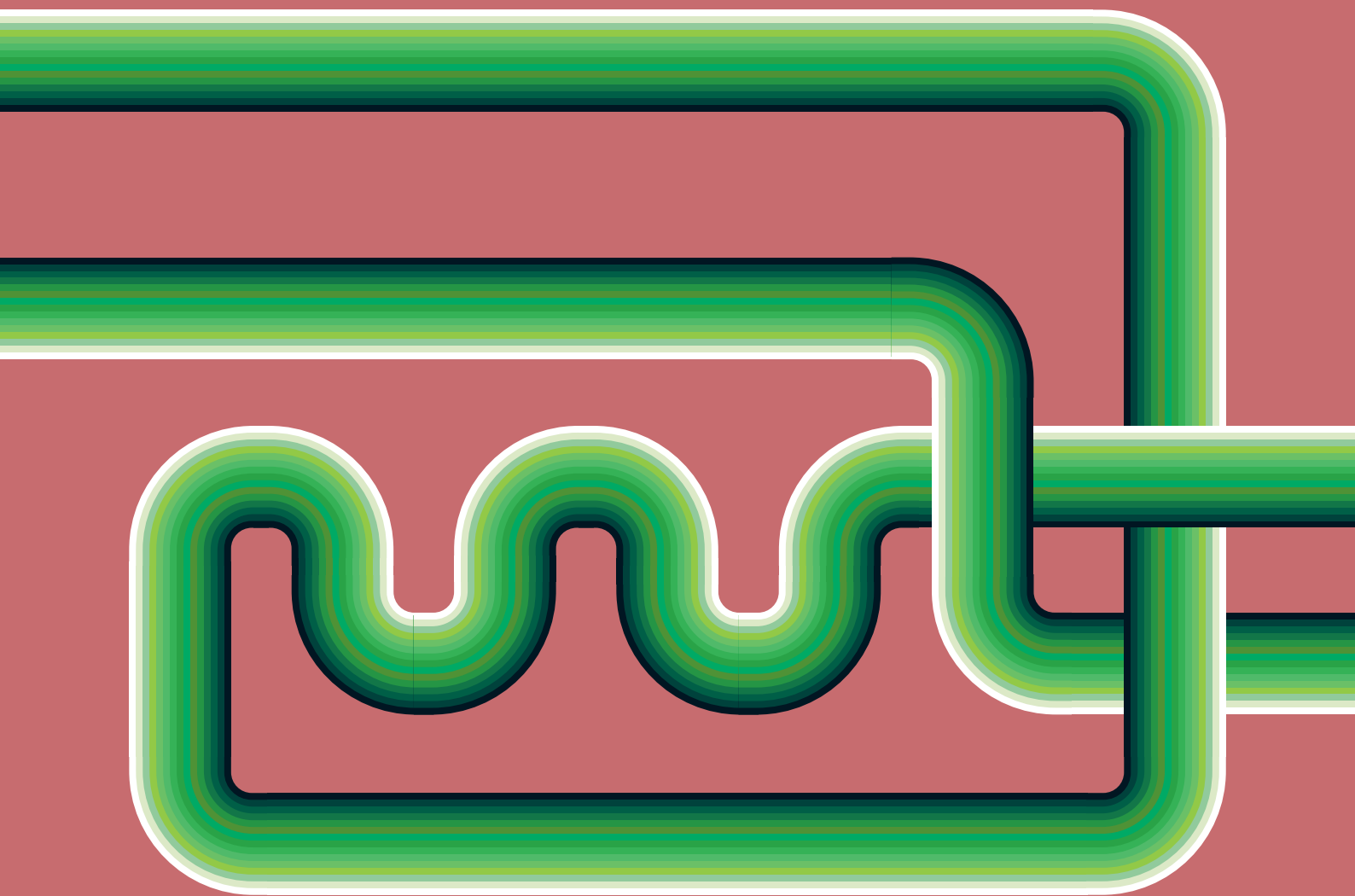


Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society  
of Friends (Quakers) in Britain

# Testimonies

including index of epistles



Compiled for Yearly Meeting,  
Friends House, London  
24–27 May 2019





Credit: Mike Pinches for BYM

This booklet is part of 'Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain 2019', a set of publications published for Yearly Meeting.

The full set comprises:

1. The **Yearly Meeting programme**, with introductory material for Yearly Meeting 2019 and annual reports of Meeting for Sufferings, Quaker Stewardship Committee and other related bodies
2. **Testimonies**
3. **Minutes**, to be distributed after the conclusion of Yearly Meeting
4. The formal **Trustees' annual report** including financial statements for the year ended December 2018
5. **Tabular statement.**

All documents are available online at [www.quaker.org.uk/ym](http://www.quaker.org.uk/ym). If these do not meet your accessibility needs, or the needs of someone you know, please email [ym@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ym@quaker.org.uk).

Printed copies of all documents will be available at Yearly Meeting.

All *Quaker faith & practice* references are to the online edition, which can be found at [www.quaker.org.uk/qfp](http://www.quaker.org.uk/qfp).

Yearly Meeting of the  
Religious Society of Friends  
(Quakers) in Britain

# Testimonies

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# Epistles

Friends in different yearly meetings traditionally keep in touch by writing and receiving epistles. One of the final acts of our Yearly Meeting will be to agree an epistle addressed “To all Friends everywhere”.

We used to include all Epistles received from other Yearly Meetings in this publication. This year however, we are printing only Testimonies. This is because:

1. Recently, Britain Yearly Meeting has received fewer epistles from other yearly meetings. Instead, yearly meetings share their epistles with Friends everywhere by sending them to Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) which displays epistles on its website.
2. Yearly Meeting Agenda Committee is reducing the amount of printed Yearly Meeting documents to reduce our environmental impact.

We are not ignoring the Epistles. Extracts will be read in Yearly Meeting in session alongside testimonies as usual. A list of epistles received is below:

## **From Europe and the Middle East**

Belgium & Luxembourg Yearly Meeting  
Central European Gathering  
Europe and Middle-East Young Friends Spring Gathering  
France Yearly Meeting  
FWCC Europe and Middle-East Section Annual Meeting  
German Yearly Meeting  
Ireland Yearly Meeting  
Netherlands Yearly Meeting  
Norway Yearly Meeting  
Quaker Council for European Affairs General Assembly – March 2018  
Quaker Council for European Affairs General Assembly – October 2018  
Sweden Yearly Meeting  
Switzerland Yearly Meeting

## **From Africa**

Evangelical Friends of Kenya (2017)  
Friends Church of Uganda (Quakers)  
Soy Yearly Meeting (Kenya)

## **From the Americas**

Cuba Yearly Meeting  
Friends Association for Higher Education Conference

Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns  
General Meeting of Friends in Mexico  
Great Plains Yearly Meeting  
Indiana Yearly Meeting  
Intermountain Yearly Meeting  
Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)  
New England Yearly Meeting  
New York Yearly Meeting  
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)  
North Pacific Yearly Meeting  
Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting  
Pacific Yearly Meeting  
Pacific Northwest Quaker Women’s Theology Conference  
Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting  
Southeastern Yearly Meeting  
South Central Yearly Meeting  
Western Yearly Meeting  
Wilmington Yearly Meeting

## **From Asia and the West Pacific**

Aotearoa New Zealand Junior Young Friends Camp  
Aotearoa New Zealand Yearly Meeting  
Asia West Pacific Section Gathering  
Australia Yearly Meeting

You can read all epistles on the FWCC website at <http://fwcc.world/epistles-from-quaker-groups-from-around-the-world> and explore the work and witness of FWCC and of Friends around the world.

If you are unable to access the epistles online please contact [ym@quaker.org.uk](mailto:ym@quaker.org.uk) or 020 7663 1040 for a printed version.



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## Introduction

### Testimonies to the Grace of God in lives – an enduring presence

The advice in the current *Quaker faith & practice* at paragraph 4.27 that “a testimony should not be a formal obituary or eulogy, but should record in thankfulness the power of divine grace in human life” is not always easy to carry through.

The following paragraph, 4.28, a minute from the then Hertford Monthly Meeting\* of 1780, records “the purpose of a testimony concerning our deceased worthy Friends [is] intended as a memorial, that they have walked as children of the Light, and of the Day, and to excite those who remain to take diligent heed, and to yield to the teachings of the still small voice, that they may follow them as they followed Christ, the great captain of their salvation”. Much of this expresses Friends’ interest in the writing of testimonies today, but how is it carried out?

Historically in Britain the issue of records concerning deceased Friends in the ministry began in the 17th century. “An early record maintained by London YM is now lost but a series of volumes begun in 1740 were maintained until 1872 with retrospective entries copied up from 1719. These volumes are known as ‘Testimonies concerning ministers deceased’. From the 19th century [they] contain minutes from quarterly meetings recording the lives of Friends rather than ministers. From 1861 quarterly meetings were at liberty to prepare a testimony concerning any Friend ‘whose life was marked by conspicuous service to God and the church’.” (Text typed up in Friends House library subject files c.1970).

An early American testimony written around 1690 advises “it is a justice due to the righteous, and a duty upon us, to contribute something to perpetuate the names of such who have left a fragrant behind them, and through faith have obtained a good report” (Samuel Jennings’s testimony concerning John Eckley of Philadelphia).

Coming forward to the 20th century, London Yearly Meeting *Church government* of 1931, in use for more than three decades, stated “A Monthly Meeting may issue a testimony concerning the life and service of a deceased member whose life has been marked by devotion to the cause of his Lord and to the service of the Church. The object of such a Testimony is not eulogy, but to preserve a record of Divine Grace in the lives of (wo)men.” This last sentence bears a close similarity to para 4.27 in the current *Quaker faith & practice*. The text goes on to refer to progression of a testimony to yearly meeting “only if it is likely to be of service to the Society”. This is in line with our current practice.

In today’s fast-moving world Friends face a double challenge: to concentrate on the Divine and to write a short but rounded record. The first is not easy as it necessarily relates to our temporal experience; the second is increasingly important if posterity is to hold learning from an inspiring text in an age of complexities, speed and an increasing multiplicity of knowledge and communication. Friends can be long-winded. This puts some off from joining in our business meetings for worship.

A testimony should radiate the Grace of God as shown in the life of the Friend who has passed from this world. It differs from an obituary account of achievements, yet a few milestones in the life of the deceased will serve to illuminate the spiritual gifts bestowed.

Date of birth, date(s) of marriage(s), and date of death describe the setting of time. This is a necessary aid to living Friends. It is also a recognition of the times in which the life is set for posterity, where future Friends can relate the spiritual gifts received to the cultural context of the era. Reference to immediate antecedents can anchor the recall of a name for more distant Friends. Reference to children can demonstrate the enrichment of life.

Recognition of a spiritually lived life and its application characterises the preparation of a testimony. Worship through quiet waiting upon God prayerfully alone or where two or three are gathered together in meeting is the hallmark of

a Quaker. This does not deny the devotional or biblical emphases in other traditions. As seekers after Truth, Friends should be open to new learning as God's revelation continues in the world.

It is against this background that the application of talents, whether within the life of the Society or in witness in the wider world, are described. There is a temptation to link these to a career pattern or an extended voluntary body commitment, and hence border on an obituary. Rather, it is the spiritually inspired application of the talent for good that matters. Examples of the flowering of each talent in the life pattern of the departed Friend can then be quoted. If carefully knit together these convey an image of the whole.

Writing a testimony to the life of a departed Friend may not be easy. How far do we understand the familial and cultural background, the stresses and successes in that life? Did the light shine forth in life? Where we see glimpses of the inner spiritual life, how do these reflect in outward activity?

Were outward concerns truly a reflection of inward Grace? How does economic comfort sit easily with God's Will? Then we come back to what to include, what to leave out and how to outwardly reflect a spiritually inspired life to future generations.

Not far distant may be the expectations of relatives of the deceased. When a close relative died I had anticipated a prepared obituary in *The Friend* but instead I read a note from one who had only known her in her last years. I know a Friend now who feels hurt that no testimony was written around her partner who died some years ago. On another occasion a Friend who was to die shortly afterwards made plain that he did not want a testimony written to his life. It is difficult to know the aspirations of family members, and particularly so when anxiety and grief intrude. With a little passage of time, such aspirations, if known, should not cloud the consideration within monthly meeting of how appropriately to remember a Friend. Such an interlude of perhaps a few months may help the meeting also

in its discernment as to whether to prepare a testimony to the Grace of God in a life. It is the Light shining in life that matters.

That meetings might hold a short record of the lives of members is commendable. That these should be developed into testimonies is not necessarily the right use of time for the living. It is difficult to distinguish between the Martha and the Mary, and neither should we judge. Meetings need prayerful thought before committing the strengths of a life to a Quaker testimony.

John Melling, Assistant Clerk to General Meeting for Scotland

As endorsed by General Meeting for Scotland by its minute 15 of 11 September 2004.

Approved by Meeting for Sufferings by minute 6 of 2 December 2006.

\*Monthly meetings are now known as area meetings.

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## James (Jim) Anderton

6 July 1931 – 11 January 2018

Jim was born and brought up in south London in an essentially kind family with very limited horizons. The wartime blitz severely disrupted his education, due to a mixture of air raids, frequent changes of teachers and recurring evacuation. He saw deprivation and poverty at first hand, developing in him strong socialist principles that never left him. During this time, he was largely self-educated, relying on the library service. By the age of six he was using his mother's library card to double his borrowing allowance to ten books a week, reading anything and everything.

And so, in his childhood, there developed his voracious appetite for the written word, with a deepening appreciation of fiction, non-fiction and poetry, expanding his general knowledge and leading him to become well-informed in a wide range of subjects. Trips to the Channel Islands with a local youth club expanded his horizons further, introducing him to the great outdoors, and inspiring a love of the natural world that would remain with him to the end of his life. These trips gave him a chance to escape the grim realities of austerity and rationing in post-war Britain and the distress of the premature death of his mother, of whom he was very fond, when he was just 16.

His father, a worker at the Borough market, saw little point in allowing Jim to sit the grammar school entrance exam as he believed his son would be best served by taking up an apprenticeship. After he became a time-served printer, Jim worked as a retoucher and then joined the teaching staff at the London College of Printing. It became a requirement to get a teaching qualification to work in Further Education so Jim completed a degree in Education at Roehampton College. The advent of modern scanning machines transformed printing and led to his early retirement, after which he became the Secretary for the Bedford Institute, a Quaker charity in East London, part of what is now Quaker Social Action (QSA).

In the mid-sixties a spiritual curiosity was beginning to germinate in him and Jim started attending Quaker meeting while living in Billericay with his first wife and daughter. He joined Friends in 1968 at Westminster. The Quakers rapidly became, and would remain, an integral part of Jim's life. George Fox's words about an 'Inward Light', the testimonies of love, practicable peace and down-to-earth simplicity made sense to him and he felt very at home with Quakers.

He served Friends as area meeting clerk, elder, and overseer but was most at home in eldership. He spoke of early pinnacle experiences of gathered meetings, which left him with a yearning for more such meetings and a concern to support those tackling inappropriate behaviour and ministry in meeting for worship. A keen photographer, he enjoyed capturing images of Yearly Meeting for *The Friend* magazine. With others, he founded the Talking Friends service, from a concern that visually impaired Friends should be able to access written material. He went faithfully to meetings in Westminster, Reigate and Glasgow.

But this list only scratches the surface of Jim's contribution. He brought a depth to worship, both in his ministry and in his still presence. As a young Friend said, "I learned how to sit in meeting from him. It was easy to sit beside him in meeting because he was so good at it." His ministry often spoke of the Light and of the radical nature of Fox's revelations. He had a Quaker compass in him that recognised when Friends might be moving away from right ordering; for example, in wondering whether there should be any books in meeting for worship at all, as the message of the ministry was in what the Friend remembered and had understood, not in the accurately reported words of others. He had a particular affinity with young people, and was a regular welcomer of newcomers. But, as one said, "He was always immensely pleased to see me. He wasn't 'doing outreach' to a newcomer; he always gave you the impression that it was you he wanted to see."



This was all done with a light touch, with wit and integrity, warmth and kindness. He was gently irreverent of some Quaker practices. “It is that sense of religion being fun that will remain with me as an abiding memory of Jim.” Friends remember his sense of humour:

“He would seek you out, as if he was waiting to share something with you, and it’d be the silliest joke, and his face would just crack up and 40 years would fall away. His Billy Connolly impression was something special.”

He had a fund of knowledge and was interested in everything and everyone, being able to converse easily with people from all walks of life and was very skilled at building relationships with them. He had a remarkable memory for quotes from poetry and dialogue from the golden era of Hollywood films. He played the cello, and music (both high and low brow) inspired him; he was a cyclist and runner (with the Troon Tortoises in later life!); a lover of wildlife, especially birds; a voracious reader and searcher of second-hand bookshops; an acute observer of the political scene; a doer of cryptic crosswords, an artist. He was a true Renaissance man, with a richness and depth to his life which could hardly have been predicted from the disadvantaged nature of his childhood.

Jim did not do this alone. Together with his friend, companion and wife, Liz, whom he met at Roehampton College, they built a welcoming home, truly following the Advice ‘Try to make your home a place of loving friendship and enjoyment where all who live or visit may find the peace and refreshment of God’s presence’, and many Friends greatly benefited from their warmth and hospitality. Friends in Australia remember the year that Jim and Liz spent as resident Friends in Melbourne Meeting with much affection, noting that they epitomized their Quaker faith as involved, caring Friends, and found it hard to think of Jim without thinking of Liz, so much a team working together. His marriage to Liz brought him into a warm loving family; and his membership of Friends gave him a community he had not before experienced.

Three things remained undiminished to the very end: his courage, his kindness, and that ever-ready signature wit. Speaking of Jim, Friends’ faces light up. The Inward Light shone in Jim, and through him, it shone on others, the grace of God in his life.

Signed on behalf of West Scotland Area Meeting

Held at Glasgow on 12 January 2019

Michael J Hutchinson, Clerk

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## Vernon Baker

1 August 1915 – 17 December 2015

Vernon Baker was a remarkably talented man, making tents for his children to go camping, sewing dresses for his wife, designing potato 'caddies' for farmers, leading art therapy for prisoners, and being an enthusiastic player of recorders. He kept an inquisitive mind until his death, and remained physically active into his nineties, dancing, cycling and walking.

His family were strongly Methodist, but during his school days he took an early interest in eastern religions, and accompanied a cousin to Hampstead Quaker Meeting. His studies and career were in the area of economics with a particular interest in Agriculture, which took him to Bristol, Scotland and Swaziland.

When World War II started, he became a conscientious objector after much deliberation. When older he recalled how strongly he felt that if we went to war, the whole race might perish: war was the great enemy of mankind. But he also had first-hand experience of the Nazis (after visiting Germany in the 1930s) and later said that, "Putting up with Hitler would have been a nightmare ... but we got rid of him – and established Stalin."

On a lovely sunny day in August 1945 he heard about the bombing of Hiroshima, and felt that the world would never be the same again. His brother Christopher was also a conscientious objector, and also struggled with what was the right course of action. Many years later he visited Vernon before his death, and they discussed whether they had made the right decision.

He married his wife, Joyce, in 1943 and they became Quakers in 1961. He was attracted to Quakers because of their combination of silent worship, practical social activities and the peace testimony. They did much good work together, training as marriage counsellors, and working as wardens in Johannesburg and Winchester meeting houses. Vernon was also a prison visitor for many years and became a Quaker Prison Chaplain.

His early interest in Eastern religions evolved into an involvement in Buddhism (he attended weeks-long Buddhist silent retreats for many years) so he would often identify himself as a 'Buddhist Quaker'. Arising from this Buddhist thinking, he often ministered in meeting, and his apparently rambling ministry was such that it often resonated profoundly with the listener.

When Joyce became ill he became a loving and tender carer for her. On her passing he did not withdraw from life, but continued to give his support to the meeting, regularly attending both Sunday and Wednesday meetings for worship where his warm and cheerful presence was greatly appreciated. It was with joy that we were able to celebrate his hundredth birthday in 2015, and greeted friends and family from all over. He remains in our thoughts and hearts as a kind and loving exemplar of the Quaker testimonies.

Signed on behalf of Hampshire & Islands Area Meeting

Held at Alton on 9 June 2018

Eddie Slade, Clerk

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## Bunty Biggs (Ida Alanur née Harman)

21 March 1919 – 13 November 2017

Stroud Meeting was very blessed when, in 1981, after a lifetime of service, Bunty and her South African husband David decided to retire to Leonard Stanley in Gloucestershire, and she chose to join Stroud Meeting. Bunty's whole life was dedicated to making the world a better place, and improving the lives of others. She could analyse a situation and see what matters, with a sense of humour that lightened things when they became too heavy. She was practical, generous and took pleasure and interest in the arts, opera and music.

Bunty saw her life as being divided into three parts. She was born in India, where her father was a missionary and a teacher and her mother a nurse. When she was two the family returned to England, because her mother contracted encephalitis lethargica, following the 1918 flu pandemic.

Her father found a teaching job at Sidcot, where she and her older brother, Alec Harman, went to school; Bunty was very happy there. It was her father and her early grounding in Quakerism that laid the foundations for her faith and her life of service. He was involved in the life of the village of Winscombe as well as in the school. His activities on behalf of the unemployed in the 1930s led Bunty to appreciate the lives of those less well off than herself. She remembers enjoying her mother's piano playing; but the ongoing illness meant that her mother left the family for care at the Retreat, and spent the last fifteen years of her life there, dying in 1948.

Bunty matriculated early and spent time abroad teaching English in Dutch and French schools and with a Jewish family in Germany. She returned to study and train as a social worker at Birmingham University while living at Woodbrooke. Her first job was with evacuees from the slums of London. She served on the Quaker Social Services Investigating Committee from 1943 to 1944.

When the war was over she went to Germany to join the Friends Relief Service (FRS), whose work in Germany primarily involved distributing food, clothes and medicines, helping with clearing destroyed buildings and housing the millions who had been displaced. The conditions she found there made a lasting impression on her.

She helped to found the Quäkernachbarschaftsheim, the Quaker neighbourhood centre, which still exists today, and where she is still remembered.

A tribute from the centre was read at her funeral. Although nearly the youngest in that team she became the leader. When telling a Friend about her work there the Friend remarked on how young she was to be doing such responsible work: "she said something to the effect that, 'I just saw a need – I went and did it'". Bunty added that young people today seem so fearful, in comparison, of just going ahead and doing something that clearly needs to be done.

The second part of her life saw her and David, an orthopaedic surgeon, move to South Africa. They met through his sister, a close friend of Bunty's when she was a student. David and Bunty had four children. In South Africa she continued seeing a need and doing something about it. Even during Apartheid, she was not afraid to speak truth to power. The law forbade her from working as a social worker with mixed-race groups, so she worked in a voluntary capacity, assisting various organisations working on behalf of people of all races.

The most important of these were Edendale Child Welfare, set up to support children and families in need in practical ways, and Kupugani, an organisation set up to distribute high protein food throughout the province as cheaply as possible. She was also a member of the Liberal party, until it was disbanded because it included people of all races. She was clerk of Southern Africa Yearly Meeting for eight years.

One tribute to her work in South Africa read: 'She would go out to the resettlement camps, see what was wrong, then visit the Chief Bantu Commissioner to tell him what had to be put

right. She gave orders, and he obeyed! I was moved. So much we took for granted... I don't think we ever said thank you. Bunty never did anything for a thank you.'

She joined the Black Sash Movement, which she described as, 'white middle class women, full of intellectuals and people from all religious groups.' With the Black Sash Bunty stood in the streets, bearing silent witness with posters and banners describing the struggles and injustices that were happening all around. Protests were filmed by security police, and Black Sash members were harassed on occasion due to their political activities. Bunty chaired her local Black Sash for three years; when she left South Africa their magazine published a farewell to her which ended: 'When people talk about Bunty, the same phrases recur; love and concern for people. She is a living example of the Friends' ideal of a humble and thoroughly practical, good-humoured and loving Christian. Uhambe kahle, Bunty!' ('Go well, Bunty' – which is what she always said rather than goodbye).

Back in England, in 1981 after a lifetime of 'doing', the third part of Bunty's life was one of 'being'. Sadly, David died not long after they arrived. For very many years Bunty was faithful in her attendance and at the heart of all that Stroud Meeting did. At a time when we used the system of corporate oversight and eldership, she was by nature both elder and overseer. We went to her with our problems, our troubles, whether these were about spiritual or social matters. She never let us down.

Her ministry was always profound, rooted in a lifetime of Quakerism, and very practical. It came from that place where the spiritual meets the political. One Friend remembers how she always discerned that of good in both sides of any situation of disagreement. She taught us about the African concept of Ubuntu – that human beings can only be human through other human beings.

Other Friends' memories include such things as 'the way in which she gently held the meeting together;' how Bunty offered 'a sense of security,

a sense that, if Bunty was at a meeting it would be all right;' 'Bunty's presence in meeting felt to me like an anchor, preventing me from drifting off into irrelevancies. She was solid and soft, impressive and comfortable, stern and kind, all at once. Always, she cut through cant, pricked pomposity, waved aside excuses. She focused on the here and now, on what could be done, what had to be done.' 'She was warm and generous and delighted in bringing people together. 'Bunty is remembered by those who were children in the meeting at the time, as an important person, a presence.

This was found after her death among her writings:

"The Meeting for Worship is where I experience relationship at its deepest level – with God and with the worshipping group.

It is the place and time where, whatever my mood, I can best come to terms with myself because I may be able to get outside and beyond the 'me' that is confined by the pressures of living and by the frailties of my constitution.

In the stillness there is the chance, the opportunity for God's accepting, understanding, freely given love to penetrate to the 'me' that is part of Him and that He can nurture in spite of myself...The Light revealing one's terrible failings is also the Light giving power to overcome these."

She entered fully into the life of Leonard Stanley, joining many village groups, such as the Monday club and delivering meals on wheels for many years. Importantly, she threw her energies into the local Amnesty International group, and the Labour party. Her garage was always full of second hand books, for the Amnesty bookstall, the cornerstone of the group's fundraising.

People use the word privileged, or proud, about having known Bunty. 'She was very special person indeed, who was remarkably able, modest and most of all kind.'

The many people who remember her with deep affection and appreciation include the local



Member of Parliament (MP), in whose office she spent many hours stuffing envelopes. He said, “Bunty was a stalwart supporter, totally committed to her politics but more than anything I was proud to call her a friend of over thirty years standing. I shall miss her terribly but I shall recall with pleasure the many hours we spent together and the fact that I was elected on so many occasions because of her commitment, care and love.”

Amnesty colleagues remember Bunty as an important member, a very special person. ‘I loved the strength in her character and her modest tales of the Black Sash movement – and I loved her joy and enthusiasm for life and living. She was a remarkable woman who lived a life of giving.’ ‘A seasoned campaigner: we all learnt how to lobby politicians in a way that engaged them but also held them to account. She wrote letters, gave talks and was always there to support any event with practical solutions and a wonderful sense of humour. Even in her eighties, she would sit for hours in our ‘cage’ to protest about human right violations.’

In business meetings she was always knitting. In later life she knitted countless blankets for Oxfam.

Alzheimer’s crept up gradually but Bunty found practical ways to remember essentials, never lost her peace of mind and remained spiritually present to the very end. That of God – which certainly included her sense of fun – was apparent to us all. Only a few weeks before she died she told a Friend, that she wished she had pursued music further: ‘Think of all the pleasure you could give to other people.’ The Friend replied, ‘Think of all the help you were able to give to others as a social worker.’ Her answer was, ‘Yes. I always tried to help them to understand that they were part of something bigger, part of humanity.’ Bunty lived ubuntu. Uhambe kahle, Bunty.

Signed on behalf of Gloucestershire Area Meeting

Held at Gloucester on 14 October 2018

Peter Carter, Clerk

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## Jonathan Graham Castle

7 December 1950 – 12 January 2018

Seaman, Greenpeace Campaigner, passionate activist on behalf of the downtrodden and dispossessed, fierce defender of the planet and the life that depends on it, a Quaker and member of Bideford Meeting, Jon Castle died in January after a short illness. He is very much missed.

Jon was born in Cobo Bay on the Channel Island of Guernsey, the second son of Robert Breedlove Castle, an English teacher, and Mary Constance Castle who ran a nursery school. Preferring life at sea to academia, he left school as soon as he could and joined the Merchant Navy College in Southampton. After graduating, he worked for several years as a second and then first mate on cargo ships.

In 1981, he married Caroline Jacobs. They had a son, Morgan and a daughter, Eowyn, The couple divorced in 1988 but remained friends.

In 1977, when Greenpeace purchased their first ship which they named The Rainbow Warrior, Jon’s destiny began to take shape when he signed on as first mate. He became a Greenpeace Captain in 1980, and was soon to take Greenpeace vessels into some of their most spectacular campaigns.

Rex Wyler, co-founder of Greenpeace International, in his tribute to Jon, says this:

“Over four decades, Captain Jon Castle navigated Greenpeace ships by the twin stars of ‘right and wrong’, defending the environment and promoting peace”, and “over the years, Castle became legendary for his maritime skills, courage, compassion, commitment, and for his incorruptible integrity.”

During the years with Greenpeace, Jon’s successes included the campaign against the deliberate scuppering of the Brent Spa oil platform, as a result of which a ban was passed on dumping oil installations into the North Sea. He is also remembered for obstructing a proposed French nuclear test in the Moruroa atoll. An account of that is as follows:

“Expecting the French to occupy their ship, Castle and engineer Luis Manuel Pinto da Costa rigged the steering mechanism to be controlled from the crow’s nest. When French commandos boarded the ship, Castle stationed himself in the crow’s nest, cut away the access ladder and greased the mast so that the raiders would have difficulty arresting him.”

The commandos took off the crew and could not understand why the Rainbow Warrior II continued sailing on for a further twelve hours before they discovered Castle was in the crow’s nest, continuing to navigate the ship.

Always conscious of social injustice, Jon sought ways to support islanders evicted by Britain in 1971 from their homeland of Diego Garcia to make way for an American military base to be built there. He and a friend, Peter Bouquet, sailed a small vessel across the Indian Ocean and staged a two-man invasion of Diego Garcia, to protest against the UK’s refusal to allow the Islanders to return to their homes. In a Guardian newspaper report (12 March, 2008) of the incident, it was noted that “Both men said they were motivated by Quaker ideals.” There was also a full page article in *The Friend* of 21 March 2008. This was a time when Friends in his home meeting in Bideford were, themselves, most aware and supportive of Jon’s activities.

When it was suggested to him that he might like to apply for Quaker membership, his first reaction was ‘I’m not good enough’. One characteristic that shines through the many tributes paid to him and the memories of those that knew him is his self-deprecation. Despite his many outstanding achievements and his selfless actions on behalf of others, often to the point of endangering his own safety, he treated all those he was in contact with as equals. As captain he always took his turn, alongside the crew, to carry out menial tasks such as cleaning the toilets. Jon’s behaviour towards others did not derive from a ‘belief’ in equality; rather, for him there was no other way to be.

A woman Greenpeace fellow activist recalls that he always insisted women steer the ships in and

out of port because, he said, “they got it right; they were naturals”. Equality between the sexes was not, for him, a principle so much as a fact.

This account, given by a young recruit, further exemplifies his approach:

“One of the first people I met as I climbed on board was a red-haired giant of a man grinning broadly at us. My first thought was that he was a deckhand, or maybe the bosun. So, I asked if he knew whether a cabin had been assigned to me yet. He gave me a lovely warm smile and reassured me that, yes, a cabin had been arranged. At dinner I found out that he was Jon Castle, not a deckhand, not the bosun, but the captain. And what a captain!”

Following the legendary Brent Spa campaign, the same recruit wrote:

“There was no question among the crew who had made this possible, who had caused this to happen. It was Jon Castle. His quiet enthusiasm and the trust he put in people made this crew one of the best I ever saw. He always knew exactly what he wanted out of a campaign, how to gain momentum, and he always found the right words to explain his philosophies. He was that rare combination, both a mechanic and a mystic. And above all he was a very loving, kind human being.”

It is clear that these aspects of his character, combined with his courage when faced with offences against social justice, and the planet that he loved, meant that he commanded extraordinary loyalty and trust in his crews.

Following the Brent Spa campaign, there were offers from Shetland Islanders to hide Jon so that he could avoid arrest. But this was the last thing he wanted. He saw arrest as the natural outcome of his endeavours. It also gave him a platform to “speak truth to power” and quietly explain his motivation for what he had been doing.

Jon was a passionate advocate of peace, but prepared to contravene the law when his moral compass required it. He never resisted arrest and was always polite but firm.

One of several contributors to his funeral service spoke of the “fierceness” with which Jon held to his convictions, adding, “He even loved fiercely.”

Jon was an attender at Bideford Quaker Meeting for about six years before becoming a member in 2007. So, for the last ten years of his life, Jon was a Quaker by conviction. However, his actions and the testimony of those who knew him, worked with and for him and were fellow travellers on his journey, suggest that the Quaker testimonies were not, for him, ideals to live by; rather, they were knit into the very fabric of his being.

That is not to say that his life was not without personal struggles. In his younger days, he had become alcoholic (his own description). We have learned from those close to him that he struggled with alcohol for a long time and then was able to give it up completely.

In the words of one of his family:

“The alcohol was the main factor that hindered him combining his work with his family life, but the last twenty-five years of his life were alcohol-free. ...Jon would protest heavy if someone would make him into something special... he saw himself in a very honest light and recognised all the struggles (I will not call them failings) he had.”

In 2013, he moved to Penzance, where he worked with the Scilly Steamship Company, living simply on his small boat, the Snow Goose, moored in Penzance Harbour. A Penzance Friend wrote that he “was a regular feature at the Harbourside Café in Penzance, and was often to be found in the kitchen washing up.”

The last time Bideford Friends saw Jon, he was asked what he had been doing of late. He replied that he had been on board a vessel pulling refugees out of the water off the coast of Libya, adding that he had not done any of the rescuing, having left that to “the experts”. In fact, he was the man who skippered that ship, and took it into the rescue area, quietly refusing to obey orders from the Italian coastguard to leave the area immediately.

Just before this escapade, he had managed to grab a few days for spiritual refreshment back home on his small boat in Penzance. In a letter to one Bideford Friend, he wrote, “On Sunday, after Friends Meeting, I went up behind Ding Dong, out on the wide open deserted moor. I like to... climb a carn through the heather, feel the height and space, the rough natural textures of granite and scrubby vegetation, the breath of the universe.”

Even in the few weeks before he died, now a very sick man, he still found the wherewithal to serve food to homeless people in a soup kitchen.

One Bideford Friend observed, “He gave the best hugs!”

Jon was deeply spiritual. It could be said that he was a person of cheerful spirituality, this great big bear of a man, with his tousled hair and perpetual grin. It was clear that herein lay the root of all his passion, his monumental courage, his capacity for love, his quiet confidence, his gentleness, his refusal to pass judgement on people, and the love he engendered in others.

A Penzance Friend wrote of him, “He was loved. He was one of the most centred Friends I have known – gentle, modest, happy in himself, well read and had clearly identified right from wrong. He lived his life simply, honestly and with humour... When he spoke [in meeting] it was always to offer support to us.”

There is so much more that could be written of this legendary human being, of his courage in sometimes hair raising exploits, of his sometimes dare-devil approach to campaigns, while, at the same time, rigorously protecting the safety of his crews. He radiated love for all with whom he had dealings, not least those who would come to arrest him, with whom he would sometimes engage in jocular conversation.

Signed on behalf of Devon Area Meeting

Held at Exeter on 10 November 2018

Juliet Morton, Clerk

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## Robert Clark

31 August 1946 – 25 January 2018

Robert Clark lived life to the full, in the manner and spirit of Quakers: both in his many roles within the Society itself, and in his remarkably active life outside it.

Robert was born in Llandudno and spent most of his growing-up years in Porthmadog. He trained as a teacher in Nottingham, but in 1970, after a year of teaching he moved to London and joined the Civil Service in the then Department of Social Security (DSS), now the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). He came to Quakers through active involvement with the peace movement, and became a member of Westminster Meeting in 1980. In the words of his partner Susan Costello, from then on Quakerism became the bedrock of his life.

Robert took Quaker ways into the workplace: former colleagues from the DSS speak of how he managed his team with a fairness and respect that was notable then (and remains so); for example in the way he addressed the processes of annual appraisals and of compassionate leave, bending rules in the belief that if you treated people as responsible adults they would act like that. Those who knew him through his voluntary activities were similarly impressed by his Quakerly integrity and honesty: fellow campaigner with the Voice of the Listener and Viewer (VLV) group described how 'he brought to some of us Quaker principles which we admired and benefited from on many occasions'.

His wide range of voluntary work, particularly after he took early retirement, reflect his concern for public accountability and social justice. Besides holding national positions with the VLV (which campaigns to ensure the independence of public broadcasting) and where he is remembered for his 'dedication to getting things right and equitable', he became active in a more informal way with the National Trust following the Bradenham affair. The Trust had granted a lease of land in the Chilterns for building an air force bunker, and members' challenges

to this decision led to changes in governance procedures. Colleagues there speak of his insight and wisdom.

But his particular interest beyond Friends was in music, a bond shared with Susan. They took a special interest in contemporary music: together they were regular attenders at the Proms, and also at the St Magnus Festival in Orkney where they contributed to commissions and enjoyed, as observers, the conducting and composing courses. Their love of contemporary music led to a close involvement with the London Sinfonietta, and young composers: the Chief Executive Officer describes Robert as one of their truest supporters. In all his activities Robert's focus was always on other people, and on activities that helped people's lives.

When he first started going to meeting he was living in Covent Garden. Robert was active in local affairs: he assisted the coordinator of the Covent Garden Community Association, in particular in challenging planning applications. He became a governor at Archbishop Sumner Primary School when he lived next door. He was also an active member of the Labour Party.

From the outset with Quakers, Robert was ready to take on responsibilities and tasks. Friends at Westminster write that Robert's proximity to meeting, coupled with his willingness to give of his administrative abilities, soon led to his becoming of great service. This was particularly in relation to the premises committee, on which he served over a period approaching twenty five years, including as its clerk. 'Robert was attracted by witness to the peace testimony, perhaps being especially moved by the large Vigil for Peace held by Friends in Trafalgar Square at the time of Yearly Meeting in May 1980. Later he and Susan actively supported the Interfaith Weeks of Prayer for World Peace at the time of the Gulf Wars.'

Robert was an elder at Westminster for more than one triennium, and after his move to Friends House Local Meeting, Robert continued this willingness for service. As well as serving there too as elder, he then joined the monthly



collections team. Whatever role he took on, he was committed and faithful in carrying out his responsibilities. Friends speak equally of this faithful attendance at business meetings and at meetings exploring aspects of Quakerism and Quaker works. Many valued Robert's ministry: for its depth, and for his ability to draw together strands from the ministry of others.

Robert was a stickler for detail; this side of his personality was experienced by some as initially off-putting, but all understood it as part of his dedication to Quakers, and all benefited from it. He is gratefully remembered for meticulously revising the Quaker marriage forms for use in civil partnerships. His last role for Friends was as area meeting archivist. He said, "Well, it's a bit of a nerdish job, but perhaps I'm the right sort of person to do it!" Characteristically, he not only did the current work but also caught up with a considerable backlog. He was a prison visitor at Pentonville for many years and continued to support a man with long-term mental problems after his release. Robert was an active supporter of the Quaker Tapestry, helping to organise displays around the country.

The current clerk of Friends House Local Meeting notes that 'Robert served our meeting at many times by helping us navigate Quaker governance and other matters. I think it was one outward expression of Robert's great love for the Society. At business meetings this was often helpful – sometimes in significant ways and sometimes in simple ways (such as helping a minute to be a little clearer through the substitution of a few words). In both his faithfulness and his love of the Society, I'm reminded of Christine Davis' words in *Quaker faith & practice* (15.01):

"I have developed a passion for good governance – in Quaker terms, Gospel Order – and see this as something of which we, you and I in the Religious Society of Friends in Britain, are stewards as surely as we are stewards of the Earth...Stewardship involves prayer, and it involves thought, and it involves applying what emerges from the two."

Robert's diagnosis of multiple myeloma in the spring of 2013 did not interrupt his attendance, in spite of sometimes quite gruelling treatments, nor his service. He stayed with the collections team and took on arranging for regular supplies of fair trade biscuits and tea and he became the smiling welcoming face to all before meeting for worship each Sunday. Most notably, having persuaded our area meeting to sponsor the Quaker Tapestry exhibition in *The Light* in 2017; he successfully raised contributions and stewards from all the London area meetings.

Robert liked to travel. He and Susan loved in particular visiting Italy, Finland and more recently, Germany, attending music festivals wherever they went. As one friend summarised it, he was 'a wonderful example of never having to regret what you didn't do and very much a life lived to the full'. His obituary in *The Guardian* concluded: 'Robert's energy, his constructive attitude, his passions, his kindness and his generosity of spirit leave him bright in the memory of many.'

Robert's ashes are, most appropriately, scattered in Friends House Garden.

Signed on behalf of North West London Area Meeting

Held at Finchley on 13 November 2018

Dugan Cummings, Clerk

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## Peter Cottingham

15 November 1931 – 29 November 2015

Peter experienced an extremely troubled childhood, living in an inner city area during World War II, with parents both of whom were addicted to alcohol. The effects of his parents' alcoholism had a traumatic effect on Peter and his difficult childhood left him with feelings of despair, self-blame, anger and vulnerability. His parents' example did not save him from later becoming alcoholic himself.

As a young man, in his twenties, Peter lived in New York and had a strong contact with the group of modern painters working there at that time. Here too, drink played its part and Peter's life began to be controlled by a growing addiction to alcohol with all the difficulties and unpleasantness which went with it. In 1970 he married, and though his wife was still with him when he turned away from his alcoholic existence, the marriage did not last.

In 1980 Peter was back in England and moved into the Quaker meeting house in Winchester, where he benefited from the encouraging support of the then warden, Dorothy Moreton. Support from Alcoholics Anonymous and the discovery of Quakers and their beliefs had helped him to stop his consumption of alcohol. Later in the eighties he moved into a Quaker community in East London. During this period he held a steady job doing the building maintenance of the Friends International Centre in Bloomsbury. However, the Quaker community failed to develop long-term possibilities and Peter moved on.

For a while he shared his time between Chattanooga in the United States, and Winchester, finally settling back in Winchester, with occasional visits to the States. During this time he applied for membership of the Society of Friends and so became a Quaker. While on his visits to the States he supported Sister Mary Dennis in her campaign to free the world of nuclear weapons. His contact with her continued when he was back in this country and he arranged, with the support of Winchester

Meeting, for her to visit England. During her visit, she gave a talk to the meeting and visited the Women's Peace Camp at Greenham Common.

Peter was not a 'committee' person; hence he did not serve either as an elder or an overseer, but he was always ready to give his support to individuals with problems. In one instance he supported a Winchester Friend who attended the execution in the States of a Death Row correspondent. She found Peter kind and understanding without ever being patronising. Needless to say, his efforts to help those with alcohol problems continued all the time – he was a constant supporter of Alcoholics Anonymous.

We celebrate Peter's life for finding the strength and the light within to deal with the adversity of his childhood, and problems associated with alcoholism and also for his friendship and his dedicated work for peace. Those who knew him will remember a quiet, modest and kind man of integrity and moral courage, sensitive to the feelings of others and with a special concern for those with difficulties of any sort.

Signed on behalf of Hampshire & Islands Area Meeting

Held at Fareham on 8 September 2018

Eddie Slade, Clerk

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## Stephen Doncaster

11 May 1919 – 13 February 2018

Born in Sheffield, the son of Quaker parents from old Quaker families – his father, Charles Doncaster ran the family steelworks, his mother Hilda, née Priestman, was a teacher in her own Montessori school – Stephen was part of a large extended family, all of whom offered the blessings of being surrounded in his childhood by love and creativity and fun. To listen to Stephen telling the stories of his magical, dramatic childhood Christmases has been a joy. Stephen's grandfather created a wonderful garden in a quarry, part of the land on which the family house stood, a miraculous reworking of a barren place, still now an amazing garden to visit, in excess of a hundred years later. Stephen himself became a talented gardener and plantsman. He created admired gardens wherever he lived and for many of us he has left a legacy of plants and garden advice. Disley Meeting's garden also owes a debt to Stephen.

Stephen might have been expected to go into the family business but his parents wanted him to be happy so he was encouraged to discover where his artistic talent and great organisational skills would lead him. His career moved into the creative arts – he was a great lover of classical music, literature and art all his life. Even in the last months of his life to hear Shakespeare and poetry read to him brought him evident joy. Open to innovative ideas and creativity, with a talent to put into practice his remarkable designs, initially in 1938, Stephen chose to study fashion at the Riemann School of Art and Design in London.

The Second World War brought Stephen back to Sheffield where, as a very young man, he attended a tribunal because he wished to stand up for what he knew to be right, a refusal to bear arms. He was able to serve instead the humanitarian causes which his strong moral compass always led him to support. Stephen served on the Quaker Refugee Committee, becoming its secretary in 1942, his profoundly compassionate nature and strong belief in justice inspiring his work.

Having joined the stage design course at the Old Vic Theatre School at the end of the war, Stephen went on to become a significant figure in the world of theatre. In 1949 he took up the post of assistant director of technical courses at The Old Vic Theatre School where he met Wendy Turner, a student, whom he married in 1956.

Their marriage was a deeply loving one and as a couple they offered remarkable warm hospitality in their home. Stephen and Wendy continued to work together at The Royal Court and at Stratford, designing and creating costumes. Their daughter Sophie was born in 1962, and their son Daniel in 1965. Sophie remembers with such delight her parents working together (and including her aged ten!), making the costumes from their own designs for a production of *The Wood Demon*, Chekov, for The Hampstead Theatre in 1972. The loving warmth and artistic fun of Stephen's Doncaster family childhood was recreated! Daniel's children epitomise the same spirit. Daniel speaks of how Stephen was truly content when he was creating and remembers him gardening, kneeling with his hands in the soil working to enrich it, a symbol of Stephen's gift to the world. At Stephen's Quaker Memorial Meeting for Worship people spoke of the inspiration Stephen and Wendy were in showing how to create a warm and secure family life and home. Stephen was described by one grandchild as 'creative, generous, kind, bold, strong, interesting and interested'

At various points in his career Stephen worked with the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, the Pitlochry Festival, Glasgow Citizens Theatre, the Arts Theatre, ABC Television and finally The Royal Exchange in Manchester. Early in his career in 1956 he moved to The Royal Court Theatre in London and was influential in this theatre company's exciting impact of change and renewal in British Theatre. For instance he worked on the first London production of *The Crucible*, among many other significant productions. When Stephen was a designer at The Nottingham Playhouse he created the costume designs for an acclaimed production

of Dr Faustus: two of these costumes are now in The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) archive. Finally having spent 1979 to 1987 at The Royal Exchange, as a designer, he retired.

In 1965 the combination of Stephen's remarkable talent and experience and his desire to enable others in their creative lives was evident in his work of setting up and leading the Theatre Design Course at Nottingham Trent University. He inspired a spirit of innovation in his students whom he cared for, with a remarkable kindness.

This courageous, loving man celebrated the youthful enthusiasms of the young people and took the care of the staff most seriously. During the late 1970s he was one of the leading figures of a successful campaign to have theatre designers accepted into the trades union, Equity.

Life in Derbyshire brought new projects to which Stephen brought his great organisational skills and his passion for protecting the natural landscape. Stephen was already a lifelong member of The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England. He worked tirelessly and with vision for the Kinder Scout appeal in the 1980s seeking to enable the restoration of stone walls and re-planting of the heather. Here, too, friendship and hospitality towards his fellow committee members came to the fore.

Another project dear to Stephen, to which he gave his influential support was the setting up of the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS), now The Arts Society in The High Peak. It still flourishes today. Here there was a programme of lectures where experts could share their professional knowledge and expertise with a wider public.

When Wendy joined Disley Meeting in the 1980s, Stephen began attending meeting for worship in earnest. Here his wonderful gifts: his natural compassion and true courtesy, the unobtrusive courtesy of noticing what someone needed in practical and emotional terms, was soon appreciated by the Friends around him. His sharp, astute mind recognised how best to give service to the meeting in practical ways and his compassionate heart recognised the needs of

people who were distressed or vulnerable, those who needed to be listened to and nurtured.

Stephen seldom gave us vocal ministry in worship but when he did he seemed able to gently convey the Spirit at work and the deep place of union with the Divine

In 2007 Wendy died, Stephen having served her faithfully and tirelessly through her illness. He grieved with quiet dignity supported by his family, his Quaker meeting and the love of all who knew him.

In 2011 Stephen attended Yearly Meeting at Canterbury where he was convinced by the Canterbury Commitment that Friends 'consider the effect of their lives on the world's limited resources and in particular on their carbon usage'. He returned to Disley determined to move into smaller, more ecologically friendly, accommodation from the home he and Wendy had shared. He gave up treasured possessions in order to follow the guidance of the Spirit and his own moral compass and live the simplest possible life.

Stephen was a deeply modest man, in his heart he never felt he was 'good enough' but he inspired in the Friends of Disley Meeting a profound love and respect for his steady presence, able service and wisdom. He was a most effective Clerk of Premises and took on simple but necessary tasks (as well as tricky ones), even re-covering our hassocks. Stephen served as co-clerk from 2011 to 2013. Having not felt able to accept becoming an elder because he did not recognise his gift of spiritual wisdom, eventually, in his last years of service at Disley and East Cheshire Area Meeting he allowed his name to go forward as elder and was duly, and gratefully, appointed.

Stephen has said that to him beauty in the visual world, and beyond, was an important aspect of spiritual life. To which end, he was an inspired contributor and because of which our lives are the richer.

We give thanks for the Grace of God in the life of Stephen Doncaster.



William Penn's words reflect Stephen:

“A true friend freely advises justly, assists readily, adventures boldly, takes all patiently, defends courageously and continues a friend unchangeably.”

Signed on behalf of East Cheshire Area Meeting

Held at Cheadle Hulme on 11 November 2018

Frances Hill, Clerk

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## Marjorie Milne Farquharson

11 August 1953 – 13 May 2016

“Give God the glory; I'll have none.”

When in 1991 Marjorie Farquharson set up an Amnesty International information office in Moscow, she was the first Westerner working on human rights with a permanent base there. It was particularly important because for years Amnesty had been considered in the USSR to be an ‘anti-Soviet organisation’ and a ‘nest of spies’. Mikhail Gorbachev's dual programme of perestroika (‘restructuring’) and glasnost (‘openness’) had introduced profound changes in economic practice, internal affairs and international relations, which inadvertently set the stage for the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union into 15 individual republics. In this highly unstable political and economic climate, Marjorie was the lynchpin of Amnesty's research on Soviet-era human rights activists, campaigning not only for those well known in the West such as Andrei Sakharov, but also helping to expose the hidden crime of the political abuse of psychiatry. Her quiet passion and work for open democracy and human rights continued in various ways for the next 25 years. She died aged 62 on 13 May 2016 of pneumonia after a cancer operation.

A couple of years earlier, she had been asked by the editor of the newsletter of Edinburgh Central Quaker Meeting for some ideas for spiritual quotes. Her reply was utterly characteristic:

“How about a quotation from William Dewsbury, reckoned ‘one of the sweetest and wisest of the early Quakers’ who was apprenticed to a clothmaker in his youth but spent much of his life in prison in Warwick... About a week before he died he said: ‘If anyone has received any good or benefit through this vessel, called William Dewsbury, give God the glory; I'll have none, I'll have none. I'll have none.’ He was in the last blue *Christian Faith & Practice*, but unfortunately didn't make it into the red one...”

In the New Testament, the word grace comes from the Greek word *charis*, which means favour, blessing, kindness, graciousness and especially the divine influence upon the heart. A related Greek word is *charisma* (gracious gift). Both words originated from another Greek word *chairō* – to rejoice, be glad, delighted ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine\\_grace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_grace) - cite\_note-16).

To Marjorie, the signs of divine grace were in peacebuilding, equality, simplicity and truth. The impact of these gifts, radiating through Marjorie's own life, was to make many people in difficult, unjust circumstances felt supported, regenerated, inspired and strengthened. But Marjorie also knew how much she owed to the divine grace she experienced in the blessings and love of others.

Marjorie was born in Glasgow, but when she was three, her father, Alexander Farquharson, a chartered accountant, changed jobs, and he and his wife, Nellie, and family moved to Lancaster. Marjorie was the youngest child of three.

In 1975, now a student back in Scotland, Marjorie won a British Council scholarship to Russia, and the following year left St Andrews University with prizes and first-class honours in Soviet Political Sciences. After a year in the Quaker United Nations Office in New York, in 1978 she started working for Amnesty, initially in London. This was a time when travel to the Soviet Union was very difficult. Russian intellectuals were smuggling material out to be published by Amnesty. In 1991, most foreigners in Moscow were still living in foreign ghettos, with access to foreign currency shops and good quality food. Marjorie was led instead to live like ordinary Muscovites, in a one-room flat with a small kitchen. In 1992, the inflation rate in Russia soared to over 2,300 per cent.

One day, she interviewed a medical journalist interested in Amnesty's work against psychiatric abuse. The next day, the woman told her daughter, Irina, that she had met a very nice 'English' woman (she didn't know Marjorie was Scottish), commenting: 'I think she is starving.' Irina began taking round an occasional couple of

bananas, a hunk of cheese, maybe a bit of coffee. They became friends, and eventually life-long partners.

The following extract from her Moscow Diary, published in 2018 by Matador (Troubador Publishing), gives a glimpse of her *joie de vivre*:

"I can't explain why I find my surroundings so absolutely beautiful. I came home in the dark through the glade behind the church. The mixture of snow, shadows, and shapes in their winter clothing was lovely.

Reading my *Izvestiya* this morning and listening to music, I suddenly felt immensely happy and at home here. I cabbied to the Quakes. Riding around Moscow in a beat-up car with music on the tape deck is really one of my pleasures in life."

By late 1992, Marjorie was working for the United Nations, based in Geneva but monitoring human rights violations in Bosnia Herzegovina, during both the Bosnian-Croat and the Bosnian-Bosnian civil wars. In 1994, she was back in Moscow directing the TACIS (Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States and Georgia) Non-Governmental Organisation Support Unit, supporting open democracy by helping the new third sector get on its feet in Russia. Then in 1996, it was on to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg for five years advising the Russian Federation and Ukraine on human rights, influencing legislation, establishing a regional ombudsman and helping emerging NGOs to get consultative status to enable them to lobby at Council meetings.

She travelled extensively and alone to remote places with very poor living conditions, at considerable personal risk. It seems her gentle, unassuming and modest demeanour coupled with her wide knowledge enabled people to trust her. She was a very good listener, spoke Russian naturally and well, and never looked like a stuck-up foreign consultant there to teach those Russians democracy.

In 2001, her father's ill-health brought Marjorie and Irina back to Scotland. In Edinburgh, she set up as an independent human rights consultant. Work included reports on statelessness in Central Asia, sexual minorities in Uzbekistan, the death penalty in four ex-Soviet states, child soldiers, and corruption in the defence procurement industries. She also evaluated projects funded by the European Union, and wrote many expert opinions on asylum seekers' applications to live in the UK. Again and again, she was able to be a voice for people in pain and distress who otherwise would have gone unheard.

Her spiritual life was deepened through Tai Chi, music and photography, poetry and even a bee-keeping course. Marjorie also translated some Gogol, Bulgakov and Mandelstam and wrote short stories. One of them, *The Weather Station*, won the 2000 BBC World Service Best Short Story Prize and was broadcast.

For 20 years, unknown to most people, Marjorie lived with multiple sclerosis. Initially, it did not affect her too badly but about 2010 or 2011 balance problems developed. Undeterred, in 2014 she took part in an internal selection process run by her local Scottish National Party branch for potential candidates for the European elections. She cheerfully bought some new clothes as an alternative to her usual jeans, T-shirt and fleece, and enjoyed the democratic process. Although she found the public speaking very demanding physically, afterwards she continued to campaign, making numerous telecanvassing calls for an independent Scotland in Europe and hosting many training sessions for Yes-vote ambassadors.

As a member of the Religious Society of Friends, Marjorie was area meeting clerk for South East Scotland from 2009 to 2013. While she was Deputy Registering Officer for Marriages for the area meeting, she oversaw the first religious same-sex marriage in Scotland and then went on to become Registering Officer. She was quietly supportive of new people to the meeting and those with particular responsibilities. Marjorie also convened the Quaker Festival Committee,

an outreach activity by the Society of Friends, running Edinburgh Meeting House as a venue in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival providing arts performances, refreshment, charity fundraising and quiet space in August.

Marjorie died as she lived, quietly and privately. In her last days, she and Irina read extracts from Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* and listened to Allegri's *Miserere*, both of which were heard at her Edinburgh Quaker funeral.

Signed on behalf of South East Scotland Area Meeting

Held at Edinburgh on 14 August 2018

Phil Lucas, Co-clerk

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## Joan Frik

25 April 1921 – 20 April 2018

Joan lived a full life, born in Sheffield and dying shortly before her 97th birthday in Eastbourne. She had originally trained as a teacher and in a quiet way, she always had many interests, but her final two years of life were spent at Meads House, a home for dementia care.

Joan was very much loved, right up until the end of her life and visiting her at Meads House was never a chore. There was continuity of her spirit and personality, even when her memory and interests were gone. Meads House staff are a remarkable group of people whose welcoming approach contributed to Joan's calm.

Joan's daughters Pat, Frances, Julia and Helen are a credit to their mother and they are inspired by her. Joan loved art and craft, was an excellent photographer and a pianist who practised Mozart and Mendelssohn. While the daughters were young the family had a small holding, including 'Blacky', their cow. Joan loved animals, particularly dogs, plants and gardening, books and ideas, playing games of scrabble on the internet with Pat, on the other side of the Atlantic, and knitting for 'Hansy Boy', Helen's partner in Holland.

Joan's spiritual interests were harder to list or specify. The books she read on the afterlife may have been purchased following the death of Helmut, with whom she shared her life between 1948 until 2005. They had met as fruit pickers, just after the Second World War; Helmut having fled from Germany to South Africa before settling in Britain. As a child Joan had attended Church of England services but for at least fifty years, she was a member of Friends.

She and Helmut were members successively of Malvern, Ludlow, Bath and Hereford local meetings. After Helmut's death Joan moved to live near Julia and her husband, Chris, in Eastbourne, however Joan's ashes will be laid near Helmut's, in the graveyard at Leominster Meeting House.

As a member of Eastbourne Meeting, an elder and overseer, Joan maintained a wholly appropriate directness and clarity. Into her eighties she attended area meetings and Yearly Meetings and even when she was starting to suffer with dementia, she hosted study groups at her flat. An example of her advice to new attenders would be delivered with a wry smile: "...and if you've got something to say, stand up, speak up, sit down and shut up".

After Joan had forgotten the names of Friends, she still remembered Jenny, the golden retriever attender at Eastbourne Meeting; mainly her wagging tail as it beat against the floor.

At Meads House, within two months of her death, Joan found a green bottle top, deep within her hand bag. Possibly she was reaching for the packet of dog biscuits she'd kept there since she first moved to the care home. She looked surprised that she knew to give the bottle top to the Friend who was visiting her, but Joan was completely correct in handing the bottle top to someone who could take it to the meeting house, as another Friend there makes a collection of bottle tops for charity.

At meeting for worship on Sunday morning 22 April, when Joan's death was announced, an attender at Eastbourne Meeting, who had met Joan just once, experienced her presence in the room. Joan was radiant and she had come with the name "Joan of Arc".

Signed on behalf of Sussex East Area Meeting  
Held at Eastbourne on 13 May 2018

Peter Aviss, Clerk



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## Geoffrey Edward (Ted) Hoare

27 December 1922 – 27 September 2017

With his wide experience in four continents, Ted Hoare brought a deep sense of inner calling to his spiritual journey combined with a practical sense of the challenges of the temporal world. He spent his boyhood in England. He then experienced the Indian Army during World War II, which was combined with subsequent work in business in India. From here he sought further adventures in Australia, to which he felt drawn, as career opportunities diminished in the sub-continent.

Now married and established in Denmark, Western Australia, Ted continued his work for the Church which he had begun when in Barackpur, while simultaneously studying theology at depth, aiming at the Associateship in Theology. Despite the presence of the church in his early childhood, his disillusionment with the established church in Australia led him in due course to enquire into his distant seventeenth century Quaker origins, leading to the decision to join the Society of Friends in 1980.

This in turn led to a spell at Pendle Hill, which both preceded and followed a return to Australia to experience the break-up of his first marriage, his ex-wife and three offspring remaining in the antipodes. More time at Pendle Hill followed this, during which he travelled widely in Quaker ministry throughout the United States and surrounding areas, including Mexico and Canada, while publishing substantial contributions on spiritual development and participating in a wide range of conferences and workshops. He was supported in sponsored, invited visits to Quaker meetings in the Southern states of America.

Having met his second wife, Ted returned to England, where he again travelled, participating at meetings at Woodbrooke, Charney Manor and visiting meetings in Holland, accompanied and supported in his ministry by Moya's active presence. This led to a settled life of

deep commitment to Quaker activity which involved writing, clerking and visiting, with an increasing interest in supporting the challenge of ageing and spiritual accompaniment. In 1992 he received a grant from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust to travel to meetings in the south of England to hold workshops for elders. In his final years, disabled by physical restrictions, he continued to read, write, and seek to stimulate and support others in their pursuit of the spiritual dimensions of life.

Ted's writing ability was that of the short story writer. He was capable of immediately grabbing his reader's attention and holding it by focused, pithy text. Ted was described as having a stern face, but with twinkly eyes and a similar description could be given to his writing. Ted was widely read and used references in much of the material he wrote, presumably seeing these as strengthening the point that he was making. He had a powerful use of imagery and also a clarity of thought.

He composed pamphlets, which covered the basis of the Society and its beliefs. He also wrote introductions to the Society, entitled *Facts About Friends* and *Quaker Questions and Answers*. Another of his major works was *Deepening the Spiritual Life of the Meeting*, which was published by the Friends General Conference, Philadelphia, in 1995. He provided many articles and letters to *The Friend*, *Friends Journal* and *Friends World News* on all manner of topics. These included: the personality of Quakers, travelling in the ministry, the spiritual journey and spiritual hunger, commitment and ageing.

He was not afraid to throw a pebble in the pond to see what effect the ripples had. In 1998 he wrote in *The Friend* about the detachment he saw between those employed at Friends House and the majority of Quakers, who felt that most of the work carried out by the employees was not related to what they thought, or necessarily cared about and that there were too many different projects in place for individual Quakers to be able to concentrate on them all.

Ted, in his writings, was always asking us to go back to our roots. He regretted that there was no commitment by those joining the Society to learn about its ways and saw a risk that there would be a movement away from the religious to the secular, with Quakers just devoted to conflict resolution, justice and human rights. He wanted us to turn to the Inner Light and develop the spirituality of the Society again. We might wonder how prescient this was and how much, if anything, has changed in two decades. In one of his pieces on the gathered meeting, he mused that it might not be too long before Yearly Meeting voted to change the name to 'The Charitable Society of Friends'. This epitomised Ted's concern that the Society was losing its way and that all involved needed to return to the spiritual centre.

Ted wrote many critiques of books and pamphlet published both by the Society and elsewhere. He used his critical faculties to dissect the author's work and to look below the surface for a deeper meaning and understanding. This act provided the potential reader the chance to garner more from it than might otherwise have been the case.

Ted was not restricted to writing and as has been said he also lectured and ran experience sessions. Sometimes this was on his own and sometimes with Moya. He worked on eldership and also on the ability to carry out creative listening, to listen with care and attention to what others were saying, the listener controlling the ego so that the speaker might explain what they were thinking and wanting to get across. From this developed the Q-room, the practice of one-to-one ministry, helping to nurture an individual's spiritual life.

As he aged, Ted turned his attention to what happened and what was the potential for an increased spirituality as we progressed towards death. From this came workshops, writings and a conference for those involved in the care of the elderly. Right to the end of his life Ted was a busy correspondent, debating the various causes, philosophies and beliefs that he held dear.

At all times Ted was, in one way or another, travelling in the ministry. His life was governed by his belief in the leadings of the Spirit. His was a desire to see the Society and those within it return to a spiritual base from which it was possible to move forward in right ordering. He endeavoured to be faithful in listening and following what he was called to do and be. Ted gave the second half of his life to this end and in so doing demonstrated a belief and understanding that we all would be well advised to try to adopt for ourselves.

Signed on behalf of Mid Somerset Area Meeting

Held at Wincanton on 8 September 2018

Gill Greenfield, Clerk

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## John Alan Ingram

18 April 1931 – 2 November 2018

John Alan Ingram was born on 18 April 1931 in North Harrow. His mother was a Baptist and Alan grew up in the Baptist church. When studying in Exeter he started to explore his faith with fellow students becoming involved in the Student Christian Movement. He encountered Quakers and began attending Quaker meeting which he continued to do for the rest of his life. On graduation Alan registered as a conscientious objector and undertook alternative service in social work in Liverpool, where he joined the Society of Friends.

Following this he worked for the Family Service Unit in London. In London he again met Evelyn whom he had known in Exeter, they became close and in due course they married. They moved to Edinburgh where Alan undertook training in psychiatric social work. Alan and Evelyn attended Edinburgh Meeting. They subsequently lived in Leamington, attending Warwick Meeting, then Salisbury and Northampton. Finally, they moved to Bramhall at the end of 1970 as Alan had been appointed to an academic post at the University of Manchester, both teaching and undertaking psychiatric social work. Ruth had been born in Leamington and Sue in Salisbury and the whole family soon settled into Cheadle Hulme Meeting and Cheshire Monthly Meeting.

In the subsequent 48 years Alan and Evelyn have been at the heart of Cheadle Hulme Meeting. They have welcomed us to their home and garden for social gatherings on innumerable occasions making sure that each of us felt welcome. For many years they organized outings for walks in the countryside with a variety of walks to suit the abilities of everyone. Both Alan and Evelyn have undertaken many roles in the Cheadle Hulme Meeting and more widely. At various times Alan has been clerk, treasurer and elder, and has also been a representative on Meeting for Sufferings and has taken a particular interest in the work of The Retreat, the Quaker mental hospital in York. Alan and Evelyn have

both been involved in Churches Together in Cheadle Hulme and Christian Aid. For many years they helped with the Christmas Day lunch for people living on their own organised by Grove Lane Baptist Church.

The commitment and responsibilities of membership of the Society of Friends were important to Alan. He attended monthly/area meeting regularly and also Yearly Meeting, and enjoyed visiting other meetings in the area meeting. If we were dealing with a difficult issue at area meeting, Alan could be relied upon for considered ministry of great integrity. If he was out of step with the direction the meeting was taking, he was faithful in sharing his leading even if this was difficult but also respected the leadings of others and sought to help the meeting find unity.

Many of us have benefitted from Alan's support and friendship. On Sunday mornings, he enjoyed acting as doorkeeper, warmly welcoming each person as they arrived at meeting and taking particular care of enquirers and visitors. He took a real interest in us all, sharing in the joys and sorrows of our lives. In retirement Alan was able to develop his love of music, singing with the Cavendish Singers and playing the recorder with various groups. We had recorder music at his memorial meeting. He was a keen gardener and loved the countryside, birds and flowers. Alan and Evelyn enjoyed travel, visiting a wide range of adventurous places often associated with visits to or from Sue following her move to New Zealand. They sought out any Friends meetings in the places they visited. We enjoyed hearing about these travels.

There is not usually a lot of spoken ministry in Cheadle Hulme meeting for worship and for many years we have been grateful for the gift of Alan's spoken ministry which has sustained us all. Although he could sometimes be a little hesitant in everyday speech, Alan had a real gift for spoken ministry of great depth, clarity and conciseness. He spoke from the heart and often spoke of the meaning he found in Jesus's life and teaching. Alan was active in Cheadle Hulme Meeting to the end. On the Sunday before he

died, he acted as doorkeeper, he ministered in meeting for worship, referring to Jesus' teaching, and then at the end of meeting he made the tea and coffee. Martha and Mary in one. It is hard to imagine our meeting without him; we will miss him in so many ways.

We give thanks for the Grace of God as shown in the life of Alan Ingram.

Signed on behalf of East Cheshire Area Meeting

Held at Cheadle Hulme on 26 January 2019

Sally Mendham, Clerk

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## Hugh Waring Maw

2 June 1920 – 11 March 2018

Hugh Maw was a birthright Friend, who was associated with our meeting at Stourbridge for over fifty years. He served the meeting in many different ways, as well as being very active at area meeting and yearly meeting levels. He was born in India to Quaker missionary parents and spent the first eight years of his life there. He recalled Mahatma Gandhi sometimes joining the family worship, sitting peacefully at the back spinning. Another memory he would tell ruefully was the only time his father administered corporal punishment. A man-eating tiger had been seen in the area where they lived and, aged about seven, he crept out, determined to see it. This had been strictly forbidden by his parents. Luckily, he did not encounter the tiger!

He travelled back to England when he was eight to go to The Downs School and then Leighton Park, which is where his love of sports developed. He played hockey, rugby, loved gymnastics and became an outstanding cricketer. He readily admitted he had been very competitive.

He loved to recall the times when, during his undergraduate years at Bristol University, he danced in the chorus of Swan Lake with the International Ballet, with the professional dancers whispering instructions in his ear. Years later an elderly member of his meeting boasted that she had been in the audience and seen him!

For his postgraduate teaching practice, he went to Sidcot School, where his mother was Matron and where Daphne Southall, his future wife, was a pupil. She loved to tell how their friendship started following an incident when Hugh returned a piece of homework on which he had written [in red!] "7 out of 10. Not good enough. See me". They eventually married. Daphne had a cousin in the same class who recalled how all the girls had fancied this handsome young man and were very jealous of her!

Hugh registered as a conscientious objector in 1939 and, after a gruelling tribunal, received an



unconditional exemption from military service, so he could continue his studies and train to be a teacher. His brother also wrestled with his conscience and felt he had to join the Army, Hugh said they had to listen to each other and learn to respect their different choices.

After his time at Sidcot School, where it was said he was no soft touch on the discipline front, he moved in 1945 to work as assistant Physical Education (PE) instructor at Bournville Day Continuation School, combined with being a Youth Worker at the Cadbury's chocolate factory. While he loved the work, he became increasingly aware of the horrors of the war and felt he was being led to volunteer with the Friends Relief Service (FRS). He wrote, "I was under concern. My Meeting has listened and tested my concern". So he underwent six months' training, including learning to drive big trucks, before going to Berlin for a year followed by six months in Cologne. Towards the end of his life Hugh revisited the diaries he kept at the time and published them as a fascinating book in 2014, called *The Training and Experience of a Quaker Relief Worker*.

He did wonder whether he had become desensitised to the horrors of war and the terrible conditions they found in post-war Germany. He wrote: "We had decided however that the present suffering is a bottomless pit... [and] we could not do it all". He did manage to go to many concerts, ballets and operas and the team held meeting for worship whenever they could. Both these kept them nourished and strengthened to cope with the horrors. He and his fellow workers had lots of, as he put it, riotous fun, but could make the transition into deep worship.

It is clear from his diary that his faith sustained him and was very profound. He was often asked to give a talk about his faith. In a Christmas broadcast he made, just before he returned to England, he said, "The profound need of our time is to realise the everlasting truth of the common Fatherhood of God, the Spirit of love and the oneness of the human race."

In 1949 he married Daphne at last. They had 3 children and eventually 4 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. Both Hugh and Daphne were from long established Quaker families.

After teaching at several types of school, including one for juvenile delinquents, in 1956 Hugh was appointed Headmaster of Sibford School. He set about transforming the school in accordance with his own Quaker beliefs.

Earlier in his career he had been made to beat a pupil and he vowed never to do this again. He believed strongly in educating the whole person, so art, music and sports were given as much importance as academic subjects. At his funeral a former pupil recalled their astonishment when Hugh, as Headmaster, visited their gym class one day and suddenly leapt in the air, did a full somersault and landed back on his feet. To the end of his life he and Daphne continued to support Sidcot and Sibford Schools.

After six years at Sibford School, he felt it was time for a new challenge and for the last thirteen years of his career he moved into teacher training. His work included setting up a course in health education for mature students. Alongside this he was involved in youth and marriage guidance counselling.

Hugh and Daphne shared a love of birdwatching, gardening, walking and music, singing together in a choir for many years and both playing the violin.

In 1978 Hugh took early retirement and was able to devote much of the rest of his life to serving the Religious Society of Friends at local, area and national levels in many roles. He had a special interest in the Middle East and he and Daphne joined David Gray, who led many Woodbrooke Study Tours to the Holy Land. These two-week tours were thoroughly prepared in study weekends at Woodbrooke. Those who came on them learnt so much, were wonderfully cared for and met amazing people in each community who, sometimes at risk to their lives, were working for peace between the Israelis and Palestinians.

Hugh had a great sense of humour. Once, on one of the Tours of the Holy land, he alerted David Gray, a fellow lover of birdwatching, to “the Greater Spotted Hoodwink” visible from the bus window! Another time, at the Christmas Party, though he seldom touched alcohol, he gave a very funny performance of a poem (supposedly by a drunkard) in which, in each verse he became more and more slurred, so that he really seemed quite drunk by the end.

He would sometimes be invited to talk to pupils in local schools. One class had been studying Vera Brittain’s Testament Of Youth, and were very impressed to hear that Hugh had known her and that she had influenced his decision to become a conscientious objector, after he had been corresponding with her leading up to his tribunal. All his life he was a prolific letter-writer.

Every Sunday he was in his seat, deeply centred, at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled time of the start of Worship, so that people came into a gathered stillness. His vocal ministry was moving and deeply spiritual and he was always ‘open to new Light’.

Hugh will be remembered in Stourbridge Meeting for his faithful attendance at business meetings, his commitment to the right holding of them and for his conscientiousness about any task he undertook. He always took time to welcome and talk to visitors to the meeting especially those coming for the first time. One person said, “his sparkling eyes, and flow of stories enthralled me to the Quaker way of ‘living adventurously’”. His welcome was gentle, encouraging and reflective. What a gift to have known him.”

Signed on behalf of Central England Area Meeting

Held at Edgbaston on 19 January 2019

Alison Ironside, Clerk

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## David Morrish

17 May 1931 – 14 February 2018

David, who was born in Plymouth, was the son of a shipwright and a shop assistant. After a short spell of evacuation to Cornwall, following the family house being bombed, David attended the Emergency High school in Plymouth. This was followed by a scholarship to Exeter University where he studied Geography and Geology. David also completed a M.Sc. and won a Fulbright travelling Scholarship which took him to the United States of America (USA) for 12 months at the time of the McCarthy purges. While at University in Exeter, David started attending the Quaker meeting, subsequently becoming a member.

On returning to Britain David was called up for National Service. As a boy, he had met an Italian prisoner of war who was working on a farm. This influenced him to start thinking about the war and the whole question of where we stood in relation to the issue of peace and war. As a consequence he became a conscientious objector.

As a conscientious objector, David served with the Friends Ambulance Unit. After refugee and medical type work in this country, he was sent to Iran, working with the United Nations to help organise education, particularly for children with visual impairment.

On return from Iran, David married Joan, whom he had met previously through the Liberal party. They had two daughters, one of whom died tragically soon after birth. The other daughter Claire now lives in London and has her own daughter, Emma.

David and Joan moved to Exeter where David taught at St Luke’s College and was able to further his love of travel in the long holidays. He revisited Canada and the USA and took the family all over Europe from the Baltic and Russia down to Spain.

David will be particularly remembered for his work as an Exeter City Liberal Councillor and subsequently as a Devon County Councillor.

He was successfully involved in implementing controversial changes in the education system which led in due course to co-education and the comprehensive system.

As a Liberal councillor he was very concerned about a controversial planning application for change of use – in the Newtown area – from a house to a place for Sikh worship. David felt this could have become “rather nasty”. The application was passed by just one vote and David thought this was a very important decision.

He served on the County Council for many years and became its leader. In 1988, when the majority of Liberals joined with Social Democrats to form the Liberal Democratic Party, David disagreed and stayed with the Liberals on the grounds that key Liberal party principles would be lost in the merger. He felt, in particular, that the lack of commitment to nuclear disarmament by the new party went against his Quaker values. This was an example of his strength of character and his commitment to the key Quaker testimony to truth. David retired from politics after 50 years. He was awarded Freedom of the City of Exeter in May 2011.

A former colleague of David’s has sent us the following two paragraphs:

“David was an outstanding County Councillor and for anyone seeking to provide the best education possible for Devon children and adults, he was exemplary: he listened so carefully and was exceptionally articulate in discussion as well as in public speaking. His many contributions were well-informed, thoughtfully considered and always consistent with his integrity, wide understanding and humane purpose.

One occasion comes to mind now: when he was making a powerful speech in the Council chamber against heavy cuts in the education budget, he argued that schools should have special protection and that the County Council should be ready to say that our roads may not be the best they could be, but our schools are.”

David was a member of Exeter and then Exmouth Meeting, going regularly to meeting for worship. Although he was able to go to meeting physically less frequently towards the end of his life when he was in a care home in Exeter, he said he always sat in silence during the time of meeting and joined us in spirit. Hearing and giving ministry and listening in the Quaker silence meant a great deal to him. He offered a wide knowledge of the world to our meeting. He was a welcome, cheerful participant with an engaging chuckle and is much missed.

In his last years, in spite of his disabilities, he retained a lively interest in people and Quaker affairs. His life epitomised the following words of George Fox:

“Be patterns, be examples in all countries, islands, nations wherever you come, that your carriage and life may preach among all sorts of people, and to them; then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in every one.” (George Fox, 1656)

Signed on behalf of Devon Area Meeting

Held at Exeter on 10 November 2018

Juliet Morton, Clerk

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## Eileen Noakes

17 November 1921 – 3 August 2018

Eileen Noakes was born in South Africa, in 1921. Her father was killed in a mine explosion when she was three, after which she lived with relatives near Pretoria, only rarely seeing her mother. She regularly attended a Church of England church and Sunday school. Later she was influenced by a man called Nichol Campbell who founded the 'School of Truth' which taught positive thought and a form of silent meditation.

She travelled to Europe in 1951 where she met her husband-to-be, Jack Noakes, in London. The couple went to live in Essex where she brought up four children and lived the life of an upper/middle class wife with parties, sailing, horses, tennis and golf. When the marriage ended, Eileen's life totally changed direction but the depth of family ties continued through her life and she was a much loved mother and grandmother.

Alongside her new close friend and business partner, Patrick Shackleton, Postgraduate Dean of Medical Studies at the University of Southampton, Eileen became a peace activist, community organiser and alternative therapist. She was an early member of the Fellowship of Healing and used her house as a Healing and Conference Centre from which, in collaboration with Patrick and Kelvin Spencer, the Scientific and Medical Network was launched.

After Patrick's sudden death in 1977, Eileen moved to Harbertonford, turning a field near her farmhouse into native woodland that remains under covenant today, known as Harmony Wood. She settled subsequently in Kingsbridge and Ringmore before moving to Totnes.

She became co-chair of the World Disarmament Campaign in the 80s and was on the Board of the London Centre for International Peace-Building. She helped to start the Schumacher College, a Victim Support Scheme, a Mediation Scheme and Kingsbridge Empowering Youth. In her seventies she was active in the charity 'Friends of Nzega', visiting Tanzania several

times. Right up to her nineties she remained vociferous in her calls for democracy, a fairer world and peace.

An appreciation by one member of her meeting at the time said that 'Eileen always spoke with clarity, directness and total honesty. She demonstrated her care for others in her open, enthusiastic and compassionate approach to life. It was not in her nature to obfuscate or beat about the bush. The result for me was that I always felt empowered by what she said which gave me confidence to pursue my own path'. Another spoke of her being 'passionately concerned about those less fortunate and with peace issues' and also of 'her sense of fun, love of dance and all things yellow!'

She testified to a God 'who was both immanent and transcendent'. Her spiritual goal was to 'live always in, and from, that Inner Light...our inward Christ, the part of us that is immortal, our spark of the Divine'.

She also believed strongly that the inspiration we receive must be translated into action: "I turned to the Quakers whose commitment to action for world peace and justice I admired". She often spoke of the power of collective prayer and had faith in the 'tipping point': the human capacity to bring about change if enough people care.

Even in her very last years she continued to care deeply about what was happening in the world, writing many letters to newspapers on peace and justice themes, and offering support and wise advice to younger friends and family, to whom she remained an inspiration and example.

She kept up her regular attendance at meeting for worship, until she moved to a care home in Dartington, where her poetic ministry remained profound and much valued.

She died on 3 August 2018 and is laid to rest at Sharpham. At the funeral, her grandson described her as "a sprinkling of the divine".

Signed on behalf of Devon Area Meeting

Held at Exeter on 12 January 2019

Judith Thompson, Clerking Team



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## Joyce Pickard

20 September 1921 – 8 September 2017

Joyce was born to a tradition of service – her grandfather was a Methodist lay preacher, mother a dressmaker, father a welfare officer – in a family where everyone was engaged in church and community social activities and clubs for the disadvantaged. She enjoyed academic and sporting success at school from whence she went easily on to read languages at university prior to teaching mainly French. Participation in religious activity was in her genes but it was while teaching on the Wirral that she discovered Quakers, finding in the testimonies to peace and equality ‘a blinding light of the obvious’ – why had she not seen this before? She felt clear that she had been ‘led’ and continued to be led in her subsequent choice of life.

She was a classroom teacher in Derby, still in her thirties, when Quakers there urged her to apply for the headship of The Mount, the York Quaker School for girls. The application, which was intended ‘just to shut them up’, resulted in her being appointed. She arrived in post, without management experience or knowledge of boarding school life, but with all the self-confidence which was and remained her hallmark.

Her seventeen years at The Mount left an indelible mark. Joyce wanted to know about and be actively involved in all aspects of the school. She used her imagination and vitality to support the expanding building programme including a swimming pool and improved sports facilities. All plans were scrutinised in detail and she suggested improvements to them. Joyce was always one to take absolutely direct leadership, clear about what action was needed and fearless of consequences.

Joyce put a huge emphasis on the spiritual and Quaker life of the school and introduced short unprogrammed meetings for worship. The girls were presented daily with what was important in life and asked: “what sort of person are you?” She provided examples of what the girls should strive

to do and become, bringing the political world of the time into the school, through peace work, United Nations Association (UNA) meetings, talks about the homeless and the like, and she made a point of consulting the girls by setting up a School Council (by no means the norm then) with year group and staff representatives. She could be ready to listen as well as to offer advice. Mount girls saw a strongly principled and firmly moral figurehead, a passionately committed, energetic person who inspired both admiring respect and enduring fear.

While some remember gratefully a straightforward relationship with her others were seared by ‘plain speaking’ which they experienced as dismissive judgments that left them devastated. When her absolutist view of things led to uncompromising decisions that were worth questioning, a direct challenge might occasionally effect change, but such resistance was all too rare. If some adult had told Joyce it was wrong to confiscate fur-lined boots from a desperately cold, homesick college girl from the tropics just because they were not on the clothing list, would she have changed her decision? As no one (to our knowledge) did contradict her, we shall never know.

It was during her time as head of The Mount that Joyce became close friends with Mary and Alan Pickard. Mary was another strong woman; when very close to death, she urged Alan to marry Joyce and this duly happened in 1976, with Joyce retiring from the headship in the following year. It was a very happy period of thirteen years for both of them. Alan’s gentle strength and ever-present sense of humour and of proportion brought out a softer side of Joyce.

Major changes needed to improve York Meeting House prior to 1981 gave her the chance to volunteer with Alan as an equal. In 1976 Joyce gave a school place to Shane, a teenager in dire need of a refuge from her family situation. When Shane left The Mount after two years in the sixth form, Alan and Joyce and Shane ‘adopted’ one another, a warm relationship which was in due course strongly shared by Shane’s husband and daughters. The family’s affectionate teasing

and total informality brought an important new dimension into Joyce's life, allowing a distinctly relaxed element of her personality to blossom when they were together and bringing her a lot of happiness.

During a retirement lasting over forty years, the things she had urged on her pupils became her own priority; these years were simply an extension of her field of activity taking in Quaker work, peace, ecumenical and interfaith work. Joyce's impact in the city of York took many forms. She was the first woman to be invited to occupy the pulpit in the Minster and in her eighties she was made a freeman of the city to mark its "formal recognition of her contribution in promoting social justice in the City."

She was well known for her radical campaigning on many issues, not least through the slogans displayed on the bike that she was still riding in her 90s. "The York Press's photographic archive shows that whenever there is a protest about inequality, war, or racism, she's there...not strident or shouting, just calmly and patiently trying to persuade the rest of us to think a little more clearly... In 1992 she is a one-woman campaign against pit closures: 'I'm standing here for: social justice; Britain's future; miners' jobs!' says the hand-lettered placard she's holding. In 2007, she's lying on the pavement to symbolise a casualty of war; in 2009, sitting in York Minster as part of the hunger strike to draw attention to children dying in Gaza."

Within the Quaker community Joyce's vocal ministry was valued. She never brought her campaigning or political side into worship; her angle was reflective, a teaching ministry with a Christocentric slant and grounded in biblical knowledge and a store of Methodist hymns. Her Quaker service included the clerkship of Quakers in Yorkshire; at different times she was an elder and overseer in York Area Meeting and 'Quaker hospital chaplain' in York.

This last was an entirely unofficial self-designation which, combined as it was with her supremely confident air of authority, took her

into many wards on many occasions regardless of stated visiting times. One patient thus visited recalls: 'I was long term in York hospital [a survivor of road accident that killed all four others involved] and far from family. She came without fail three times a week... That Quaker presence and silent worship supported me in a very dark place.' She was an equally committed visitor to patients at the Retreat and the meeting for worship there.

She served from 1962 to 1988 on the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and, in retirement, on the Mount School Social Service Training Endowment Trust and the Breckenbrough School governing body. Committee work in general however, including that needed for central Quaker activity, was not her forte, so though her focus was often worldwide, her many actual commitments remained regional.

She found slow process hard to bear and had no patience with deeds or regulations that might prevent her going full steam ahead with what she perceived to be useful, practical and visible action. (Characteristically she could not understand that a retired ex-colleague chose to put academic study of early Quaker worship ahead of concentrating full time on a project for today.)

A prime example would be her commitment to the small group of Quakers which, every other month, holds a meeting for worship near the main gates of Menwith Hill, the world's largest monitoring communications station, situated on the moors above Harrogate. Well into her 90s, Joyce remained a faithful worshipper there. She was a powerful grounding presence as she sat on (except when occasionally blown right off) her folding stool or gave clear thoughtful ministry. She seemed impervious to blizzards, teeming rain or freezing cold, and was usually inadequately dressed by ordinary standards; her idea of wet or cold weather gear was a plastic mac and summer-weight stockings.

The indomitable Joyce was inspirational to many members of small and perhaps struggling causes including York Against the War, the Palestine

Solidarity Campaign, York Interfaith Group. She was a founder member of York Voluntary Euthanasia Society.

Three things – her diary, her bike and her extreme environmental approach – will for many people always symbolise Joyce. The well-thumbed diary was kept to hand, so that whenever she heard of another cause or meeting, she could check the possibility of being there in the action, lending support against injustice. Until her last two years Joyce was rarely separated from her bike.

She could still use it when walking had become very difficult and would always (not just in later years) ride it the wrong way down a one-way street to shorten her journey to worship. Attached to the bike's rear there was invariably a prominent and very homemade placard ensuring that everyone in its wake read something useful to rouse them to action: "For a better world let's practise Truth, Fairness, Caring, Sharing and Respect for all (It Works)."

Joyce was renowned for a utilitarian 'waste not, want not' approach to everything from her own clothes to furnishing and furniture in Friargate Meeting House. The meeting's plan to replace old curtains was thwarted for some years by Joyce's unilateral action in climbing a very high ladder [with no one to check or support or warn], then taking down the offending curtains for relining and running repairs before reinstating them. Many such actions elicited a wry mix of admiration for her spirit and frustration at a one-person decision taken for the community.

Joyce was no plaster saint. Her gifts could make her exhausting and over-convinced of the rightness of her views. They could also be energising and a spur to others to think through and articulate something different. All her views and actions were strong: on the one hand, she was generously willing to share money freely – wisely or unwisely – with all and sundry; on the other, she was equally ready to share her firm opinions on situations, people, and individuals regardless of how much or little she might know

of underlying circumstances. Seen at its best, as in interfaith work among equals, it showed as energy, crispness and the ability to look directly into people's eyes and listen – even if she often promptly and animatedly disagreed with them!

Where it emerged in unequal relationships, the wounds could be profound and lasting. She did not temper the wind to the shorn lamb and perhaps did not appreciate the impact of her actions and words on others, expecting everyone else to be able to match her ability to stand up to any gale. Even so, many have been grateful to her for down to earth and unflinchingly honest advice which they did not want to hear but knew, if not at the time, was just what they needed.

In a brief account written for Shane and Shane's family, Joyce recorded her deep gratitude that her parents had blessed her "with a temperament combining practicality with freedom from fear or anxiety for the future, self-reliance yet a liking for people." We might add: the very good fortune of over ninety years of great energy and robust health.

A photo of her campaigning for York Against the [Iraq] War is typical: the eldest person present, she has turned herself into a placard, is wearing less protective clothing than anyone else, and is clearly the only one who is not even feeling the cold. One of life's originals, Joyce saw every day as an opportunity to do something worthwhile to express what she believed to be that of God within. She has been the public embodiment in York of what it means to be a Quaker and let your life speak.

Signed on behalf of York Area Meeting

Held at Acomb on 11 July 2018

Barbara Windle, Clerk

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## Geoffrey Rendle

10 December 1948 – 10 December 2017

Geoffrey Rendle was born in South London on 10th December 1948. His parents were active Baptists, and while at Cambridge, where he studied mathematics, Geoffrey was involved in a Baptist group. Throughout his life, he continued to draw inspiration from the Bible and other Christian writings. He explored the relationship between faith and action in society and developed an interest in addressing inequality and injustice. He started attending Wimbledon Quaker Meeting and was accepted into membership there. The lack of dogma in Quakerism appealed to him and as a committed Christian, Geoffrey felt that he could now develop his faith in his own way. Putting faith into practice was of key importance to him and is reflected in the commitment he made to peace and social justice throughout his life.

In 1977, while on a course at Woodbrooke College, he met Louise Torbe and they married in August 1978 at Westminster Meeting. Their marriage was long, happy and devoted, embodying a sense of true partnership. Geoffrey was a wonderful father and role model to his sons Nicholas and Andrew, a loving father-in-law to Liberté and grandparent to Louis.

Geoffrey served the Society faithfully in many roles: both in the local area meeting and nationally, on Meeting for Sufferings, as a trustee of Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre and a Britain Yearly Meeting Trustee.

Always conscientious and caring, Geoffrey put much time, energy and commitment into all he did on behalf of Quakers. His strong sense of integrity was connected at a deep level with duty and compassion in the spirit. He regularly went out of his comfort zone, always the first to step in when there was need. Geoffrey possessed enormous reserves of patience, extending loving care and great tenderness to all those he worked with. He was open-minded and had a great sense of humour. Geoffrey always listened thoughtfully, before discerning an issue

and commenting sensitively. He did, however, sometimes get frustrated with Quaker ways, once staring gloomily at a great pile of papers, sighing “Is this all really furthering the Kingdom of Heaven?”

Away from Quaker commitments, Geoffrey was involved in the Wood Green World Development Group, campaigning for justice and fair trade. He also looked for ways to support newly-arrived refugees. In professional life, Geoffrey worked at the Audit Commission, aiming to identify good practice in aspects of the National Health Service. After retirement, Geoffrey undertook work at Citizens’ Advice, where he worked on social policy initiatives.

Geoffrey was a gifted musician and he experienced music as a universal leading. In his commitment to developing links with other Christian churches, he often offered his skills – particularly playing the organ. He also dedicated his singing ability to participation in a madrigal group and a choir. A talented pianist, always modest about his skills, his playing meant accompanying, joining in with, and supporting others.

Geoffrey always showed a positive enjoyment of life and is greatly missed by all who knew him.

Signed on behalf of North West London Area Meeting

Held at Friends House on 11 September 2018

Dugan Cummings, Clerk



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## Dorothy A. Richardson

8 October 1917 – 3 April 2015

Among the influences on Dorothy's life was being born in India, early separation from her parents to go to Boarding School in England, the death of her father when she was 8 and the Quaker headmistress of her school.

Dorothy was very intelligent, literate, determined, energetic, unconventional and ready to take risks. Her quest for knowledge took her all over the world.

Soon after her marriage to Claude 'Dicky' Richardson, a solicitor, the couple bought the run down Mill at Longstock, Hampshire where she lived for the rest of her life. The couple had two children – Selina and Simon – and during their childhood Dorothy was fully involved in her community, from birth partner, to magistrate to membership of the WI, as well as having the practical gifts of being competent domestically and with animals. Later, she wrote two books, one about her son Simon who was tragically lost at sea, and the other about a relative of Dick.

Dorothy's search for a spiritual home led her to Quakers and she was accepted into membership in 1967. She played a full part in the life of the meeting as elder, overseer, registering officer and Resident Friend. She is particularly remembered for her welcome to newcomers. The Mill became open house for Friends: monthly meeting camping weekends, attenders' days as well as for individuals needing to talk. She also took in those in distress or perhaps on remand.

Dorothy led a group of Friends looking for a permanent home for Winchester Meeting. Their vision was for a meeting house, not just a place of worship but a home that offered the kind of short term accommodation to those in need that was lacking elsewhere. A large former rectory was bought in 1973 and it is still a place of worship, a community centre and a home to the homeless but with an emphasis reflecting the times we live in.

Dorothy served on the Penal Affairs committee of Quaker Social Responsibility & Education (QSRE) and was also its Chairman. She felt passionately that the root causes of delinquency should be addressed in a Quakerly, preventive and therapeutic way. Her enquiring mind led her to research her subject, go to conferences and visit institutions. She wrote articles for the QSRE Journal.

In 1993 Dorothy helped set up Friends of the Family, a support group for troubled families in the early years, with the long term aim of preventing antisocial behaviour. This group is still thriving and has expanded its work. Sadly, her vision of a secure therapeutic unit for troubled teenagers, set up with professional and Quaker support, did not succeed.

A woman with such a strong personality and definite ideas can be an inspiration to others. She was a Quaker by conviction. For some though, Dorothy was seen as over forceful, and a difficult personality to deal with. She spoke her mind plainly and clearly, in her precise, authoritative voice. She spoke truth to power, she was impatient of delay. It is not surprising that Dorothy's concerns became reality, of putting faith into practice.

Signed on behalf of Hampshire & Islands Area Meeting

Held at Portsmouth on 13 October 2018

Eddie Slade, Clerk

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## Mary Ridley

6 March 1922 – 1 November 2017

We are deeply saddened by the death of our dear Friend, Mary Ridley, the loss of her presence is felt in our community. Although latterly her infirmities prevented her from attending worship, Mary's still, kind presence and stature (for one so small in physical height) was still felt within our meeting. Mary's was a dedicated, kind and orderly life. We miss her.

Raised in Clitheroe, where Mary grew up with her brother and sister, she went to board at Ackworth, a Quaker school in Pontefract where she made several lifelong friends. Jane Heywood (formerly of Lancaster Meeting) and Mary remained dear friends from their Ackworth days. For many in our meeting they both characterised a strength, trustworthiness and lightness of touch. Mary was unerringly kind and knew how quietly to foster the bonds of a community of love. When someone new attended meeting, she would invite them, after a discreet and well-judged period of time, to afternoon tea at her and Norman's home in Sunnyside Close. Those invited remember it warmly and one person distinctly recalled being told 'we get to know each other dear, through service'.

Mary gave us much service. She served on most of Lancaster Meeting's committees and working groups, including Clerk and Assistant Clerk and, for a long spell, as a Monthly Meeting Trustee. Her commitment to our Children & Young People's groups was strong. She regularly led children's meetings and had a gift for imparting bible stories with humour and love. Having been a key member of Lancaster Meeting since the early 1950s Mary's life mirrored and mapped many of the changes in Lancaster Meeting and its fabric. She held the memory of the original Friends' School, and was instrumental in making our building the significant community resource it is today.

During periods of transition, she was a central figure in many difficult meetings for worship for business. As a result there was a degree of

wear and tear but being a 'local Quaker' was an essential part of Mary's life. It offered her a form of worship from which she drew strength and inspiration. It also provided a community where she could share new ideas and challenges. Mary's was not a demonstrative faith, rather a quiet knowing that captured trust in God's love, and how these ties of love, made real Christ's model of service.

Mary joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) during the war and learnt to fly. Mary brought the confidence of flight into all she did. After the war she trained as a physiotherapist at St Thomas' hospital in London, became a Quaker and then met Norman Ridley. These three happenings shaped the rest of Mary's life. She and Norman married in 1952 and soon afterwards bought and built a home on a plot of land in the Fairfield district of Lancaster. Here they made their home for almost sixty years, bringing up four children – Sarah, Peter, David and Nick – and later welcoming their grandchildren.

When the children were old enough Mary returned to part-time physiotherapy work. She was a significant voice in articulating the need for change in how young people with significant disabilities were cared for. This work led her to join the support group for the Leonard Cheshire Home at Holehird, Windermere, and later, with the assistance of Norman to set up a similar group to work for the establishment of a Leonard Cheshire home at Oaklands, Garstang.

The two of them worked tirelessly to raise the necessary funds for this project, which took in its first residents in 1969. In all, Mary committed twenty five years of service to working with and supporting people with disability in our community; she reflected that these were the happiest years of her life. Mary's sense of the importance of her local community was strong. The Fairfield Association Orchard was one of Mary's later projects which she actively supported.

Mary once said that going to meetings was her hobby. Certainly the amount of service

throughout her life would reflect this. But Mary also found time for other hobbies. Gardening and rambling were key; she and Norman particularly enjoyed walking holidays in Austria, where they developed strong friendships which they nurtured over many years.

Mary was a voracious learner and explorer, later in life attending language, art and dancing classes and achieving an A' level in Art along the way. She sang, she danced and she loved reading and learning – there was an easy twinkle in Mary's eye. At local Quaker events she entertained with her singing and dancing performances (notably as a 1920s 'flapper') which have gone down in the annals of Lancaster Meeting, as has the ceilidh which she organised to celebrate her ninetieth birthday.

It is doubtful that Mary would have accepted the title "weighty Friend" yet she carried with her all the attributes of wisdom, conscientiousness and firmness of purpose. She also had the ability to cut through arguments about weighty matters with kindness and common sense. She had the gift of being able to balance seriousness of intent and purpose, with a lightness of touch and the ability not to take herself too seriously.

We give thanks to the glory of God as shown in the life and service of Mary Ridley.

Signed on behalf of Lancashire Central & North Area Meeting

Held at Garstang Meeting House on 10 March 2018

Marie McCusker, Clerk

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## Brian and Kathleen Robson

Kathleen Robson:

29 January 1922 – 21 February 2017

Brian Robson:

14 July 1923 – 04 March 2017

Kathleen Newby was born in Sunderland on 29 January 1922 into a Quaker family. She was close to her father and he took her out visiting poor and needy families. She had a lifelong sympathy with those who were worse off than her. Even in her final years when surrounded by the bizarre behaviour of people with dementia she would comment that 'they couldn't help it'.

Brian Robson was also born in Sunderland on 14 July 1923. Brian was a clever boy whose academic potential was truncated by the coming of the war. His father's mental breakdown and religious mania put him off organised religion and he adopted a position of agnosticism.

Despite this Kathleen and Brian met at a church dance. They married at Sunderland Friends Meeting House on 23 June 1948. Brian trained to become a chemical engineer and worked in Iran and later joined the National Coal Board to work in research.

Kathleen's first child was born prematurely and died soon after birth. She was advised not to have any further children. Kathleen was hospitalised for most of her second pregnancy but her daughter, Alwyn, was safely delivered. They decided not to have further children because of the severe risk to Kathleen's health. However, they wanted a larger family and decided to adopt. At that time adoption was only available to members of established churches and this was a problem for Brian. His integrity prevented him from stating that he was a Christian when he was agnostic. However, with help from the newly-formed Agnostic Adoption Agency they were able to adopt Michael and Sharon.

Brian and Kathleen promised to the courts as part of the adoption process that the children would be brought up in the Christian faith.

At age four Michael refused to go to meeting for worship “because daddy doesn’t go”. From then on Brian joined the rest of the family at meeting.

Kathleen and Brian ran their home on traditional lines. Kathleen organised their home lives and supported Brian in his working life. Kathleen served the meeting in many essential roles throughout the years. She helped organise children’s meetings, served as an overseer and for a while was an Assistant Registering Officer for marriages.

She was often to be seen in the kitchen serving cups of tea and always talking to people and listening to their stories. As the children grew she extended her service into the community, delivering meals on wheels, visiting prisoners’ wives, taking round the hospital library and working in a charity shop.

After many years Brian eventually applied for membership of the Society of Friends and was accepted. When he retired he threw himself into Quaker activities with the full support of Kathleen. Brian oversaw the transfer of Cheltenham Quaker Meeting to new premises. He served as convener of the Property & Finance Committee for area meeting for over ten years. At the time, several meeting houses, including four listed buildings, were in disrepair. Brian oversaw their renovations, turning them into attractive, welcoming meeting houses. He achieved this quietly, cheerfully and in a spirit of worship. He helped the area meeting to become a registered charity, which required Brian’s quiet diplomacy and understanding of meeting concerns.

Together Brian and Kathleen frequently brought new attenders home to enjoy their joint hospitality; and Kathleen’s ability to be a sounding board and to dispense direct common sense advice was widely appreciated. People who had been away for long periods were remembered by Kathleen and Brian on their return years later.

Kathleen rarely spoke in meeting. But she said that as soon as she sat down in meeting she would go through all the members of the family

and pray for them. Brian would minister in a quiet and thoughtful and always appropriate manner. Despite ill health they managed to make their final trip to meeting together at Christmas 2016, a couple of months before they died. They sat side by side in wheelchairs and Brian managed to speak and share their joint joy at being together in meeting again.

For many years Brian led area meeting rambles which enabled members and attenders to enjoy the countryside and to come to know each other in ‘that which is eternal’. Brian often had a sparkle in his eyes. On one occasion when his Global Positioning System (GPS) failed he gave the excuse that the satellites were having their mirrors polished. If he fell over during the walk he would say: ‘Don’t tell Kathleen,’ as she took a close interest in his exploits and worried about his frequent minor injuries.

They recognised when they needed to withdraw from active service in the meeting, and when Kathleen’s vision deteriorated and she began to develop dementia they made the difficult decision to go into a care home together. On her 95th birthday, they sat together at a table and Kathleen told Brian: “You’ve been a good husband.” Kathleen died on the 21st of February and Brian died eleven days later on the 4th of March. During their 68 years of marriage they have proved patterns, models of a thoughtful Quaker life, living simply and each having ‘some measure of the light’.

Signed on behalf of Gloucestershire Area Meeting

Held at Painswick Meeting House on 5 July 2018

Peter Carter, Clerk



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## Sheila Savill

6 September 1939 – 28 October 2017

Shortly before she died, those close to Sheila received a package from her which contained writings which she found inspirational or sustaining, exemplifying the things which were of primary importance to her – family, friends, her love of English literature and her religion.

Sheila Savill was born in Norfolk, her mother was a teacher, her father a policeman. At three years old she became deaf in one ear as a result of drinking infected milk. Despite this and with the help of her mother who taught her to read, she did well at school. One of her classmates describes her as 'much more grown up and gentle than the rest of us'. She read English at Nottingham University, and it was here that she embraced vegetarianism and became a member of the Religious Society of Friends. She also was an active member of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and at one time was arrested for trying to stop the installation of missiles.

After training as a teacher in London, she taught at schools in Essex and Norfolk before becoming head of the English department at Worcester Girls' Grammar School. It was at this time, at the age of twenty seven, that she lost the hearing in the second ear, which of course brought her teaching career to an end. Her friends have said that moving into profound deafness was a traumatic experience for her, accompanied by a sense of loss and disorientation.

Sheila set about the daunting and heart breaking job of trying to cope with the changes that deafness brought about. She returned to London and found clerical employment with the gas board, and although she was later promoted to slightly more interesting work, this was a difficult and taxing time, during which she began the task of learning to lip read, something she did so well that some did not realise that she was a deafened person. During this time, she began her long association with Hampstead Meeting.

At Hampstead Meeting she grew close to a recently bereaved Friend Elizabeth Locke. Both were deeply interested in myths and legends. In 1971, when Sheila was thirty one, they moved to the South Coast. Sheila had written some reviews for national newspapers after leaving teaching, and had become known to the publishers of Pears Encyclopaedia. Thus began a fruitful period in which Sheila edited, and partly wrote with Elizabeth, Pears Encyclopaedia of Mythology. This, published in several parts, and with two others, covered myths and legends from all over the world.

Three years later, on the completion of this work, Sheila returned to London to begin training as a social worker. Her special calling was to further the interests and understanding of deaf people. She was a co-founder of the National Association of Deafened People – founded because of a feeling that the existing organisations for the deaf didn't properly answer their needs. During this time she wrote a report on the effectiveness of a pioneering project on behalf of the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID).

Sheila could be very funny, relating stories from her social work and other experiences, often using a broad Norfolk accent.

In retirement her health began to deteriorate; initially with Parkinson's, then an operation for cancer, but this did not stop her keeping up a large correspondence and pursuing further education via the Open University.

Alongside her professional work, Sheila made a significant contribution to the life and work of the Religious Society of Friends. She was an elder, an overseer, and a hospital visitor, as well as editing the Hampstead Local Meeting newsletter. She also served the wider region as assistant clerk of the area meeting.

As her health deteriorated and she was told that cancer had returned, she decided to return to Norfolk, thus ending a 45-year association with Hampstead Meeting. Interestingly, right from her first attendance at Quaker meetings she declined offers to transcribe spoken ministry. Friends were aware of her deeply spiritual

presence, which led occasionally to ministry delivered in her striking well-articulated voice.

Sheila Savill died at the age of seventy eight. Tall and upright in every sense of the word, she was known for plain speaking and expressing her views frankly, sometimes to the point of abrasiveness. She wouldn't hold back for fear of giving offence. She was lacking in self-pity, whether it concerned her deafness or the serious illnesses of later life.

She was known for her intelligence, her absolute integrity, her commitment to serve and in the Society of Friends, for proper discipline. She earned respect and admiration for her intelligence, determination and fortitude.

Signed on behalf of North West London Area Meeting

Held at Edgware on 15 May 2018

Dugan Cummings, Clerk

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## Betty Stutz

20 October 1917 – 10 January 2018

Betty was born Konstanza Elisabeth Wändorfer in Vienna, in October 1917, and grew up there, the youngest of three children. Her mother Connie was English, her father, August, Austrian.

With hindsight, it is clear that Betty's parents were a powerful influence on her. Connie, the daughter of a grammar school headmaster, had arrived in Vienna at the age of about twenty, having answered an advertisement for a governess for two young children. So young a woman taking off into the unknown in this way in around 1905 must have been an enterprising and intrepid person. The parents of the children whom Connie was teaching later divorced, and Connie and their father August subsequently married. August was socially progressive. He was very concerned about the effect of the war on young men coming out of the army at the end of World War I: they'd lost the war, seen some of their friends killed, and had no money; so he tried to help them. The Quaker Aid Mission was active in Vienna at the time and he became involved with its work. Together they started a project for helping unemployed young men to find some healthy occupation. August's great interest was amateur sport, which was just taking off at the time, so he acquired sporting equipment for the young men and became involved in various new sports clubs.

Betty loved sporting activities too, particularly swimming, ice skating, and gymnastics – at which she excelled. She did not enjoy school, however, and did not do particularly well academically, so was allowed to leave when she was sixteen. By this time her parents had little money and she and her brother and sister had to learn a trade. Betty therefore began a four-year course in dress-making; but as she was doing her exams (having taken time off to work as au pair in England) Hitler invaded Austria and, due to her father's Jewish origins, although he had converted to the Lutheran church years before, the family had to flee.

In 1939 Betty (now twenty two), her parents and her much older half-brother were very fortunate to be taken in by Connie's widowed sister-in-law who lived in Elgin, Scotland. Betty's aunt found her a job as nanny to the daughter of the headmaster of Wester Elchies, the prep school for Gordonstoun. When World War II broke out and the school's staff were called up, Betty was asked to teach geography and art.

She must have enjoyed this as she then did two years' teacher training. The training college she attended, Charlotte Mason College in the Lake District, put huge emphasis on nature study, and the students had to make many paintings of wild flowers, and write detailed botanical descriptions. Betty loved this activity, and continued to sketch and paint flowers and trees all her life, particularly in her later years.

When World War II ended, Betty decided that she wanted to know how it had affected German children, as youngsters had been obliged to join the Hitler Youth; so she joined the American army of occupation in Germany. Being fluent in German and English, she worked in the Intelligence unit which gathered information from letters and phone calls. It was on the way to Germany, in October 1945, that she met Jindrich (in English, Henry) Stutz, a Jewish refugee from Czechoslovakia, who was going to do the same work. They were married in London the next spring, but continued to work with the US army of occupation until the summer of 1947 when the unit was wound up. While in Germany, Betty and another woman, with the help of a pastor, assembled a group of about fifteen children aged eight to twelve, and played games with them and talked with them, observing how the children became friendly and confident as a result of these activities.

Betty and Henry moved back to London, and Betty found work on the strength of her dress-making skills, as a designer of sponge bags and raffia sandals in a 'fancy goods' factory, and worked there until the birth of Teresa in 1952. After a while she took supply teaching jobs, including in a remand home and a school for severely maladjusted boys, and then a full-time

job in a small, rather quirky private girls' school where she taught mostly art, needlework and French. She liked the idea of working there because the headmistress was happy to give her a free hand.

In the early 1960s Betty decided to move to the state education system. She had developed a teaching method based on creativity and wanted to test it in a secondary modern school. She got a job in a girls' school in a fairly deprived area of North London, teaching children in the 'remedial' class or bottom stream. Here she became aware of how the lack of opportunities to play in early childhood had left her pupils without imagination or the ability to think abstractly. She decided that their experience of life needed to be widened to include joy and imaginative possibilities. Her recipe was to read them poetry (Goethe, first in German!) and to play classical music to them while they painted. The result was rapt, silent involvement from the girls – who were normally quite noisy. Betty found that the opportunity to express themselves artistically had a healing and uplifting effect on her pupils. She played them the radio broadcast of the opening of the rebuilt Coventry Cathedral, having explained to them its history of wartime destruction and that of British bombing raids on Germany; and took them to museums and art galleries. She also set up a relationship between her class and a school for blind children on the other side of London, and saw how the communication between the children, and the carefully thought out meeting she organised for them, worked wonders for her pupils' self-esteem, empathy and behaviour. She wrote years afterwards that she found that the key to getting positive results from her teaching was to develop good relationships with the children and not to be afraid of having high expectations of them.

Later Betty moved to another school in an increasingly racially mixed area of west London, where she pioneered first the teaching of child care, incorporating a large element of play, which was therapeutic for the pupils themselves, and then designing and implementing a Multi-cultural Studies Certificate of Secondary

Education (CSE) syllabus, to support which she took a Masters degree in multi-cultural education at the Institute of Education.

While she was growing up, Betty attended the English Church in Vienna where her mother was an active member. It was after she retired that she became involved with Quakers. Her first contact with Quakers had been the knowledge that her family had benefitted from the food parcels that Friends had distributed in Austria after World War I. Her second came during World War II in London when, finding herself in Euston station one night during the black-out, she felt a hand on her shoulder, and turned to find a policeman who advised her to go to Friends House where she would find a bed for the night. She duly crossed Euston Road, and at her knock, the great wooden door of Friends House opened to admit her. Her first experience of a Quaker meeting came years later, however, when, unhappy that Teresa was hearing stories at primary school of “gentle Jesus meek and mild”, she decided that they would try Quakers for a more robust take on Christianity, and she attended Muswell Hill Meeting, and Teresa the children’s meeting, for about a year. On her retirement in 1977, Betty started attending St Albans Meeting. She soon applied for membership and quickly became an active Friend.

Having finished teaching, Betty put her great interest in peace and in children into action. At St Albans Meeting she came across parents of young children who were bothered by how boys’ toys were dominated by those which encouraged violent play, while those designed for girls tended to be silly or glamorous. She became very concerned at the threat to childhood and the encouragement of violent attitudes by the growing market in war toys. But rather than campaigning against them, she began to think positively, about what kinds of play, in the widest sense of the word, are supportive of the development in children of all ages of a love of and respect for life. In time, she raised this issue amongst Friends as a formal concern, received official Quaker support, and Play for Life was launched at Quaker International Centre, London, in 1983. It became a registered charity

with the aim of stimulating public thinking about the kinds of activities and experiences that support children’s emotional, social, cultural and spiritual development. Its membership and committee, which included Teresa (now Belton) and some other Norwich Friends, was not, however, exclusively Quaker, and it developed a following and contacts far and wide, amongst many individuals and organisations, in Britain and abroad. Play for Life held a number of conferences at which it offered workshops to parents and teachers; published a quarterly magazine; and researched the toys and games market for ‘life-affirming playthings’, a range of which it sold directly and by mail order.

Play for Life was active for over a decade between 1983 and 1995, coming to an end when its committee members moved on to pursue other interests, but during its lifetime it created ripples in various quarters. In particular, Betty’s thinking regarding the potential of the kinds of play that children experience to incline them as adults either towards peaceful attitudes or towards violence and disregard for life, developed and led to research, writing and speaking. Particular highlights were a number of invitations which she took up: to participate in a workshop at the UN Third Special Session on Disarmament in New York; to join the panel of judges for competitions for peace toys in Warsaw in 1988 and in St Petersburg in 1991; to give a paper in the House of Lords on the effects of violent electronic entertainment on children and steps to reverse it in their series of seminars on Ethics, Politics and Social Development; and talks with UNESCO officials in Paris in 1996, arranged by a French member of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

In 1985 Betty and Henry had moved to Norwich to be near Teresa and her family, and Betty quickly became an active member of Norwich Meeting. A year later she met a Botswanan social worker, Sebastian Okelo-Wengi, who attended Norwich Meeting while doing a course at University of East Anglia (UEA), and who shared a concern about the nature of children’s play. So the following year, when she went to visit relatives in Zimbabwe,



she took the opportunity both to contact Harare Area Meeting, who invited her to give a talk, and to follow it with one in Gabarone, Botswana, organised by Sebastian, with whom she stayed.

There were other ways in which Betty pursued the cause of peace, too. In 2004, when she was eighty six, Betty asked that Norwich Quakers appoint her as their representative at the First Annual Festival of Middle Eastern Spirituality and Peace in Edinburgh. There she met Eliyahu McLean, an Orthodox Jew, and Ghassan Manasra, a Muslim teacher of Sufism, who together ran the Jerusalem Peacemakers (now renamed the Abrahamic Reunion), an organisation dedicated to nurturing harmony and mutual understanding among the various religious communities of the Holy Land. As a result of this encounter she organised a visit by these two men to Norwich the following year, and set up a public meeting with them at the meeting house, to which she invited leading local religious and civic figures, and which was very well attended.

Throughout her life, Betty looked for and made the most of every opportunity to build peace and understanding, and to make connections with people. In all her activities one can see her abiding qualities: a positive, proactive outlook; a thoughtful imaginativeness; an affinity with the disadvantaged; and a love of nature and of creativity. She always had strong views about how things should be done, and a determination to carry her ideas through. Her husband, too, was a deep and original thinker with a love of humanity. His resolute pursuit of independent scientific research, together with the serious effect on his mental health of the loss of his identical twin brother and parents in a concentration camp did not make for an easy life together, but Betty's support for Henry and his work was unwavering, and together they provided Teresa with a warm and loving home.

Although Betty's approach to life was earnest, she had a great sense of fun and zest for life, and loved to provide hospitality. She was kind, generous, and always thought of the welfare of others; indeed, several Friends have remarked on their appreciation of how she invited them for a

meal when they were new to Norwich or going through difficulties. Her grandsons, Benjamin, Thomas and James, have fond memories of their Granny, as a constant presence in their lives, remembering her as infinitely loving and tolerant and open, gentle, inquisitive, intelligent, wise and strong, with wit, boundless good humour, and a great ability to tell a good story. Many of their most vivid childhood memories involve visits to her house, where they would always be greeted with hugs, questions and delicious platters potato salad and cold meat, and homemade cake; and activities in the garden, such as hunting for animals in the pond and raking fallen leaves.

At her memorial meeting Teresa chose to play the tuneful opening of Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, partly because it was one of Betty's favourite pieces, but also because it seems to express the way she never stopped thinking about the needs of other people and the world, and what she could offer. Until a few months before her death she was still considering writing an article about how, as she saw it, green issues should not be the special province of one political party, and therefore to be contested, but of all parties, because they are so important. She marvelled daily at the trees she could see from every window of her care home, and never ceased to enjoy sketching them. She relished the exercise classes and art sessions provided at the home; and she often tried to make friendly contact with some of those fellow residents who could no longer really talk, and took a personal interest in her carers. The many strands of her character and her interests were palpable throughout her life, to the very end; so, like Schubert's symphony, there is a sense in which she never really 'finished'. Yet she lived so long and fully that when her death came, releasing her from seriously failing health, it did feel like a real completion.

Signed on behalf of Norfolk & Waveney Area Meeting

Held at Kings Kynn on 15 September 2018

Gill Smith, Clerk

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## Betty Swancott

21 July 1922 – 16 April 2018

Betty was born on 21st July 1922 in Chepstow. She was the eldest of three sisters whose father ran a family business in the town. As she grew up, she and the older of her two sisters spent the summer months in Bournemouth helping out in the hotel run by her aunt, uncle and grandparents.

Betty was just 17 years old when World War II broke out. It was in Bournemouth then that she became a volunteer Red Cross nurse and found herself nursing a large contingent of French soldiers who had escaped from the beaches of Dunkirk. On one occasion she was asked to sit with a lively French captain named Pierre de Vallet following an operation to remove a bullet from his spine.

She had been shocked to be told that he was not expected to live through the night and sat by his bed willing him to live. She concentrated hard for several hours. When the priest arrived to read the last rites she said to herself – being too polite to say it aloud – “You needn’t bother because he’s not going to die!” She was right and the next day he was back on the ward. Was this experience the beginning or the confirmation of Betty’s belief in the power of healing?

Betty later returned to Chepstow and continued as a Red Cross nurse at the cordite factory in Caerwent, Monmouthshire, the most dangerous factory in Wales. Betty met her future husband Chris when he was stationed in Chepstow and they married in October 1944 after the D-Day landings. They set up house in Ledbury, a small market town in Herefordshire and Betty had three daughters. Sadly, the second one, Judith, died at the age of 18 months.

Betty and Chris, searching for a new spiritual path, became interested in Quakerism and joined Malvern Meeting around 1950. In 1952 they journeyed north on a pilgrimage to Pendle Hill to mark the tercentenary celebration of George Fox’s famous climb there. En route they had to change trains at Birmingham and

were both amused and relieved when they were able to readily recognise other Quakers in the crowded station and follow them on to their second train. The pilgrimage was a greatly fulfilling experience for them and one which was referred to often in family life.

In due course Chris became head teacher of a village school in Herefordshire. Not content with her role of ‘headmaster’s wife’ Betty sought to embark on something more fulfilling.

First she became a Spirella corsetière. Having to travel round the countryside, often to farm houses, to measure women for corsets, she bought herself a motor scooter and a helmet.

Given her contrasting roles of head master’s wife (i.e. pillar of the community) and corsetiere (i.e. trade), she was interested to observe the ease with which more ‘upper class’ clients received her at the front door and the discomfiture of the ‘middle class’ clients when faced with the dilemma of encouraging the front door for the headmaster’s wife or the back door for trade! This sparked a keen interest in Sociology. Later Betty became a dental hygienist working out of a caravan with the school dentist.

In 1965 Chris got a new job in teacher training working with mature students at Chorley College. Fortified by her previous forays into employment, Betty immediately started an Advanced (A) Level correspondence course leading up to her own teacher training course at Chorley College. She took up Sociology as her main subject. In 1967, at the age of forty five, she began her teaching career. She obtained her first post at a school in Hindley where she taught the Raising of the School Leaving Age group in a hut.

She moved on to Pleckgate School in Blackburn where, in the parlance of the day, she taught English to immigrants and faced the challenge at times of working in an environment hostile to the work she was doing. Quite clearly Betty understood the importance in education of building relationships and has remained in touch with some of her ex pupils throughout her life.

With no Quaker meeting in Chorley, Betty and her friend Joan Lowe started to attend Wigan Quaker Meeting. With typical resourcefulness in 1972 Betty launched a fortnightly Chorley Quaker Meeting on Sunday evenings in the old Blind Centre (now Galloways). For years numbers were few – five or six at best – but meetings continued first upstairs and then, to enable accessibility, downstairs.

At some point Betty ceased travelling to Wigan for the in-between Sundays when there was no Chorley Quaker Meeting and spread her ecumenical wings by attending the Unitarian services in the chapel opposite her home. She grew to value her membership of the Unitarian congregation and felt an affinity with many of their beliefs as well as feeling loved and valued by her Unitarian friends. In due course Betty and Vina Curren, Unitarian lay pastor, discussed the possibility of Quakers meeting in the Unitarian school room opposite the chapel. Quaker numbers were still quite small when the move was made from smaller premises but then grew to fill the much larger space.

Following her retirement from teaching, Betty put her considerable energy into co-founding Chorley Well Women's Centre (now Chorley Women's Centre).

This began an involvement which was to continue for decades during which time Betty's work in recruiting and training volunteers, maintaining a well-stocked library and information base and offering person centred counselling contributed to providing a haven for women often at their lowest ebb where they could feel supported and listened to. Such a lot of correspondence with Betty's family on her death reflected just how profoundly important that support has been to so many women over the years. Betty continued to run a weekly relaxation session at the Women's Centre into her nineties.

Betty also found time to start informal meetings for her female friends in her own home where the group would study spiritual paths. These Friday evening meetings continued until quite

recently and the experience of silence there proved a gateway to Quaker meeting attendance for most.

Pursuing her belief in the power of healing, Betty started a Quaker healing group which continues to meet monthly and embraces the healing needs of Quakers and non-Quakers. Betty remained receptive to new ideas and was ready to discuss topics such as cosmic forces and the dawning of a new golden age.

Betty's involvement and commitment continued as long as she was able. Deafness, failing eyesight and increasing frailty would have deterred many but not Betty. She made it her business to know who was in the meeting and to express her gratitude to those who had spoken in the meeting after asking for a one-to-one repetition.

Betty died on 16 April 2018. She has left us an inspiring legacy of love, care, commitment and resilience. We give thanks for her life and example and hope we can continue her spiritual journey.

Signed on behalf of Pendle Hill Area Meeting  
Held at Chorley on 14 July 2018

Stan Lee, Clerk

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# Kenneth Charles Crosby Walch

16 September 1927 – 24 September 2017

Ken was a valued member of Chichester Quaker Meeting for 35 years and he will be universally missed.

Ken was born in Wimbledon, the only child of Austin and Mary Walch. His father was a diplomat and Ken travelled widely with his parents throughout his childhood and youth. In the early 1950s the family emigrated to Australia, where they ran a sheep farm in Victoria. There Ken began his training as an artist, studying at the Melbourne National Gallery Art School. Ken retained his love of Australia for the rest of his life.

Ken continued his studies at St. Martin's School of Art in London after the family returned to England. In 1965 he married Olive and together they ran an art gallery in Petworth.

Sadly Olive died in 1995 and her sister Idris eventually moved to Chichester to be near Ken, which necessitated giving up her own home in Birmingham. Like Ken, Idris became a valued member of the Chichester Quaker Community, serving as a welcomer.

Ken served as an overseer for several years. As one Friend put it: "It was his joy to serve the Meeting". He always arrived early at meeting for worship so that he could set out the meeting room, and he continued to do this even when it became a physical struggle. The last lines of Idris's poem *Quaker Meeting* encapsulate the spirituality she and Ken found there:

"Away from the worldly feud  
we grow into the peaceful whole,  
in the inner quietude."

Ken's death came shortly after achieving his 90th birthday. On the day following this milestone he ministered at what was to be his last meeting for worship and told Friends how much he valued "this precious hour". He spoke too about the need for hope, distinguishing this quality

from optimism, which he thought could be unrealistic. So the final thought he left us with was: "With hope, always with hope".

Ken lived his Quakerism and if he sometimes struggled to understand the world he would try to convey his deep sense of spiritual meaning in the form of the essays he wrote and his letters which were published in *The Friend*.

Yet he often commented that "words get in the way" and it was perhaps easier for Ken to express his spirituality not through the spoken word but through his art. He had excellent eyesight (a great blessing for an artist) and when he was painting his focus was total: for that period of time it became his world.

Ken painted continuously and passionately until his death and was held in high regard in the art world, being a former Secretary of the Quaker Fellowship of the Arts. His paintings hang in private collections in three continents, but most of all in the homes of Quaker Friends and in St. Richard's Hospital. During 2018 there will be a retrospective exhibition of Ken's art in Chichester. This was his wish, which he had discussed with Idris and with his close friends Sue and Peter Thrussell.

Ken was a man of simple tastes and profound thoughts. He was frequently self-deprecating, referring to himself as 'cerebral', as if he viewed this as a failing rather than as an attribute. Yet despite all his intellectual and artistic gifts he remained an unassuming man who will be remembered by Friends for qualities that he would not have claimed for himself: his "good, kind, understanding heart"; his old fashioned gentlemanliness, which "was just natural behaviour for him"; his "lovely, deep voice" when he sang with fervour at a Christmas celebration but forgot the words, no doubt endearing himself more than ever to his audience.

He loved Baroque music more than any other genre because he experienced it as "solid and honest", a description which seems to fit Ken perfectly.



During meeting for worship on the day Ken died a Friend read from Psalm 90, which includes the line: “So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart”. Many Friends listening that morning found that those words spoke to their condition.

Signed on behalf of Sussex West Area Meeting

Held at Worthing Meeting House on 17 March  
2018

Kathryn Pearce, Clerk





Quakers share a way of life, not a set of beliefs. Quaker unity is based on shared understanding and a shared practice of silent worship – a communal stillness.

Quakers seek to experience God directly – internally, in relationships with others, and with the world. Local meetings for worship are open to all who wish to attend.

Quakers try to live with honesty and integrity. This means speaking truth to all, including people in positions of power. The Quaker commitment to peace arises from the conviction that love is at the heart of existence and that all human beings are unique and equal.

This leads Quakers to put faith into action by working locally and globally to change the systems that cause injustice and violent conflict.

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