**Memorial Minute**

**Carla Lurie Dowben**

January 18, 1932, to January 9, 2024

In January, we lost our valued member Carla Dowben. In April 2014, she had transferred her membership from Acton Friends Meeting (Concord, MA), 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.

Approved on June 9, 2024, by Providence Monthly Meeting, Ariana Steele, clerk

Endorsed on June 16, 2024, by Southeast Quarterly Meeting, Elizabeth (Beth) Hansen, clerk