoke words of gratitude and love, closed his eyes, and gently left the body that had served him well for 96 years. John's memorial meeting was held outside at Mount Toby on May 13, 2023, under a big tent that echoed the generous capacity of his embrace for life and all of us. Loving, gentle, and peaceful described his life. John's body was donated to the UMass Medical School, but his spirit and lessons of love and affirmation will live on in all whose lives he touched.

MOUNT TOBY MONTHLY MEETING, MAY 12, 2024

CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING ON OCTOBER 5, 2024.

Friends agreed to accept the minute and added that, from our experience, John had a phenomenal capacity to let people know they are loved and to make each person feel they were the most important one in his life.

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**James Ramsey**  
**November 23, 1946 - October 10, 2020**

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Jim Ramsey lived a life in deep alignment with Quaker values. While he was not born a Friend, his early life was surrounded by echoes of Quakerism. That, combined with his own inclinations, drew him deeper and deeper into the community of Friends throughout his life. Jim's life was dedicated to service, peace, learning, teaching, and living with the earth. He was an educator, a writer, a father and husband, a part-time farmer and a low-key mystic. His principles of egalitarianism, creativity, and cross-cultural communication gave him a life of deep meaning. He also loved the Boston Celtics.

Jim was born in 1946 in Wilmington, Ohio. His parents, James and Rosa, were students at Wilmington College, a Quaker school. Though neither of Jim's parents were Quakers at that time, Rosa came from a family of Friends. Much later in life his father, James, would return to Wilmington, attending the unprogrammed meeting regularly.

Jim grew up mostly in Oxford, Ohio, a small college town that is home to Miami University. Jim always had an orientation toward teaching and education. He was also a passionate athlete, playing football, baseball, golf, and basketball. Throughout his life Jim assessed people not by society's educational, economic, or racial strata, but by the quality of their behavior. The same qualities of kindness and respect that cemented friendships with black playmates and teammates would lead him later in life to embrace people in rural Maine that others might have avoided or judged as beneath them.

A student of the humanities, throughout his life he was interested in literature, philosophy, religion, language, and history. Informed by these studies, and by his own sense of morality, he refused to participate in military training exercises, a requirement at the university. After an extensive application and interview process the university allowed him to take alternatives to the military classes. Three years later, he was classified as a Conscientious Objector by the draft board.

In the turbulent late 1960s/early 70s, when busing was a controversial practice, he supported students of color in Dayton, Ohio, who were subjected to aggression from white students. His efforts to connect in compassionate ways, and to speak out against overt racism, were not easy, and got him fired from teaching in one school.

Jim and his wife, Liz, moved to central Maine in 1971. Jim took a job at Skowhegan Junior High as an English teacher, where he would stay for 40 years in various positions. He and Liz bought a dilapidated, uninsulated farmhouse on 39 acres for \$14,000, where he spent the rest of his life, growing gardens, cutting wood, raising their two children, Caitlin and Ian, and working on the house.

Jim thrived as a teacher, ultimately achieving a master's degree in gifted and talented education. His influence in mentoring students was profound and lifelong, and many former students point to his teaching and high standards as having transformative effects on their lives. They remember him not just for his creative teaching style but because he always took an interest in their mental health and personal lives, riding in an ambulance with a student in crisis, or quietly visiting those who had been institutionalized or incarcerated.

Jim and Liz became members of the Vassalboro Friends Meeting in 1986. He appreciated the unprogrammed and unpretentious nature of the Meeting and found deepening value in Friends principals. He became a trusted mentor, an accepting friend, and a supportive presence to many in the meeting. Among other committees and services to the meeting, Jim served on Ministry and Counsel, and as clerk of the meeting for several years. His kindness, steadfast good humor, and his impish love of puns were a balm for any stress.

In later years he lived his values by taking part in a peace delegation to the Soviet Union. It changed his life and led to more international travel and activism, for international peace, food support for Africa, and other global concerns. Jim believed fervently that Americans needed to travel more, to appreciate the rest of the world and its differences in more nuanced ways, and to understand how we as Americans are perceived by other nations. He sought to understand various cultures through their cinema, literature, history, and art. He truly believed that there is something beautiful in every country and every culture.

Jim Ramsey's legacy is one of peace, compassion, activism, wacky humor, and creative learning. He leaves behind a beautiful family that shares his values, legions of transformed former students, a well-loved

acreage, and countless more people whose lives have been touched by his trips, his teaching, and his example

VASSALBORO FRIENDS MEETING, NOVEMBER 17, 2024

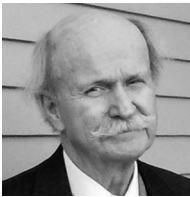
VASSALBORO QUARTERLY MEETING, FEBRUARY 1, 2025



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**Jack Shepherd**  
**December 14, 1937 – December 26, 2022**

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“Make visible what, without you, might perhaps never have been seen.” These words of Robert Bresson’s encapsulate so much of our dear Friend Jack Shepherd’s inner and outer life: his deep and lifelong commitment to the power of writing, his intense curiosity and desire to educate, and his rich and private spiritual life. Jack, 85, passed away at his home in Norwich, Vermont, with his family at his side. Jack loved his family, friends, colleagues, Africa, life in Vermont, and every element of his varied career as journalist, author, and professor.

Jack first became acquainted with the Quaker faith as an undergraduate at Haverford College, where he admired the values and ethics of the professors and administration, as well as the college’s overall moral atmosphere and the personal support that he received. He carried these influences into many aspects of his life in the years that followed. Not inconsequentially, his first date with Kathleen, his wife of 63 years, was to attend a meeting for worship.

After leaving Haverford, Jack received a degree at Columbia University’s School of Journalism. His assignments for *Look* magazine took him to cover famine in Ethiopia, war in Nigeria, and the civil rights movement in Watts, Los Angeles, and Lowndes County, Alabama, where to get closer to the story he chose to live with Black families. These experiences exposed Jack to some danger and, although he had a keen sense of justice, he did not consider them acts of moral courage (some might disagree) but attributed his successful recording of those tumultuous times to “good luck and smarts” and being “drawn to a good scoop.”

These experiences engendered in Jack a deep and lifelong concern for the issues of food insecurity, chronic hunger, and poverty that permeated his subsequent writing and research. A central organizing

principle for him became how we are called to live on this earth—how we manage our personal resources (e.g. fitness, healthy food) and the right sharing of resources on a world-wide scale.

When Jack and his family moved in 1977 from New York City to Norwich, Vermont, his outreach to Haverford alumni in the area brought them to Hanover Meeting, where they soon became members. Jack's involvement with Friends influenced his interest in mediation and peacemaking at many levels, from interpersonal to international. His great interest in Africa, plus timely encouragement from a Dartmouth professor and member of Hanover Meeting, led Jack to advanced study at Boston University and on to teaching Dartmouth undergraduates as the director of the War and Peace Studies Program and in the Environmental Studies Program. He had a loyal following of students and relished teaching and mentoring both undergraduates and graduates.

Beginning in 1993 Jack became the director of the Global Security Fellows Initiative (GFSI) at the University of Cambridge, England. There he brought together mid-career professionals from East-Central Europe and southern Africa to address common environmental, political, and economic issues. Although his good spirit, sense of humor, and eagerness to address conflict (which was inevitable) served him well, he admitted to his secretary at the time to having “un-Quakerly thoughts” about the actions of some individuals who were undermining the program. Returning to Dartmouth's Environmental Studies Program in 2000, he directed its Africa Foreign Studies Program for 8 years. He and Kathleen took great joy in guiding groups of Dartmouth undergraduates as they traveled and worked together on southern African environmental issues.

Jack cared deeply about Hanover Meeting. He regularly attended meeting for worship and was often at meeting for worship for business. He served as clerk of the meeting, on the Board of Trustees, and was clerk and a member of the Finance Committee for several years. He was a steady, quiet presence. Jack had a way of sitting with the quieter folks at the rise of meeting, finding the Light in their companionship. He took a keen interest in the young adults in the meeting, with whom he shared his wide knowledge and experience and connections, pairing these with their individual interests. One of his great gifts to the meeting was mentoring a member in a significant writing endeavor, which enriched them both.

The monthly meeting, however, was not the central force in Jack's life, as he gave his energy to a number of other important and demanding pursuits: teaching and mentoring students, developing pro-

grams at Dartmouth and beyond, work and travel in Africa, and to a wide variety of research and writing projects. Jack's first thoughts were always for his family—wife, daughter, and son and their life partners, and three beloved granddaughters who came together each summer for a family camp created by their grandparents.

Jack's spiritual life was foundational to him, and it was also private. During worship he was content to be in his own space. Messages based in Scripture had particular meaning to him, as Biblical texts did in his inward spiritual life. Writing, as a driving force in Jack's life, was a sacred mystery. He once said, "Writing is almost like being in a Friends Meeting. What I want to say, what is most interesting, will emerge if I am in that listening place."

HANOVER MONTHLY MEETING, JUNE 16, 2024

NORTHWEST QUARTERLY MEETING, SEPTEMBER 14, 2024

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**Sarah Howe Spencer**  
**September 29, 1949– September 29, 2023**

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Sarah Howe Spencer, beloved elder and Friend, died on September 29, 2023, her 74th birthday.

Sarah grew up in Cleveland, Ohio. In her youth she danced ballet. She continued with dancing, doing Morris Dance and partner dancing as an adult. Even in high school, her classmates noted her lively wit and commitment to social justice.

After college she moved to Boston and met Shearman Taber. The young couple connected through common interests in dance and sailing. Sarah and Shearman raised two children, David and Jeanette, and later, Sarah had the joy of a granddaughter, Ramona. While her children were in elementary school, Sarah took courses in computer software engineering, an expertise she shared in her service to Quakers.

Sarah lived with visual impairments due to a genetic condition that from a young age gradually reduced her field of vision. She managed her personal and working life in a manner in which most people did not become aware of her impairment, and for which she rarely asked for accommodation.

Throughout her childhood Sarah attended services in the Episcopal Church, where she found the formal services with the “smells and bells” and theology unsatisfactory. Shearman introduced her to Quakerism, where she found a spiritual home and a lifelong community. Sarah developed a deep knowledge of Quakerism through her extensive readings and discussions with Friends from our various traditions. Her love for Friends was most clearly expressed through her wit and intellect, which she mobilized to provide care and support for her community.

Sarah had a concern for helping Friends increase their knowledge of Quakerism and its history, and making connections both within

their meetings and throughout the Society. As part of her work with Beacon Hill Friends House, Sarah edited and published a long-running series of pamphlets highlighting contemporary Quaker voices. Sarah also coordinated the Quaker Studies Program, which was a joint program with Salem Quarterly Meeting. She was an early explorer of online Quaker learning programs through Quaker Studies.

While raising her children, she began teaching in First Day School, which eventually led her to become the coordinator of NEYM's Junior High Youth Group. She told a story of sleeping across the exit door at Woolman Hill during junior high retreats to keep the kids from encountering the local wildlife in the dark. Guiding the young teenagers in learning and using Quaker principles and practices gave her much joy and satisfaction.

Sarah's service to the Yearly Meeting was broad and deep, with terms on various committees in many different roles. Her deepening understanding of the Spirit led her to participate in the School of the Spirit and serve on Ministry and Counsel for monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings. In her later years, she was widely known as an elder, a role that she cherished.

While on Ministry and Counsel, she was asked to edit the memorial minutes being read at Yearly Meeting Sessions. This led her to develop guidelines for writing memorial minutes. One of the challenges Sarah bequeathed to the authors of this minute was her understanding that a memorial minute was an account of a spiritual life and not a recounting of secular milestones.

She and Allison Randall developed and led "daytreats" for local meetings' Ministry and Counsel, Worship and Ministry, and Pastoral Care Committees. These daytreats were an opportunity for Friends serving on those committees in their local meetings to talk about the joys and challenges of serving in those roles. They brought their wisdom and care for service to those times, enriching sessions for those who participated and made connections to others serving in similar roles in their meetings.

When she and Shearman moved to Northampton, Sarah was tapped immediately to serve on Worship and Ministry. She brought her deep knowledge of Friends and her wisdom to all the roles she filled. She had a slightly snarky sense of humor, which she often deployed when things got too serious. She could be forthright in sharing concerns, a quality which was not always appreciated, though her honesty and straightforward approach often kept discussions on course.

While on Worship and Ministry at Northampton, Sarah helped start midweek meeting, serving as a shepherd. This meeting has continued

to develop into a wonderful community since moving to Zoom during the pandemic, with participants from Oregon to Philadelphia and even Great Britain. Her eldership and presence in that community is deeply missed, as is her wisdom and humor.

Sarah loved spending time with her family, particularly cooking and laughing together. Being with her through joys and challenges always felt like home for all of us—a feeling we may never experience in quite the same way again.

NORTHAMPTON FRIENDS MEETING, FEBRUARY 9, 2025

CONNECTICUT VALLEY QUARTERLY MEETING, MAY 4, 2025





**NEW ENGLAND  
YEARLY MEETING  
OF FRIENDS**

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