



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

Testimonies

including index of epistles

Compiled for Yearly Meeting 2020





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 2019
5. **Tabular statement.**

All documents are available online at 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.

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.

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 or 020 7663 1040 for a printed version.

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 fragrancy 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.

Warren Adams

7 February 1924 – 18 September 2018

Our Friend Warren Adams was a familiar figure in his quiet Northumberland village. Towards the end of his long life he suffered from arthritis so he got around on an electric mobility scooter, usually while smoking a cigarette. He was always accompanied by his latest Jack Russell terrier, which rode with him, sitting at his feet. He seemed to know everyone and had helped more than a few of them, but not many of his neighbours knew that he was a direct descendent of two US presidents. Born in Minneapolis, Warren became a Quaker as a result of his experiences while serving as an officer in the US naval reserve in the South Pacific during World War II. (In his old age, traumatic memories of that time resurfaced as terrifying dreams.) After the war he studied law and economics at the University of Minnesota and the University of California at Berkeley, where he resisted taking Senator McCarthy's notorious loyalty oath.

Warren had an abiding concern for challenging injustice. He became a true citizen of the world as his work in international development took him to Iraq, Iran, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and also to India, where he was working shortly after the end of the war in what was then Bombay. Answering the phone one day, he found himself speaking to someone in the US State Department who wanted to know how the US could help alleviate the terrible famine then afflicting India. Warren knew there had been a bumper grain harvest in the US that year, and also that, left over from the war, there were many surplus ships in US harbours. Could some of the grain be sent to India in some of the ships, he asked? He was shaken by the next question: "How much do you need?" Thinking quickly, he gave the caller an astronomical tonnage figure, and some weeks later the harbour started to fill up with grain-bearing ships. It was typical of our Friend's innate humility that when he retold the story many years later, he was still worried that he might not have asked for enough.

In the 1970s Warren came to London to work as economic advisor to E.F. Schumacher's nascent Intermediate Technology Development Group. The central concept of sustainable development can be summed up by the phrase 'small is beautiful'. After Schumacher's death, Warren stayed on in the UK to put those ideas into action, using his people skills to organise a thriving network of panels involving academics, government personnel and non-governmental organisations in a range of topics, from forestry to energy to women's issues.

In the mid-1980s he moved to Northumberland to establish a workshop making pine furniture, providing work for 20 men and women who had previously been unemployed. He joined Stocksfield Local Meeting, where he liked to occupy a particular chair in the same corner of the room. He usually sat motionless for the hour, "looking rather like a diminutive version of Mount Rushmore", as one Friend remembers. One Sunday there was ministry about Martin Luther King, recalling his life and especially his most famous speech: "I have a dream". And Warren ministered. "I was there," he said. "I was teaching at Earlham College [in Richmond, Indiana] and my students asked if we could get a bus. So, I got a bus and I drove it and we went to Washington." The power of his ministry lay in its vivid link to an important moment in American history, but the simplicity of it hid the fact that Warren must have driven 500 miles to get to the capital.

Throughout his long life, Warren was concerned with conciliation rather than confrontation, happiest acting to promote freedom and equality wherever possible. The core of his life, and the source of his charm, was that he did not brim with self-confidence. Lacking ego, he always considered that he might be mistaken. In part this came from his position in his family: he habitually compared his own achievements unfavourably with those of his older brother. A gifted teacher, generous and encouraging, he was a great networker and problem-solver. He was always interested in people and their individual stories, and he worked to make

connections that would help to build a world where Schumacher's concept of 'enoughness' might prevail.

Warren's final project was the North East Refugee Service (NERS), which he launched in 1995. He realised there was an urgent need to provide sound legal advice to refugees and asylum-seekers as they tried to navigate the many obstacles placed in their way by the repressive policies of successive administrations. By this time, our Friend was in his 70s. He had every excuse to leave the job to someone else, but he pressed ahead. The premises he found for offices were on the third floor of a building in central Newcastle, and the access was a steep climb for a fit person. By the end of his association with NERS, Warren was in his 90s with severe mobility issues, but he would not be deterred, wheezing up three flights of stairs to meet clients or sign cheques. Working with traumatised and vulnerable people is always challenging, but he was impressed by the resilience of refugees. He put in place structures that held the line between getting the job done and blatantly breaking the rules. He had courage, wisdom, humanity, and humour.

Motivated by faith, this good and generous man was steadfast and true to the end to the causes he believed in and the people he loved.

Signed on behalf of Northumbria Area Meeting

Held at Allendale on 8 September 2019

Michael Long, Clerk

Judith Mary Effer

24 March 1933 – 17 May 2018

A birthright Friend, Judith was the eldest of five siblings born in Manchester to Quaker parents, both of whom were teachers. She was a Young Quaker, and then an active member of Saffron Walden Meeting for over fifty years. Quaker values were the backdrop to a life filled with activism and loving care.

Judith went to college in Liverpool, training as an occupational therapist and, after qualifying in 1958, moved to London (living at the Penn Club) to work at Hackney and Claybury Hospitals. While at the Penn Club, Judith met Barbara and John Woods, who became close friends and, years later, near neighbours when John became Head of Friends' School, Saffron Walden. Judith met her husband Ernest through membership of a musical group that also included David Firth (later editor of *The Friend*), who was to be the best man at Judith and Ernest's wedding.

In 1962 Judith and Ernest began their married life in Saffron Walden, where they raised four children. When Judith and her family moved in 1966 to a larger house near the Friends' School, they were also opposite the former Saffron Walden College of Education, which became a language school (the Bell College) in 1977. Many overseas students bed-and-breakfasted locally to improve their English. For over 25 years Judith hosted students from all over the world, including: France, Germany, Indonesia, Argentina, China, Tanzania, Oman, Uruguay, Nepal, Norway, and Brazil. One of these was Noha, a student nurse from Beirut Hospital, with whom Judith corresponded through the years of the war in Lebanon: Judith felt compelled to provide support from afar while regularly seeing on television the horrific impact of the war but, eventually, the return letters stopped, leaving Judith with a great sense of not knowing. Other students became friends and regular correspondents, in some cases for decades.

Tragically, their eldest daughter, Ros, died in 2011 following an accident from which she never recovered. Judith and Ernest cared for Ros in hospital, visiting her two or three times a week for six years. Despite these difficult circumstances, Judith engaged with many of the other patients' families, providing mutual support and gaining another group of friends.

Judith believed strongly in the Quaker testimonies of equality and peace, and fully immersed herself in the life of Saffron Walden Meeting – from leading the children's group to being an overseer, a trustee, a member of the premises committee, and various other roles within the meeting. She was part of a group of doughty women who for many years ran a very successful stall on a Saturday morning outside the meeting house, selling home produce and bric-a-brac in aid of Quaker Peace and Service. Her practicality and her steady, cheerful, helpful and supportive presence could be relied on utterly, without lots of drama and publicity.

She supported a range of humanitarian and environmental causes and organisations, most especially the United Nations Association (UNA) and the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). Her commitment to peaceful demonstration saw her supporting the anti-nuclear protests at Greenham Common, and the large CND marches in London in the 1980s. In the early 1980s, with Diana Barr, she set up Saffron Walden Group Against Nuclear Weapons. This group (later the Saffron Walden Peace Group, expanding its remit to include all weapons) became affiliated with CND, marched under its own glorious banner, and was one of more than 2,000 organisations, from over 90 countries, that signed the Abolition 2000 Statement in 1995, which called upon all states, particularly nuclear states, to take the 11 steps necessary for the abolition of nuclear weapons. This led to a meeting in May 2001, in Saffron Walden, of the Abolition 2000 Global Council, culminating in the Saffron Walden Declaration on Human Security and Nuclear Abolition.

While CND owned her heart at this time (she was a very able treasurer of the local group for many years), the UN relied on her mind for advocacy and organisation with the local UNA group, on behalf of which she travelled to UN conferences in Switzerland. Her favourite part of the UN organisation was the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), with its purpose of keeping children safe and healthy, and she actively supported them for many years by taking orders from friends for products from the UNICEF Christmas catalogue.

The focus on the holistic treatment of body and mind in her occupational therapy work had been of particular interest to Judith, and also provided skills that helped through many facets of her life: raising a family, counselling, and dispensing her own brand of generous, loving kindness throughout her life, right up to its end.

Signed on behalf of Thaxted Area Meeting

Held at Dunmow on 10 March 2019

Gill Parker, Clerk

Marion Fairweather

17 September 1981 – 5 April 2018

Marion was many things to many people: a great friend, a fun person to be around, a natural carer for others, a moral force, a quiet influencer, a polite rebel, a student of humanity, a spiritual light, a cultural guru, an enigma, a law unto herself, and a fantastic dancer.

She spent her early life just outside Glasgow before moving with her family to Elgin, where she spent the rest of her childhood. Later she remembered the beautiful scenery of the area and the quiet, but also the isolation of adolescence in a small town. She studied social anthropology at Edinburgh University, a natural choice for someone whose fascination with humanity never dimmed. She used her university studies and her subsequent training as a teacher of English as a Second Language as a springboard to take her off into whatever far flung parts of the world grabbed her interest. She lived in India, Japan and Mexico, each time coming back to her friends with incredible stories of what she had seen and who she had met.

After settling in Glasgow, she set her mind to jobs that chimed with her values and beliefs, working throughout the voluntary sector in jobs that promoted the interests and welfare of disadvantaged people – coordinating a befriending service, advocating for vulnerable young people, campaigning against the effects of poverty in education. In this last role, which she was working on before she became ill, she helped to develop the Cost of the School Day toolkit, which enables schools to identify and address inequalities of opportunities for their pupils, and which is now being rolled out nationwide.

She volunteered extensively, visiting detainees in Dungavel, playing with children in Barlinnie prison and being a much-loved staff member at Quaker youth events. Marion believed she could, quietly and peacefully, make a difference to the world; she seemed to have no real ambition other than to do what she felt was right.

Marion's Quaker beliefs were a consistent core to her identity. She remained committed to attending meeting for worship throughout her life and took on roles with Summer Shindig, Northern Friends Senior Conference and her local meetings. Her beliefs were not incidental to her life or a trapping that she would put on, but lay at the very heart of who she was and what she did. So many memories remain of a wise, serene and accepting presence sitting beside us in the silence.

Marion was an avid consumer of culture and devoured books, music and films with joy. She explored some of the farther reaches of the cultural landscapes, and when she found something she loved she would share her treasure with her friends. Many of us have happy memories of Marion's mix-tapes, or the experience of receiving a recommended book in the post.

She had incredible taste, and her recommendations widened her friends' horizons and opened their minds. She was unfailingly generous and gave great presents. She was also a great correspondent, and her letters and cards found their way to many people who found themselves touched by her thoughtfulness and strengthened in whatever they were going through.

Marion faced loss on a scale that few of us have had to contemplate, losing her mother to a cruel type of multiple sclerosis when she was in her late 20s and then her father to heart disease the year before she died. Her own death at 36, and only a few months after having been diagnosed with cancer, was painfully and shockingly swift. She dealt with it with characteristic courage and selflessness, using the time that remained to her to focus on the relationships that mattered to her and spend time with the people she loved.

At the time she died, Marion lived on the South Side of Glasgow with her partner James and their cat Cheddar. She had overcome an early shyness to become a happy, confident, engaging person who lived for her beliefs and had many friends. As a committed cyclist, she

found her way around on two wheels both throughout Glasgow and to some of the more remote parts of our beautiful country. Always more comfortable speaking about others than herself, her passionate interest in people shone through, whether she was discussing politics, recommending books or asking about your day.

The experience of talking to Marion was one of total attention as she genuinely cared deeply about all of the people in her life. She gave warm hugs and was generous with her distinctive laugh. She was funny and fun, effortlessly cool, fiercely serene, totally without pride or pretension, and often surprisingly fearless. Children instinctively thought she was awesome. She answered to nobody but herself, her own values and beliefs.

We are all poorer without her, but grateful that we had her in our lives, and continue to be inspired by her spirit.

Signed on behalf of West Scotland Area Meeting

Held at Dunblane on 12 October 2019

Michael J. Hutchinson, Clerk

Sheila J. Gatiss

1 December 1937 – 12 October 2018

If ever a life was lived in service in the world that was the life of Sheila Gatiss, who died within weeks of what would have been her 81st birthday.

Sheila Joan Flexen was born just before the outbreak of World War II. Like many other London children, she spent some of her childhood as an evacuee, living with her godmother in Ilfracombe in North Devon. Her father was eventually invalided out of the Navy and needed constant nursing, and this helped steer Sheila towards a career in nursing, training at Guy's Hospital in London.

After London, Sheila worked in Stafford, with her husband, John Gatiss, whom she had married in 1960. They had three children, Clare, Ian and Rachel. Moving to America with the family in 1967, Sheila became interested in politics and realised the importance of personal campaigning. She was also introduced to Quakerism and attended her first meeting. A British Friend at her funeral service in Cambridge in November 2018 compared the activism of Sheila Gatiss to that of Lucretia Mott (1793–1880), an American Quaker.

Back in England again by 1969, the Gatiss family then settled in Cambridge, and Sheila became a county councillor and continued her exploration of Friends. Her caring path had already begun to expand beyond nursing to include foster parenting and campaigning with the NCCH, later the National Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital. This same concern for children and young people was to remain a constant thread in her life, later evident in her contribution to the life and work of the children's meeting in Hartington Grove Local Meeting. It was also evident in her long service to Glebe House in Shudy Camps, just outside Cambridge (www.ftctrust.org.uk), which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2015.

The Friends Therapeutic Community Trust had been set up to help damaged teenage males with complex needs, and for whom an intense period in a therapeutic community was known to be effective. The focus of the service now is working with young males who have histories of harmful sexual behaviour. The Director of Glebe House from 1992 to 2009 recalls the pivotal work of Sheila, who served as his line manager and acted as a very effective conduit between his team and the Quaker trustees: "She was a unique person, a powerhouse who got us through some relatively difficult times. Without Sheila Gatiss and her single-minded focus on keeping our doors open due to her belief in the value of our work, Glebe House might have closed."

Sheila's Quaker service in Britain was evident at all three levels – local, area and national. Beginning at the local meeting level in Cambridge, a Friend recalls that "...she was the driving force in the early days here behind the building of an extension to our meeting house in Hartington Grove". This has ensured a steady income from our room hirers, which continues to underpin the healthy state of our finances. In her time with us, Sheila also served as an overseer and as clerk for six years, and more recently as an elder until agreeing to be released shortly before her death. She had also led the discernment in recent years behind the simplification of our multiple local meeting committees into two core ones: General Purposes Committee and Policy Committee.

At the Cambridgeshire Area Meeting level, Sheila's service included that as an AM Trustee, as Convenor of Elders and Overseers, and as Convenor of AM Nominations Committee. She also coordinated the recent five-year programme of work that area meeting agreed in commemoration of World War I, which included the distribution of peace education packs to schools in our county. Sheila's leadership skills again came to the fore in her championing of the revival of a local meeting in Ely in Cambridgeshire over ten years ago.

She was also ever active in ideas for the development of individual adult Friends across the area meeting, both looking out for opportunities to bring inspirational visitors to come to us and in encouraging everyone to attend Quaker training courses at Woodbrooke, Charney Manor or Swarthmoor Hall. And it was Sheila who encouraged our area meeting to fund a short course at Woodbrooke for each person coming into membership in their first year as a member.

At a national level, Sheila served on many committees, working parties and groups over the years, notably in connection with Meeting for Sufferings and with the work involved in the future vision of Quaker work as done by RECAST. Sheila worked alongside three Britain Yearly Meeting (BYM) Recording Clerks in her time, and one of them highlights two aspects in particular: "Sheila served as clerk of Quaker World Relations Committee (QWRC), where she brought her phenomenal networking ability and her ability to make shrewd assessments of the abilities of Friends she met to bear on BYM's international relationships with the many varieties of Quakers around the world.

She was instrumental in organising for a quilt reflecting British Quakers to be made and shipped to the World Conference of Friends in Kabarak, Kenya, in 2012, where it hung on the stage as a gift to the World Family of Friends. It was a gesture typical of Sheila's creative approach to relationship-building, as well as to her determination to see through often complex projects.

The other aspect was her term of service as one of the first group of BYM Trustees. Taking up the reins of the governance of the Society nationally at a time when Friends were still uncertain of their decision to have a trustee body at all, she brought to bear her experience of good governance and good working relations with the organisation's staff and contributed to BYM being the well-governed body it is today. She offered deep care for staff alongside loving but rigorous scrutiny, not holding back

from making sure accountability was well exercised. One particular emphasis was on the importance of proper planning and evaluation. Quaker work may be God's work and the resources God-given, but Sheila was there to make sure the resources we were given were not wasted!

A lifelong interest in architecture and buildings was also reflected in Sheila's service to the planning of the refurbishment of Friends House on Euston Road in London, and in particular her delight in ensuring effective disabled access within 'The Light', which is the name now given to the Large Meeting House at Friends House. She had a keen interest in arts and crafts, and delighted in bringing friends together for delicious meals in her home and organised many enjoyable theatrical or musical outings, e.g. to Glyndebourne.

Family and friends remained important to Sheila to the end, and though she struggled with ill health in recent years, she was very happy in her home at The Peacocks in Shelford, just outside Cambridge. It was there that she died, with her family around her.

Rachel Gatiss sums her mother up as a 'do-er'. It can be said that Sheila's actions came from her spiritual depth. Those of us who belong to her worldwide extended family of Quakers give thanks for the Grace of God as shown in the faithful service of Sheila Gatiss's life.

Signed on behalf of Cambridgeshire Area Meeting

Held at Huntingdon on 13 July 2019

Dorothy Ball, Clerk

Joyce Gee

13 June 1929 – 1 September 2018

Joyce was born in 1929 and grew up in Croydon. Her parents were factory workers and times were often hard, especially during times of unemployment; Joyce sometimes spoke of the difficult decisions that had to be made because of lack of money.

In the winter of 1940–41 she experienced some of the mass bombing of cities in which many civilians were killed and, as a girl of 13, she felt keenly the horror and pity of war, and this was a feeling that stayed with her all her life.

Joyce grew into an adventurous teenager with a great love of the outdoors and a feeling of deep connection with nature. Throughout her life she enjoyed being among trees, flowers, wild animals and birds, and walking, cycling and camping were among her greatest pleasures.

She would have loved to go to university on leaving school, but the family finances did not permit this and she started work at an electronics factory as a typist. Later she became secretary to a technical writer, Cyril Gee, with whom she fell in love and married, aged 18.

Although she went on to have three sons as well as a daughter adopted from Hong Kong, Joyce continued to study, undertaking a number of courses. She qualified as a social worker, marriage guidance counsellor and teacher while her children were still young.

From her youngest years, Joyce had a deep interest in spirituality, and she sometimes spoke of a profound experience she had as a tiny child, when she sensed what she called a "wordless knowing" of being a small, evolving part of the creative whole. She later wrote a poem about it, which was published in *The Friend* shortly after her death.

Joyce's spiritual seeking led her at first to the Congregational Church, where she trained as a lay preacher. But she later gravitated towards the historic Jordans Quaker Meeting, not far from her home, and when the family moved to

Hindhead in Surrey she joined a local Quaker meeting there.

However, Joyce was interested in many ideas and religions, and she was always keen to explore and discuss them. This interest continued throughout her life and she became very active in Interfaith groups. She was also a great admirer of the ideas of Rudolf Steiner and studied anthroposophy at Emerson College, going on to train as a Steiner School teacher when in her sixties.

In 1986 Cyril suffered a stroke, which left him paralysed down his left side, and Joyce became his carer as well as keeping his technical publication going. When Cyril died in 1992, she decided to relocate to the Welsh Borders, where she had enjoyed many happy holidays. It was at that point that she became a very faithful and active member of Clun Valley Quaker Meeting.

She was often moved to give ministry in our meetings for worship and, although she declined the role of clerk, feeling that it was not right for her, she was a member of the Pastoral Care Group for a number of years.

Joyce loved to fill her home and large garden with friends and family, and for many years she welcomed Clun Valley Quakers into her home for discussion groups, retreat days and an annual summer picnic. She enjoyed discussing all the subjects that one is supposed to steer clear of on social occasions, especially religion and politics! She could be very outspoken and was never afraid of causing controversy. Her thirst for knowledge and new ideas never abated, and a friend remarked of her that she simply couldn't do small talk – within five seconds of meeting anyone they would be plunged into a discussion about the meaning of life!

It was on a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum in 2013 that Joyce was struck by the lack, among all the many military memorials, of any monument there to the countless civilian victims of war. She remembered her own experiences of the Blitz as a young teenager, her feelings of helplessness and her conviction ever since of the senselessness of war. She brought

her concern to local business meeting and subsequently to area meeting, and from this the Pity of War project was born. Although work on this must now be continued without Joyce, her passion and energy for this cause will continue to be an inspiration.

Anyone who met Joyce will have been challenged; certainly Clun Valley Quakers were challenged, and we benefitted from these challenges. We miss Joyce and the challenges she presented us with, both in ministry and in friendship.

Signed on behalf of Southern Marches Area Meeting / CCR y Gororau Deheuol

Held at Ross-on-Wye on 19 July 2019

Stevie Kraye, Clerk

Joan Gibson

9 April 1919 – 16 May 2017

Joan was born on 9 April 1919, the third daughter of Guy and May Parris, who lived in Hemel Hempstead. Her parents were highly principled dissenting Christians but not Quakers. As a young woman, Joan independently, and without parental urging, joined the Quaker Meeting in Watford. It was at Watford Meeting that Joan met a male Friend who, on recognising her family name, said: "I shared a prison cell with one of your relatives during the war, as we were both conscientious objectors...".

Joan trained as a physiotherapist at the Middlesex Hospital in London, followed by spells at the National Orthopaedic Hospital in Stanmore, and in Betws-y-Coed, North Wales. While working in hospitals, Joan experienced at first hand the transforming introduction of the National Health Service (NHS) in 1948: families who had been unable to afford specially adapted footwear and other appliances for their disabled children received life-changing help from the new NHS.

From 1947 to 1949 Joan's work took her to the Cambridgeshire Fens, and Sunday worship at the Friends Meeting House in Jesus Lane, Cambridge. It was at Jesus Lane Meeting that Joan was introduced to Martin Gibson, who was working on his doctorate at Cambridge University. On 20 August 1949 Joan and Martin married at Jordans Meeting House. Soon after their marriage, Martin took up a post as research associate in physics at Bristol University, and Joan worked at a Bristol-based homeopathic hospital. They worshipped at Horfield Meeting in Bristol. Their son Stephen was born in 1953, the year that Martin's work took him to Northern Ireland as lecturer at Queen's University. They became members of Frederic Street Meeting, and then of what became South Belfast Meeting.

As a newcomer to the Province, Joan was saddened to observe the bitter divisions in society between Unionists and Nationalists,

which defined sharply their religious affiliation. In 1955, during their time in Belfast, daughter Penelope was born.

In 1957 Martin's work took the family to Geneva, where, in 1959, Martin suffered a burst cerebral aneurysm. The pioneering surgery that saved Martin's life was described by the neurosurgeon as having been greatly assisted by Joan's dedication to Martin and the family. In 1960 the family moved back to Bristol for Martin to take up a senior lectureship, the duties of which included spending the year 1971 in Geneva en famille. During that year Joan's skills as a physiotherapist were employed by the Swiss Red Cross.

In 1986 Joan and Martin went to Malava in Western Kenya, where Joan set up a clinic for disabled children, while Martin taught at a nearby girl's secondary school. Joan's work resulted in over sixty disabled children being able to have a near normal life after being virtually abandoned by their families.

In 1987 Joan and Martin retired to Saffron Walden and took an active part in Saffron Walden Meeting, which included Joan serving for three years on Meeting for Sufferings. Verbal ministry was not Joan's preference and, if verbal ministry arose, it should be very brief. Her favourite personal contribution, which she reiterated every now and then in meeting for worship, was Advice no. 1: "Take heed, dear Friends, to the promptings of love and truth in your hearts. Trust them as the leadings of God whose Light shows us our darkness and brings us to new life." The Advice tells us a lot about Joan and the precepts by which she lived her life: love, truth and lack of pretension.

She and Martin cared not only for the well-being of Saffron Walden Meeting, but for Thaxted Area Meeting as a whole. In spite of Joan's increasing physical difficulties in the later years, they were regular attenders at area meetings and also regular visitors to the smaller meetings (particularly Bardfield) on a Sunday morning, to join with Friends for meetings for worship.

For many years the Area Meeting Distant Healing Group met at Joan and Martin's home every month. Joan was actively involved in healing and continued to participate in the group until almost the end of her life, although, on balance, she preferred the 'hands-on' approach to healing.

Over the years she knitted hundreds of tiny teddy bears for an organisation called Teddies for Tragedies, and a small wicker chair containing the teddies as they came off the production line stood near the front door. When the smiling, colourfully dressed teddies had reached sufficient numbers, Martin would parcel them up to go to some disaster area and bring joy into the life of a child. Those of us coming to the Healing Group loved to be greeted by the chair full of cheerful teddies. Great skill was needed to create them, and Joan's fingers were constantly flying.

Joan and Martin had quietly supported progressive causes throughout their lives, and Martin reckoned that Margaret Thatcher's singular achievement was to encourage him to join the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the Labour Party.

From 2010 Joan's memory and thinking power slowly diminished, but her physical strength was retained, until early in 2017, when she had a fall attributed to an earlier undiagnosed stroke. On 16 May 2017 Joan died peacefully in Radwinter Road Hospital, Saffron Walden.

Signed on behalf of Thaxted Area Meeting

Held at Dunmow on 10 March 2019

Gill Parker, Clerk

David Henshaw

14 June 1930 – 18 August 2018

Background:

David was born on 14 June 1930 in Liverpool. Within months, the family moved to Edlington near Doncaster.

His father was an Anglican priest and his work took him to various places. As a boy, David found particular pleasure in dance, dressing up and the theatre. As he grew older, he sought information on his developing sexuality in local libraries and was soon identifying as homosexual. It was important to him when as an adolescent he went to his father and told him he was homosexual that his father said to him, "I know you are", seemingly in a spirit of love and acceptance. Given the illegality of homosexual activity at the time, David resigned himself to a life of secrecy and illicit relationships.

He chose a career as an actor and dancer and then found that he liked teaching drama more. His early teaching career nearly came to an end when his homosexuality was uncovered. He resisted attempts to bar him from teaching young people with a force and resourcefulness that came to characterise his subsequent life, including his various Quaker activities.

Coming to Friends:

David came to Friends after a long history of seeking. One Friend relates how she had seen David in the days he was part of the Rajneesh movement – followers of the Indian spiritual guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh – when he had dyed his clothes orange in line with their dress. He was taken to Quaker meeting, while in his 20s, and thought "this is rather good. I must come back to it when I've got a bit more time." It took him nearly 50 years to get "back to it", but when he did he realised that in many ways he had been a Quaker all along.

In the early 1960s he read *Towards a Quaker view of sex*, first published in 1963. The pamphlet was important to him, both in coming to terms with his sexuality and in planting further

seeds that would eventually lead him to a commitment to Quakerism many decades later. In particular, it was the Quaker testimony to equality that made it clear to him that he was a Quaker, whether he knew it or not. One Friend put it this way: "For someone who found Quakers so late in life, he was an astonishingly natural one."

Quaker activities:

Many coming to Quakers for the first time found David's warm and welcoming personality a great influence on their early Quaker experiences. Having come to Quaker's through Quaker Quest, David became one of its most dedicated supporters, fulfilling the roles of clerk and treasurer and presenting its reports to area meeting.

One Friend noted: "He was one of the first Friends I spoke with in Friends House at Quaker Quest. I remember his firmness about Quakers accepting everyone as children of God, and he quickly snuffed out my worries about Friends and sexuality, given that I was a refugee from the Church of England. He gave me a copy of *Quaker faith & practice* and told me that I would find much wisdom in it; he was right." Another Quaker Questor added: "David made a great impression on my introduction to Quakers by how quietly, and with incisive clarity, he held Quaker Quest. He moved me every one of the few times I met him. This will stay with me."

His welcoming approach when Friends returned to Friends House after a break could be equally long-lasting in its impact: "When I re-joined Friends House his welcome was one of the best things, and I got to treasure those 20 minutes or so before the start of meeting for worship when he was sitting quietly in the room while others slipped in one by one. He still sits there, for me."

David was a most faithful volunteer in the Quaker Centre for more than a decade, providing a welcome to visitors, sharing the Quaker story and tenderly listening to the life stories and faith experiences of others. David's passion for this ministry was demonstrated throughout his weekly attendance, latterly

arriving on his mobility scooter, then placing himself at the desk. Throughout the day, David kept an eye out for the newcomer, the weary and the distressed. To each he gave of himself – his attention, his wisdom, his kindness.

Although David was not particularly drawn to the programmed style of worship, he was passionate about the right of a group of Kenyan Quakers to be welcomed into area meeting. Though not alone in this, he was instrumental in facilitating that recognition. It took time and perseverance, and a great deal of love in what was at times a painful process – the kind of love that does not flinch from stating its truth and making a clear case when needed.

David engaged with a number of organisations whose aims he felt to be aligned with those of the Quakers. He went to many campaign meetings and demonstrations with London Citizens, identifying with its version of non-aligned activism to help otherwise powerless people. David was also a volunteer on several Circles of Support and Accountability. This is the scheme, initially brought into the UK at the instigation of [former general secretary of Quaker Peace & Social Witness] Helen Drewery, whereby a number of volunteers (with training and professional support) meet weekly with a 'core member' – a former sex offender – to assist that person to re-integrate into society and not re-offend. David, with his non-judgemental attitude, generous spirit and open heart, made every effort to find 'that of God in everyone'.

Many of those who met David through his peace activism were enthralled by him: by his calm, fearlessness, bravery, and his ease throughout entire actions. As one Friend put it of one particular action, a few years before he died: "When the groomed delegates arrived for the Annual Defence Dinner at the Imperial War Museum, they had a shocking reminder of the death they were celebrating as they had to walk over the bodies of peace activists. David hobbled up with his stick after them, posing as a guest, which prompted security to berate the activists about their heartlessness for stopping

this poor old man – until David stunned them into silence by lying down in the entrance. Moving with the energy of the action, he got up to loudly, firmly and calmly berate the arms dealers who were now entering via a side entrance. When security eventually managed to grab him, he started waltzing joyously around the museum's foyer, the guard not knowing what to do. I've still never heard of anyone else who waltzed with a security guard."

"David continued with his peace activism right up until his death. At the 2017 Defence & Security Equipment International (DSEI) London Arms Fair we had a Quaker meeting for worship in the road, blocking one of the two entrances. There were well over 200 people there, and the police didn't manage to arrest all the people in the road in the hour we were blocking it. David was livid – he wanted to be arrested! A couple of days later, at the height of the morning peak, David rode up to the entrance of the arms fair on his mobility scooter. Two women accompanied him and super-glued themselves to his scooter, blocking the entrance. The police had no idea what to do with an octogenarian with limited mobility, and as he maximised the disruption to thousands of arms dealers, he was full of grace, humility, and joy."

Very soon after joining Friends House Meeting in September 2006, David immersed himself in Quaker business affairs and was very keen to serve his local and area meetings on various committees. David was clerk to Friends House Meeting for five years (2008–12). He liked to prepare everything in advance, properly, and was rather thrown when a last-minute addition was offered. He also served as an elder (2010–16). He enjoyed being membership clerk for area meeting (2014 – March 2017) and made new members especially welcome. When the area meeting had difficulty finding a successor, he continued to serve for two further meetings until we had found a replacement. David also served as our representative on London Quakers from 2012 to 2016. His last job for area meeting was taking on clerking its Nominations Committee.

Those who worked with David more closely, especially in business meetings, could find him difficult. David was certainly not one to mince his words and upheld plain speech in an exemplary fashion. For one Friend, when "thinking about David, the purple of the thistle flower came to my mind. The colour is warm and reassuring, an apt metaphor for David, who could be very prickly at times." This prickliness frequently led to him falling out with people, sometimes for lengthy periods. Some felt that his preference for action over thought was responsible for his sometimes erratic behaviour at business meetings.

One Friend remarked: "David was blissfully unaware of the darker side of his character, which would come out in ways such as aggressive driving, or criticism of other people and ways of doing things. His criticism was always well-intentioned and to your face, but without understanding and tolerance of other points of view. His impatience could occasionally lead him to walk out of business meetings that took too long to discern what he felt strongly to be right. He was very much geared up for action and in any situation wanted to know what he could do to help, which, perhaps, came more easily to him than reflection and waiting."

In a talk he gave at a Friends House Meeting on 'Aspects of Quakerism', he detailed his very considerable achievements in dance and performance education. While holding a senior position at Trent Park College of Education, Middlesex Polytechnic, he pioneered performance studies as a degree subject. When questioned about the seeming absence of any long-term relationships, he said he had been too busy in his career to provide the necessary energy and support for that.

Approaching the end of life:

In the year or so before he died, he became someone who smiled more, became lighter in spirit, and at ease with people he met. He would frequently talk about his love of London and of heaven being 'here and now', notwithstanding his physical frailty.

Characteristically, once when David was at an all-age meeting held at Muswell Hill, he got down on the floor to be with the little children, even though he knew he would need help to get up again. Something had changed, and some found it wonderful and mysterious to witness.

David made no secret of wanting to end his life when he felt the time was right to go, or of the cardboard coffin waiting in his wardrobe. He died on 18 August 2018, aged 88, having decided while his mind was clear and joyful that he did not intend to face another winter, and having taken the pills he had kept for that purpose.

In recognition of his considerable contribution to Quaker work, David's ashes were buried in the garden of Friends House, by special permission, on 7 April 2019.

Signed on behalf of North West London Area Meeting

Held at Friends House on 27 March 2019

Dugan Cummings, Clerk

Kate Joyce

27 August 1934 – 3 January 2018

Kate (née Anne Katharine Palmer) was born on 27 August 1934 at Ulverston, within walking distance of Swarthmoor Hall, the birthplace of Quakerism. Her maternal grandfather, Frank Thomas Sunderland, was born in Letchworth, and although not himself a Quaker, he held strong religious and political views. In 1916 he refused to be called up and was imprisoned for over two years. He was strongly supported by his wife Lucy, and their regular wartime correspondence testifies to their convictions (*The Conscientious Objector's Wife: Letters between Frank & Lucy Sunderland, 1916–1919*, edited by Kate Macdonald) and the stresses of being related to a conscientious objector. Kate's mother was not allowed to take up her place at grammar school because of her father's stance. This did not prevent her from living an infectious artistic and social life. Kate's father was more fortunate: he graduated from Fitzwilliam House, Cambridge, and trained as a teacher. He joined Quakers while he was an undergraduate.

When Kate was three, her family moved back to Cambridge, where he was later appointed as a lecturer at Homerton College. Kate's two younger sisters, Elizabeth and Julia, were born in Cambridge. The three girls grew up attending Jesus Lane Quaker Meeting, and all enjoyed a good education.

As Kate grew up, she participated in many of her father's field work studies. She was then offered a place at Newnham College, Cambridge, and read Natural Sciences, specialising in Botany. After graduating, she obtained a Cambridge University teaching diploma, and worked as a Field Assistant at Flatford Mill Field Centre.

Kate met Peter Miller, a gifted entomologist, while she was still an undergraduate and he was a postgraduate student. On 4 April 1959, when he had completed his postgraduate doctoral degree (PhD), they married. Later that year he was offered a lectureship in Zoology at Makerere University, and they set off by boat

for Uganda. Kate and Peter's daughter Clare was born while they were there. Shortly thereafter, the family returned to the UK, since Peter had been offered a lectureship in the Department of Zoology at Oxford University. He became a Fellow of The Queen's College. That same year Kate started to attend Oxford Friends Meeting, and a year later their son Fred was born. They created a very happy family home, with a marvellous garden with ponds to encourage dragonflies and other living creatures. In spite of her childcare responsibilities, Kate managed to publish four books with Oxford University Press, geared to young people's understanding of human physiology. She also worked part-time at the herbarium of Oxford University.

In 1972 Kate started full-time biology teaching at Headington School for Girls, where she worked for 22 years. She became head of department and insisted on all students taking the 'O' level course. She designed new biology laboratories for the school: they are still in use in 2018. Kate continued working there until her retirement in 1994. Peter took a number of sabbaticals over the years, and the whole family lived in Nigeria for three months in 1968, for six months in Kenya in 1973, and for four months in Madurai in South India in 1987.

Peter took early retirement in 1994: he and Kate planned to spend four months of each year teaching at Makerere University, and another six months elsewhere. They managed to fulfil this plan for one year, but Peter died very suddenly of a brain tumour in March 1996. This was a terrible shock to the whole family.

As a widow, Kate threw herself into a wide range of activities. Peter had been an international expert on dragonflies: Kate completed the book *East African Dragonflies* that he had started shortly before he died.

She was a very active and involved grandmother to her three grandchildren, Ndo, Chi and Nonge, who lived nearby.

She devoted even more of her time to Quaker activities in Oxford Meeting. She served as clerk and assistant clerk and also as garden manager.

She was an elder and convenor of elders at Oxford. She was a funeral adviser for Oxford Local Meeting. She represented Oxford Meeting on the planning group for Remembrance Day. She was a member of the Area Meeting Spiritual Nurture Group.

She also became an active participant in Civic Society affairs in Oxford. For 16 years, after her retirement from Headington School, she was the planning secretary of Oxford Civic Society. Her tact and firmness in expressing the Society's views on planning applications made a major contribution to the direction of the development of the city in those years. She joined the Civic Society Executive Committee shortly before Tony Joyce was enrolled as the community liaison officer. These two worked together on organising consultations with residents' groups to help produce the Oxford City Council Local Plan. They also collaborated on the production of the Civic Society's book *Visions for Oxford in the 21st Century*. So they had known each other for eight years when they married at Oxford Meeting House on 15 April 2006.

Both Kate and Tony understood clearly that her Quaker membership was fundamental to Kate's life. In Tony's words, "when we first discussed the possibility that we might share our lives together, the main consideration was that Quaker belief and practice were her first priority and would remain so... She built her life around her participation not only in Oxford Meeting, but also in attendance at area meeting and Yearly Meeting. The way in which she contributed to the lives of so many individuals and communities stemmed from the abiding quality of her belief." Although Tony had grown up in the Anglican Church, he started to attend meeting for worship regularly, playing such an active part in Oxford Meeting and Oxford & Swindon Area Meeting that he was invited to become a member 'by affirmation' (an invitation he was glad to accept).

Tony lived with Kate at Blenheim Drive, and they enjoyed very happy years together. Together they maintained the beautiful garden and hosted many family gatherings, which always

gave Kate much pleasure. Kate died peacefully at home surrounded by family on 3 January 2018.

Kate's faithful commitment to her Christian-based Quakerism is what most Friends remember about her. Her spoken ministry was Spirit-led and profound. Many Friends have expressed their gratitude for Kate's commitment to the Experiment with Light sessions held regularly in her own home over a number of years.

Her funeral, held in the meeting house 'after the manner of Friends', was a profoundly moving occasion attended by a huge number of family members and F/friends.

The following are a few of the many tributes to her, which have been contributed by those who knew her and valued her influence on the life of Oxford Meeting:

"When I was new to Quakerism, I attended enquirers' group meetings in Kate's home. Kate was convenor of elders at that time. I remember particularly her gift of making strangers feel welcome."

"When I was new to Oxford Meeting and to Quakers, Kate was at the centre of most things in the meeting. I was not especially aware of Quaker roles at the time, but it felt to me that Kate was something of a 'mother' to the meeting. She was one of my visitors when I applied for membership, and I vividly remember going to her home for Experiment with Light meetings. Later we were both involved in Quaker Quest. I remember a moment when a comment she had made about other Churches had upset a member of another faith community, and I shared that with her. She took my hand and, with a sweet smile and no defensiveness, said to me, 'I think you are eldering me!' I worked with Kate in the clerkship team as co-assistant clerk. Through that, I got to know more about her love of nature and her work in completing Peter's book about dragonflies. I also remember the hospitality of her home, as we met there to prepare for meeting for worship for business."

"I first met Kate when I arrived in Oxford in 1994 and realised almost at once what a valued and committed member of the meeting she was. She was particularly kind to me when my father died at the end of that year. Kate held the position of elder for at least two triennia. She served the meeting in a number of other ways, including making her house available for enquirers' evenings and helping to set up and facilitate the very lively and creative quilting group."

"Kate had an openness and a warmth which made her a very special F/friend. She had a deep knowledge of and love for the natural world, and it was always a pleasure to visit her beautiful house and garden. It was sad to see her in failing health in her last years, but always a joy to be greeted by her beautiful smile."

Signed on behalf of Oxford & Swindon Area Meeting

Held at Oxford on 19 January 2019

Elsbeth Wollen, Clerk

Richard Lacock

17 September 1928 – 4 February 2018

Richard was born in East London and lived there until his early teens when, after his initial evacuation to Dorset, the whole family moved to Devon during World War II. He attended the grammar school in Totnes. His love of the countryside and walking probably dates from this time. He walked and cycled miles around Devon both as a boy and adult. From the age of 14 to 18 he attended the local village church twice on Sundays, being paid to pump the organ. While he would have described himself as a Christian, he said he had already begun to question things.

After school Richard went into National Service. He was in the Education Corps, serving in Libya and Palestine, as well as the UK. He then went to Exeter University to study history, the only one of his siblings to continue into further education. It was there that he met Jean Miller. Once they had completed their teacher training, they married and moved to London, both teaching in secondary schools, and then to Bristol where their daughters Janice and Lynne were born.

They moved to Cheltenham for Richard to take up a post as headmaster of Chosen Hill School, Churchdown, where he was a much loved and respected headmaster from 1977 to 1988. Colleagues and pupils recall his fairness and his ability for remembering names. At his funeral a former pupil spoke of the way he inspired respect, his sense of duty and the example he set for others to follow.

Richard and Jean first attended the parish church and then, over 10 to 12 years, several other churches across different denominations where, despite the warm welcomes they received, they still felt something was missing. Jean taught about different faiths in humanities lessons and their daughters remember family discussions about their parents' move away from some of the more dogmatic teachings in the Anglican liturgy and the Creed. Eventually,

they came to Cheltenham Quaker Meeting and felt immediately at home.

Later, Richard likened the present time of great uncertainty with that of the 17th century, when George Fox and his contemporaries were living "in a world turned upside down". Fox also sought religious certainty in different churches, even in army garrisons during the Civil War, but found no answers. He then had a religious experience when he heard a voice saying, "There is one, even Christ Jesus that can speak to thy condition" and so he and his fellow seekers after truth followed the teachings of Jesus unmediated by priests and ceremony. While Richard could not subscribe to beliefs in the virgin birth, the Trinity and the death of Jesus as atonement for our sins, he described himself as an agnostic Christian – "I just don't know". He felt that in this uncertain world his rock was Jesus and in the Quaker meeting for worship we are able, without ritual or creed, to open our hearts to God and to seek divine guidance.

In Cheltenham Meeting Jean first became an overseer, a 'role' that Richard took over when Jean died in 2002. He became convenor of overseers, later known, at his suggestion, as Pastoral Friends in Cheltenham. He was an active participant in many other ways, and became clerk of Gloucestershire Area Meeting for several years.

Many Friends remember with great gratitude the support in their bereavement shown to them by both Richard and Jean. Richard remained a committed visitor to the sick and bereaved as well as to those needing emotional support, bringing a warm and deeply sympathetic presence into the homes of those who were isolated by age or illness. He continued this even when he became ill and more physically challenged himself. Many Friends remember with affection how he would always ask on meeting them, "How are you?" He also regularly attended Gloucester, a smaller and therefore struggling meeting. Gloucester Friends remember his kindness, especially in visiting and giving lifts to people.

Richard first joined Jean in the local History Society. He then embarked on an MPhil at Birmingham University and Woodbrooke with a dissertation on the history of Quakerism in Gloucester. He graduated in the year Jean died, but she knew he had gained the award before she passed away in 2002.

Walking was always a vital part of Richard's life. Family holidays were often spent walking and visiting historic buildings. He had a passion for old churches in particular and was a fount of knowledge on different styles of church architecture. He was a keen member of the local Ramblers Association and, post-retirement, a Cotswold warden as well, keeping footpaths open, building and repairing stiles and, for many years, organising the working parties.

In 2005 he co-founded and led a walking group for Cheltenham Quakers, initially to walk the Cotswold Way. He continued to lead the group until 2013 when his health no longer allowed him to do so. He planned and coordinated these walks with meticulous care and precision, overwalking the entire routes himself beforehand. Friends who participated remember with affection how he led us over streams, stiles, beautiful hills and woodlands with picnic lunches, always ending with tea and cake in a café he had previously chosen. He often treated the group to a historical tour in local country churches. Close friendships were formed during these excursions, which enhanced and deepened the life of the meeting.

Richard enjoyed time with his family and his grandchildren – Sam, Joe, Megan, and Sorrel. One very special time was when he climbed Scafell Pike, Ben Nevis and Snowdon with his grandsons.

A highly principled and deeply spiritual person, Richard nevertheless had a great sense of humour. He was welcoming and kind, with a wonderful way of being 'present for people'. His personality made a great impact on others.

He was a faithful member of Interfaith for many years, pleased to be part of its aim to encourage connections between people of

different faiths and none in order to foster greater understanding. Members remember him for his kindness and the way he often gave people lifts to meetings.

A new classroom block for the humanities at Chosen Hill School, including history and religious education, was named after him in 2010. Typically, at the official opening he stressed that while he felt honoured by this, he only accepted it as a representative of the team as a whole, both staff and students.

It was also in 2010 that he moved to Pegasus Court where, despite his health problems, he played a full part in the community there. The garden, which won a bronze award in a magazine for the best community garden in 2018, is dedicated to him.

We are encouraged as Quakers to be patterns, be examples. That is what we believe Richard was, or what we can hope to be. Richard regarded his life as one that was truly blessed: his family and his Quaker meeting will know it as one well lived.

Signed on behalf of Gloucestershire Area Meeting

Held at Painswick on 13 October 2019

Peter Carter, Clerk

Lesley Parker

3 March 1921 – 21 February 2018

Lesley Gray was born in Shere in Surrey on 3 May 1921. Her parents were Scots by birth and ancestry, but lived in England. Her father, Leonard Gray, was a lecturer in chemistry at King's College, London. Both her parents were actively involved with the arts and were part of the Bloomsbury Set. By the time Lesley was one, her family had moved to Welwyn Garden City, of which her father became the first director.

Lesley was the youngest of three. Her older sisters were good at games and popular at school, but she hated games and loved reading books and reading and writing poetry, which she did throughout her life, which didn't go down well in an English girls' boarding school. Even her mother would frequently tell her to stop reading and do something. Lesley went to the same boarding school as her older sisters, but at about the age of 12 had a breakdown. She was then sent to Wychwood School in Oxford. This school was a bit more congenial, and she became editor of the school magazine, where one of her claims to fame she liked to make was that she was the first publisher of Joan Aiken. Lesley loved botany and the nature walks they regularly made.

Lesley applied to Oxford to go up in October 1939, but was turned down, but when the war began was unexpectedly offered a place. Her first term was not happy, but when she went back after Christmas she settled and enjoyed her time there. Women were allowed to have men visitors during the day, provided they didn't have any alcohol in the room. One day the Bursar marched in and took a bottle of sherry out of the cupboard and put it outside the door, all without saying a word. In Lady Margaret Hall you were not allowed to have your bed in your room if men visited; it had to be propped up in the corridor.

It was while at Oxford that Lesley attended Quaker meeting for the first time. Her parents had refused to impose any religious education

or views on their children. The eldest became Catholic, the second Anglican and the youngest a Quaker.

When Lesley finished her degree in French and German, specialising in medieval French, she was interviewed for Bletchley Park with two questions: do you prefer Bach or jazz? Do you prefer chess or bridge? She preferred Bach and hated both chess and bridge, but hated bridge more.

Lesley was often on the night shift. She remembered one particular night in Hut 6 when they broke the code and learnt that Coventry was about to be bombed. One of the women on the team had parents living in Coventry. She spent the night supporting her colleague until the news of the raid was announced and the family could be contacted without threatening security. All turned out well.

By May 1945 the war was winding down and there was very little work in Hut 6. Lesley contacted her Uncle Cecil, saying that she was bored and asked him to arrange a party for her 24th birthday. This took place at the Café Royal in the Strand in London. There, Dylan Thomas introduced her to an American, Frank Parker, who had been in the Canadian Black Watch and had spent most of the war as a prisoner of war, and was waiting for passage home. They were married at Newport Pagnell Registry Office on 30 May, although they nearly missed their slot at the registry office because her husband-to-be was trying to rescue a grey mare from an air-raid shelter. Frank was shipped out on 1 June. The night he sailed, there was a violent thunder storm and Lesley spent the hours reading and re-reading the same book over and over until dawn. She used to say she hadn't really expected the marriage to last more than six months. But she was a young woman in search of adventure and culture, and Frank was offering a life in the artistic community in Paris, where he had lived and painted from 1936 to *l'exode*, when the Germans marched in.

In late 1945 it was almost impossible to get passage to America, but a Norwegian

shipping line was willing to sign on GI brides as stewardesses for the crossing instead of calling them passengers, so Lesley got passage with a number of other women who had married American servicemen. The trip was extended by two massive hurricanes, which pushed the ship backwards. Lesley, who always got terribly seasick, was tied into a chair in the saloon. The ship was rerouted from landing in New York to the St Lawrence River, but some of the husbands had learnt of the change of course, including Frank, and so when the ship docked, they appeared/clambered over its side.

Lesley and Frank initially lived briefly in New York, and then Paris and Aix-en-Provence, with their circle of friends of painters and writers. Their first daughter, Linzee, was born in November 1947. In the early 1950s they settled in Massachusetts after Frank's mother, who had lost both her husband and younger son in the war, asked them to stay. After three miscarriages, Lucy was born in October 1958, and both Lesley and Lucy were fairly poorly for the next year, partially as a result of medication Lesley had taken to try to prevent another miscarriage.

When Robert Cohan's modern ballet company was based in Boston, Lesley designed and made the costumes for one of his ballets, and also for a ballet by Esther Waters in Cambridge, Mass. She worked part-time in Widener, the Harvard University Library, as a cataloguer of foreign books, so it was a question of being able to understand enough of a wide range of languages to work out what a particular book was about. Lesley was gifted at recognising language and patterns of words, a skill that had served her well at Bletchley Park and that she later enjoyed when completing *The Guardian* crossword in her daily encounter with 'Araucaria', her favourite crossword-setter. Lesley also studied graphology and used to analyse handwriting, both for interest and later for the Citizens Advice Bureau.

After the difficult break-up of her marriage in America, Lesley settled with Lucy in Norwich and became very active in a wide range of

spheres. She was a candidate in local and national elections for the Liberals, never losing her deposit, which was rare for a Liberal candidate at the time.

After a visit to Strangers' Hall Museum, Lesley asked if there were opportunities to help care for the collection of costumes, a lifelong passion of hers. This was the start of a long friendship with the curator, Pamela Clabburn, with whom she made a strong team, running Strangers' Hall until Pam's retirement. They developed a range of techniques for conserving costume, which became the basis for the National Trust's fabric conservation unit set up at Blickling Hall. Lesley helped Pam write her first book, *The Needleworker's Dictionary*, which involved many heated debates about the difference between what the words said and what Pam actually meant to say. Lesley was later involved in helping to catalogue the Norwich costume collection and in establishing the library of reference books on the history of costume.

Lesley also became a volunteer at the Citizens Advice Bureau, where she helped set up a scheme to support people who were facing tribunals, mostly employment and medical, and represented them at the hearings, almost always, successfully. She relished the challenge of putting her case and defeating her opponents. She also acted as advisor to set up a similar scheme in Vienna.

And not long after her return to England, Lesley returned to Quakers. She was very active in Norwich Quaker Meeting, serving in a wide range of roles, including clerk, elder and registering officer. However, she was clear about drawing the line when it came to any suggestion that she become treasurer or clerk to Finance and Property. She was one of the founder members of the Patchwork and Quilting Group, which is still going strong. Lesley also served on Meeting for Sufferings in the 1980s and some subgroups of what was then Quaker Social Responsibility & Education (QSRE). She continued to attend Norwich Meeting until a serious fall meant she became housebound.

Throughout her life, Lesley enjoyed a wide range of crafts: sewing, quilting, embroidery, knitting... the list goes on. She had a keen eye for detail, and a friend commented that she was always aware when visiting her that she really looked at her and took in the details of her appearance.

For many years, Lesley would visit Linzee in America for about five or six weeks in October, being there for the birth of her granddaughter Eliza in 1987. Often, Linzee would come up with some new craft project for them to explore together, which usually then formed the basis of what Lesley would make for the upcoming Christmas sale at the meeting house.

She loved her garden and made it a point of honour that there would be some flowers blooming in every month of the year. Lesley died peacefully at home on 21 February 2018, surrounded by her books and cats.

Throughout her life, Lesley freely gave a listening ear or more practical help to all those in need of a bit of extra support. After her death, many spoke of their gratitude for her quiet wisdom, often delivered with gentle humour.

Signed on behalf of Norfolk & Waveney Area Meeting

Held at Norwich on 19 May 2019

Gill Smith, Clerk

Erika Margarethe Zintl Pearce

16 July 1931 – 13 March 2019

Erika was born in the spa town of Marienbad – then in the Sudetenland, now the Czech Republic – the only child of an arranged marriage. Her father's family business was Apotheke and Pharmacist in the town. Her mother's father was a Professor of German at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore and a specialist in Incunabula bibles kept at the Monastery at Stift Tepl near Marienbad. Her father died when she was nine months old, and her mother returned to Baltimore a year or so later to live permanently. Every year until 1939, the whole family travelled to Marienbad for study and family time. Erika was brought up by two sets of loving grandparents on both sides of the Atlantic. By all accounts, her mother was a cruel and unloving woman. Erika's Marienbad grandparents loved her to bits. This is documented in a lovely memoir dedicated to Erika written before her grandfather died in 1951 and delivered to Erika by the Red Cross in the early 1990s. In 1989, when the Berlin Wall came down, she felt she'd like to 'go home' but felt unconfident about doing it. After a lot of encouragement from her daughter Deborah, she agreed to a trip.

Her amazing memory of very happy times astounded Deborah and Hugh, her grandson. She wanted to visit the Catholic church where she'd worshipped with Valli, her beloved Marienbad grandmother, showing them the pew she sat in. The joy Erika felt on this trip lived with her to the end of her days: "It really did happen, you know."

In 2005 Erika explained to Deborah about how she'd 'run away' as a young teenager, from her mother's strictly Lutheran church in Baltimore to the Quaker community in what was to become Stoney Run Meeting. She had clear memories of the Quaker kindness shown to her, and it was Friends at Stoney Run who pleaded with her mother to get Erika's eyes tested. Retinitis

pigmentosa was the diagnosis, but she was poorly treated and didn't have proper glasses for lots of years. The support she had from Friends for her eye condition and the friendships she built through Quakers in post-war US and in Europe resulted in an energetic, life-long love of and service to the Society of Friends.

She studied Latin American History at Penn in Philadelphia as an undergraduate and later came to the UK to continue her PhD studies at the University of London. In the period immediately following World War II, Friends' communities in the US were keen to rebuild European Quaker strength. American Young Friends organised Friends World Conferences, and for a couple of these Erika was on the organising committee. Reports from Friends who knew her then still recall a vibrant, determined, independent woman with a brilliant mind. When her mind was put to anything, it was great, but being on the wrong side of it was not an option!

This period of activity with Friends World Committee for Consultation brought her into contact with many English Friends. In 1952, while in the UK, she met many Young Friends who were to become the heart of her friendship circle inside and out of the Society.

Erika met John Woods during the planning stage of the International Gathering of Young Friends held in Reading shortly before the Quaker World Conference held in Oxford in 1952. He became a close family friend.

She lived in a flat owned by Dame Edith Evans near Marylebone and entertained in a uniquely American style. When she first arrived in the UK, she was welcomed into the Woods family at Epsom – Percy and Doris and their sons, Andrew and John. They provided a warm and supportive environment for Erika that lasted for decades.

She became part of a group of Young Friends that included Robert and Anne Diamond, George and Margaret Bunney, Christopher Holdsworth, Juliet Clutterbuck, Janet Eavis, Philip Jacob, Brigid Scanlon and Mary Bewley. They shared a passion for making the Society

of Friends a social force in post-war Britain, through Yearly Meeting, conferences and supporting each other's initiatives to build up local Quaker meetings.

Sometime in this period she met John Pearce, a high-minded theology graduate from Oxford who was an English teacher, not yet a member of the Society of Friends but very sympathetic with its values. He became a member, and they were married at Jordans in 1955 – their marriage certificate was more than four feet long, a document of their life with Friends. John was teaching at Hampton Grammar School; Deborah was born in Hampton in 1958. Later, John was on the founding staff at Burnham Grammar School when they moved to Farnham Common and committed themselves and their two daughters to the community of Friends at Jordans. Hannah was born in Beaconsfield in 1962.

In this period they were active in helping British and US Young Friends protest against the Vietnam War, their home being near enough to Heathrow to help as a transit point from the US to avoid the draft. Life at Jordans Monthly Meeting was total. They were active in the decision to develop Old Jordans' refectory into a usable asset, a downstairs space for all sorts of activities, with rooms above, a short walk from the Mayflower Barn. Erika worked with the architect, Claud Rogers, on the interiors while John made curtains. Erika selected woven Welsh blankets from a Quaker family she'd come across in Haverford West. John became a member of Meeting for Sufferings. They brought the girls to meeting, workcamps, joined in and supported activities and individuals in need, and the girls made friends with the children of their friends. It was a happy time for Erika. She never drove but would cycle or take the bus. It mattered to be active in the life of the Society, a way to repay the kindness and love Friends had shown her as a younger woman. The girls went to Monthly Meeting Summer Camp for years. Erika encouraged their independence, and they were sent to Friends' School at Saffron Walden, where her dear Friend John C. Woods was now head.

It was important to Erika to learn about the history of the Religious Society of Friends, which had almost rescued her; its philosophers and its role in the cultural life of this country and the US. Her bookshelves bear witness to this intellectual pursuit and making sure the girls knew and were proud of their Quaker heritage, especially in areas of social justice. In 1973/4 John got a new job as Inspector of Schools for English in Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely. The family moved to Great Chesterford, where Erika lived until she died in 2019. Increasing pressures from John's work and Erika's decreasing confidence due to her declining sight meant the marriage struggled and John left the family in 1979.

John had broken away from the Society due to theological disagreements at Jordans, but Erika maintained her membership, primarily attending Quaker meeting in Saffron Walden, serving on Finance and Premises committees. She had become a London and Middlesex Governor at Friends' School Saffron Walden in the mid-seventies, serving on Finance and Property sub-committees and other smaller groups. She loved this service and gave it her best. Her powerful intellect rubbed people up the wrong way at times, she could be abrasive and her rigorous approach at times could be most off-putting. She was often 'right' in what she was saying, but brutal in her delivery. She was very hospitable: other members of the Board came to stay, making travel easier. She was an excellent cook and generous hostess, serving her lifelong love of Akbar Blend coffee beans from Fortnum & Mason that arrived every month.

During this time her sight continued to deteriorate, which while restricting some of her activities also provided an insight into her determination to maintain her way of life.

Beyond life in the Society she was a keen supporter of artists and craftsmen, weavers, potters, painters, stained glass artists and furniture-makers. She was always keen to understand their craft, the limitations of living a life as a craftsman and buying a wide variety of their wares. Artists would visit her and spend time with her; she was companionable and

encouraging. Letters to the family after her death bear witness to her quiet, understated, but hugely valuable support: "she was always comforting if things were going wrong". She was a member of the Royal Academy and went to the Summer Exhibition as often as she could. After John's departure she moved to a smaller house in the village and for a while continued to spin and participate in village activities, Women's Institute and Workers' Educational Association (WEA) classes, and going to music events at the village church, the Thaxted Festival and West Road Concert Hall in Cambridge. She would often buy two tickets and offer one to someone who might like to go – if they'd take her!

In later years she stopped going to meeting in Saffron Walden, preferring Bardfield Meeting when her longstanding friend from Jordans came for the weekend. She loved the trip 'over there'; the building and sense of calm reminded her of happier times at Jordans. She suffered more than was widely known with mental illness, and in the last decade her failing sight combined with failing memory brought huge challenges for her. Her determination to keep going alone and independently was in itself amazing. But her refusal of any form of help or support – she confused that with failure – meant she became increasingly reclusive, irascible, infirm, and impossible.

Her lasting wish was to die at home, and she was well cared for by some truly committed Christian women, many of them from various parts of the African continent. But it was painful to see this once brilliant, bohemian, vibrant intellect hollowed out by dementia. She abandoned her hope to be buried at Jordans and had her funeral at All Saints in Great Chesterford, which included Quaker elements, and is buried in the churchyard there.

Signed on behalf of Thaxted Area Meeting

Held at Dunmow on 8 December 2019

Gill Parker, Clerk

Angela Maureen Pivac

19 September 1947 – 20 February 2018

Angela was born in Belfast into a family in which religion played a central role: her father was a Church of Ireland clergyman, as was her grandfather, while three other relatives became bishops. She attended the Clergy Daughters' School, the special boarding school attached to Alexandra College, Dublin – an institution founded by a Quaker – and it was at school that she met her lifelong friend, Gloria.

It was Gloria, a Quaker, who, with her parents, introduced Angela to her first Friends meeting, at Eustace Street, Dublin – where Angela felt that “a seed had been sown”.

Later, while a university student at Trinity College Dublin, Angela grew more disenchanted with the forms and tenets of the Church of Ireland and began occasional attendance at Eustace Street Meeting. After two years at Trinity, she left her degree course, returning to Northern Ireland to train as a teacher. Her first teaching post was in a primary school on the Isle of Man; but the headmaster's propensity for the use of the birch on the children was too much for her to bear, so she resigned after 18 months and left the profession.

When Angela was 16, she took lessons to learn braille, partly for self-knowledge but also for the challenge, a skill that she was later able to use to help visually impaired people. Aged 20, she spent two months working in a kibbutz in Israel, which fostered an interest in Israel and Palestine that was to develop once she retired. Angela learnt French to a good standard after enjoying many summer holidays in the south of France with her parents and siblings.

She retained a love for France throughout her life. It was there, when she was 21, that she learnt that her first meaningful boyfriend had been killed while mountaineering in Peru. Angela always retained an ambition to visit the country and fulfilled this a month after her retirement. While in the region, she also enjoyed a visit to the Quaker community in Bolivia.

However, Ireland was always the country closest to her heart.

After leaving teaching, her experience with braille spurred her to train at Leeds to become a social worker for the blind, working for several years in Cheshire. During this time she became actively involved in amateur dramatics in Chester. Angela became friends with a couple there whose marriage ended when the husband killed his wife. Understanding what led to the tragedy informed Angela that all involved in violence are victims, each in their own way.

After completing training in Birmingham as an orientation and mobility officer for the blind, Angela returned to Dublin in 1974 to work at St. Mary's Roman Catholic School for Blind Girls. She enjoyed teaching the pupils how to get around safely with a long cane, but frequently met indifference from the head teacher, who was interested in academic attainment rather than the acquisition of practical life skills. Incidentally, Angela was instrumental in introducing the first pelican crossing in Dublin, to the busy road outside the school.

In 1978 Angela moved to Auckland, New Zealand, to take up a mobility role in the Adult Rehabilitation Unit of the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind. This was a move that had a profound effect on her life, because there she met her future husband, Mark, who had recently lost his sight at the age of 18. They married in 1981 in New Earswick Meeting, York, near where Angela's father had his final parish.

As Angela's first digs in Auckland were near Mount Eden Quaker Meeting, she decided to attend and received a very friendly welcome from the outset. After just six months – an unusually short time – she applied for membership, so sure was she that she had found her spiritual home among Quakers. Her visitors and monthly meeting clearly discerned the rightness of Angela's leading. Mark became an attender soon after he and Angela fell in love and was received into membership in 1983.

Angela and Mark began their married life in January 1981 as resident Friends at Mount

Eden Quaker Meeting, when the Friends who were due to fulfil the year were unable to do so. Helping to run the small Auckland Friends Centre, next to the meeting house, proved rewarding, if challenging. They had to fit their Quaker work around Angela's job and Mark's university lectures. Meeting Friends from New Zealand and around the world staying at the centre made the almost year-long residency a particularly memorable experience.

Later that year Angela and Mark moved to another property in Auckland, before moving again to share the house of a dear, older, Quaker friend. Their first child, Claire, was born in 1982.

In March 1984 the family moved to Dublin and regularly attended Churchtown Meeting. Their son, David, was born in September. Angela was pleased to return to Dublin, where two dearly loved aunts, Miriam and Peggy, gave the family constant support. A few months later Angela's parents, Eric and Elizabeth, retired to Dublin, enlarging the family circle.

Angela sold the small artisan's dwelling she bought before going to New Zealand, and with savings, she and Mark purchased a small family home in Churchtown. The three years spent there were dogged by Mark's inability to find paid work in an Irish economy that then had very high unemployment. For a while, Angela helped their scanty finances by taking on the cleaning of the meeting house.

Unable to see a clear way forward in Dublin, in 1987 they moved to Stirling, Scotland, where Mark undertook more postgraduate study. They transferred their membership to West Scotland Monthly Meeting and worshipped at Dunblane Meeting. They spent a year living on campus before deciding to sell up in Dublin and move permanently to Scotland. Angela worked part-time with Fife Society for the Blind and eventually took a distance course for a degree in social work at Aberdeen. She was particularly pleased to get her degree, long having considered it unfinished business after failing to complete her course at Trinity College years earlier. Abiding friendships were made

with Quakers at Dunblane Meeting.

Angela, Mark and the children moved to Saffron Walden in 1996 after Mark obtained a permanent post as a journalist with the BBC World Service in London. Angela got a job as a mobility instructor and general social worker with Essex County Council, remaining in the latter role until her retirement in 2011.

The decision to establish themselves in Saffron Walden was determined by a wish to place Claire and David at Friends' School.

Angela's whole life was centred around caring and giving service to others; essentially, in retirement, she simply swapped paid employment for almost equally busy voluntary work. In the last years of her life Angela actively supported a range of concerns. These included a local Alzheimer's support group; volunteering for five years in the British Heart Foundation shop in Saffron Walden; and in her final year of health as a voluntary advisor with the Citizens Advice Bureau. She was a long-time letter writer for Amnesty International and supported Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, among other campaigning organisations. Angela was a dedicated blood donor, giving more than a hundred donations in four countries. Extra fulfilment came with birdwatching, cycling, creative writing, and nurturing friendships.

Retirement gave Angela the time to become even more involved with Quaker work. Her gentle, caring nature was ideally suited to the role of overseer in her local meeting, and she found serving on Meeting for Sufferings stimulating. She had a particular concern for the Palestinian people. In 2014 she spent two weeks in Palestine with Quaker Voluntary Action; later she applied to be an ecumenical accompanier in Palestine but was disappointed to be turned down because those interviewing her felt she might not cope well with potential violence. Angela continued to support the Palestinians by helping to operate the Palestinian information stall at Cambridge market on one Saturday each month. She actively sold Palestinian goods to Saffron Walden Friends.

Angela greatly enjoyed being a Friend in Residence at Woodbrooke, once or twice a year for the last five years of her life. Her social work experience enabled her to be a useful and committed trustee of Friends Therapeutic Community Trust at Glebe House, a Quaker charitable trust providing specialist interventions for young men between the ages of 15 and 18 with a known history of harmful sexual behaviours.

Angela was a devoted wife and mother. She and Mark felt blessed to have Trudi join their family when she and Claire celebrated their civil partnership. Later, Angela revelled in being a grandmother to Freya. It was a joy to watch the two together; Angela was simply a natural granny. She and Mark were thrilled with David and Laura's engagement; sadly, cancer took Angela's life five months before their wedding.

The religious seed sown in Angela's youth led to her finding a spiritual home with Quakers; it inspired her to devote much of her life to the needs of others, and to the love of her family and friends. Ultimately, it gave her the strength to face her final illness with a calm dignity and the assurance that love never dies.

In Angela's own words about what made a Quaker meeting so special, she once wrote:

"...I have experienced a voice in my innermost being saying phrases like 'I am with you', 'You're not alone'. This spiritual experience is profoundly moving... I value the silence of a Quaker meeting for worship. This is not the same silence as can be found on a mountain top; it is a living, uplifting, spiritual silence."

Signed on behalf of Thaxted Area Meeting

Held at Dunmow on 10 March 2019

Gill Parker, Clerk

Margaret Rowan

21 March 1930 – 24 October 2018

Margaret was born in 1930, and in 1952 she married Irving Leverton. They had four children, for whom Margaret was obviously a very loving mother. When someone recently commented to one of her daughters what a lovely family they were, in the context of the care they had shown to Margaret during the last stage of her life, the daughter replied: "We are a lovely family because we had lovely parents!"

They moved to Hereford in 1965. Margaret loved working in her garden for as many hours as she could, growing vegetables, fruit and flowers and keeping chickens as well as bringing up her children. She recognised how fortunate they were, and she had underprivileged youngsters from London to stay with the family for holidays, as well as caring for her own mother, who lived with the family for the last few years of her life. Margaret and Irving helped set up a home in Hereford for adults with learning disabilities.

Irving died suddenly in 1983. Margaret spoke of experiencing a reassuring Presence at that time of great sadness, and described a sense of feeling uplifted and supported.

During the next few years, Margaret explored more political areas, joining her daughter Ruth in visiting peace camps at Greenham Common, and supporting the local women's group activities. It was at this stage that she became a Quaker, finding Quakers a calm and caring community where she could give and receive support.

Margaret was a Samaritan volunteer and a founding member of the Friends of Hereford Samaritans, helping to raise thousands of pounds through fundraising initiatives such as collecting newspaper for recycling and running charity barn dances. Through Samaritans, she met another volunteer, Bill Rowan. Margaret introduced Bill to Quakers, and in 1987 Bill and Margaret were married at Hereford Quaker Meeting House.

Margaret joined Bill at his home in Little Birch, and took on the challenge of living alongside Bill's son Jonny, who had Down's syndrome. Bill had a market gardening business, with which Jonny was able to help. Margaret joined in working with both the market garden and their very beautiful flower garden.

Bill and Margaret were very hospitable, and loved sharing their magnificent garden and excellent cooking. When Hereford Quakers were fundraising for a visit by Ukrainians, after the Chernobyl disaster, Bill and Margaret offered meals in their home.

Margaret was loved and appreciated by everyone at Hereford Meeting. She had a quiet wisdom, unfailing courtesy and a gentle, quick-witted sense of humour that was present in every situation. She served the meeting as overseer and on catering committee, and was actively involved in peace activities. For many years she was responsible for providing flowers for the table on Sunday mornings, and said that picking and bringing the flowers was to her a way of offering prayers.

Margaret and Bill took responsibility for the meeting house garden for many years, and established the tubs of flowers outside 21a King Street, which they kept filled with beautiful flowers all year round.

Margaret and Bill, with Margaret's daughter Ruth and other Samaritans, established Hereford Open Door, which is still running – providing food and support for homeless people in Hereford: accommodation at Christmas and hot breakfasts all year round. Bill and Margaret provided inspiration and administrative ability to get Open Door set up in the first place, and for many years worked devotedly to organise the food, raise funds, collect useful clothing, and show great friendship to the people who came for meals.

Sadly, in due course Jonny died and both Bill's and Margaret's health deteriorated. Margaret was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Eventually, the decision was made to leave their beloved home and move into a shared room in a care home.

After Bill died, Margaret moved into the home of her daughter Janet, but when she needed more care than could be provided at home she moved to Newstead House care home, where she died as peacefully as she had lived.

She wanted to continue to be of service to others even after her death, and – as she had requested – her brain and spinal cord were donated to Parkinson's UK for research into the disease.

Signed on behalf of Southern Marches Area Meeting / CCR y Gororau Deheuol

Held at Ross-on-Wye on 19 July 2019

Stevie Kraye, Clerk

Peter Tregelles Rutter

12 December 1923 – 15 January 2019

Peter, second son of Farley and Hester, was born in Shaftesbury, one of five siblings. He was a lifelong Quaker and pacifist. His values, which included justice, compassion and equality, shaped the whole of his long and eventful life.

His childhood was an idyllic mix of country life – enjoyed with his brothers, sisters and cousins: fishing, cycling and sailing from the family boat house at Sandbanks. He learnt many practical skills on his uncle Cecil Hart's farm at Tisbury. While he was at the farm it was known that he was a very fast runner so he was challenged – "bet you can't catch a rabbit, can you?!" Of course he did!!

He was a linguist with a passion for arts and music. He attended Sidcot Quaker School where, with his height, athleticism and competitive spirit, his talents as a sportsman shone. Most notably he excelled in middle distance athletics and rugby. He joined the choir, played the cello to a high standard and made many lifelong friends. He was set on a career path to join the family firm of solicitors, Rutter and Rutter.

During World War II, his professional studies were interrupted. Aged 18, in the tradition of Quakers, he registered as a conscientious objector. This followed in his father's footsteps, who had served in the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU) in World War I. After training in Birmingham in hospital care and mechanics, he was sent out to Germany in 1944 to coordinate and operate FAU logistics. This support unit role included ferrying injured soldiers from the front line to hospitals.

After the war he stayed in Berlin, billeted with a German family. Here he honed his German and continued to work in the FAU alongside allied forces, ferrying sick people across the various borders in the city. He was involved in the evacuation of Auschwitz concentration camp. Nursing emaciated survivors of the Holocaust made a deep impression on him. Years later two

American women, who were girls he rescued from Auschwitz, came to Shaftesbury to find him and thank him.

He studied in London to gain his articles, then returned to Shaftesbury as a solicitor and eventually became a partner in the family firm. His keen interest in cars was shared by Stephen, his cousin. They toured France in his beloved Lea-Francis sports car, stopping off to climb mountains in the Pyrenees and Alps. His passion for local cultural activities saw him closely involved in the development of Shaftesbury Arts Centre. His keen ear and love of local literature found expression in the renditions of William Barnes poems in dialect. This ability made him sought after by the BBC.

He met Jenny, a young Quaker vet, through Shaftesbury Friends Meeting. They got married in 1954 and started a family. In 1959, as the family grew, they moved to Cottage Green, St James. This would be the cherished family home for nearly 50 years. Peter and Jenny shared a strong interest in world affairs and welcomed visitors from all over the world via the Servas network. Memorable guests became family friends included.

Peter was involved in the civic life in the town. An airfield at Melbury was being established and met with opposition from landowners, and Peter was engaged to help the founders secure planning permission. Always adventurous, he learned to fly a Tiger Moth bi-plane. After surviving a crash in 1962, with his sixth child on the way, he gave up this hobby for safer pursuits.

He proved to be a successful solicitor. He possessed a rare talent for communicating across the social spectrum, while having the creativity and problem-solving ability for advocacy work. His reputation attracted a wide range of clients. Yet he found the desk work, outside of the court room, boring and he hankered for a more practical, outdoor life. His circle of friends was wide, reflecting his passion for literature, the countryside, art, and music.

In his mid-forties he followed his dream and purchased a derelict farm at Stower Row.

He and Jenny embarked on a new career as farmers. Peter's practical mechanical and engineering talents were put to good use as he worked hard to restore the land. Together they established a small dairy herd. The life was all-consuming but rewarding. Peter continued with part-time court work, relinquishing his partnership in the firm. The pair were early adopters of organic farming principles.

As the family grew up and left home to study, Peter and Jenny became more involved in the wider community, and welcomed many people to stay with them on a temporary basis until they found their feet. This included visits from asylum-seekers, with the pair offering them an opportunity to relax, share and enjoy the tranquillity of country life.

On retirement from farming in the early 1990s, Peter became more involved in the Society of Friends. He was sought after for his deep knowledge of pacifism and the Quaker faith. Always a family man at heart, he supported his son and daughters, taking a keen interest and pride in his growing number of talented grandchildren and eventually great grandchildren. The family home was sold in 2007 to downsize. Sadly, Jenny died suddenly, age 81, in 2009. With the love of his life gone and the plans they had together curtailed, he managed to stay positive and outgoing. He stayed open-minded, believing in the innate goodness in people he met.

Always practical and pragmatic, he moved into the town to be in the centre of things, doing away with the need for a car. He renovated Green Cottage in Bimport, to high eco-standards. He was delighted when his granddaughter, her husband and their two young children came to live with him for two years. He loved to help his family – his generosity and lack of materialism were standout qualities. Always an amazing storyteller, with a razor-sharp mind and curiosity, he would regale all comers with his stories and anecdotes across many topics and experiences. He particularly enjoyed a stream of researchers who beat a path to his door to record his

wartime experiences as a conscientious objector. Clips were recorded for 'Songs of Praise', Radio 4 and the 'One Show'.

His failing sight, in particular, limited his many activities, including hedge-laying. Inevitably, many dear friends died. To combat loneliness, he looked out into the community around him. His motivation was to find social opportunities and share his knowledge, resources and talents with others. He welcomed each day and was looking for new purpose in his life. He never stopped appreciating his good fortune and pursued his love of life right up to the day that he died. He was buried alongside his beloved wife, Jenny, and two of their sons at the Quaker Burial Ground at Ashgrove on the Wiltshire/Dorset border. He will be greatly missed, and memories of his love and wisdom are carried.

Signed on behalf of Dorset & South Wiltshire Area Meeting

Held at Bridport on 10 March 2019

Tess James, Clerk

Margaret Slee

20 March 1919 – 25 April 2018

Margaret was born to Edith Temple, recently returned from nursing in Boston USA, and local farmer Oswald Hickson on 20 March 1919, at Barton Moss Farm, Irlam, near Manchester. She grew up in a loving, hardworking Methodist family. A happy child, she loved walks with her mother, sparring with her adored brother Clifford, the Messiah, sung in Irlam every Christmas, and the farm's heavy horses. An early incident reveals Margaret's developing independent spirit.

When she was four years old, on the morning of her pregnant mother's birthday, she went missing. Her family searched desperately. She was nowhere on the farm! Her father noticed a bright speck by the railway a mile away and cycled frantically to find his triumphant daughter clutching a bunch of rare wild pansies "for mother". She had remembered her mother showing them to her the year before, aged three! Her passions for wildlife and for surprising and cheering people lasted her whole lifetime.

Sadly, her mother died later in childbirth, and the baby died too. Her father eventually remarried, and she spent school holidays between the farm and her mother's teetotal, Methodist family. With her cousins Edna, Marjorie and especially Dorothy, she enjoyed a very different world from the hectic life on the farm! There were earnest discussions over mealtimes and lots of singing. She "signed the pledge" at nine years old!

Primary school was a three-mile walk away, and back (to which she attributed her subsequent longevity). She excelled at her studies and eventually won a scholarship to Urmston Grammar School, becoming the first in the Hickson family to go beyond elementary school. To her three-mile walk, she now added a ferry across the ship canal, then a train and bus ride! Margaret loved her studies, especially geography, but she excelled at sports and drama too. Her father built her a small hut, where she could work undisturbed. As a prefect in the sixth

form, her one privilege was permission to use the library in bad weather. Here she found, in a copy of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, horrifying images of draft horses, just like theirs at home, but these were dead, piled up, killed in the First World War. Her shock and horror had a profound effect. She decided that "war is stupid, and I will have nothing to do with it."

A geography teacher, Gerth Aldine Wright, a Quaker from Cambridge, once showed a film of the work of the International Voluntary Service for Peace (IVSP), founded in 1931 by Pierre Ceresole, which impressed her deeply. She later joined and hoped to be able to volunteer in Germany. However, the IVSP required volunteers to be assessed first on their ability to work hard as a team, cope under pressure, etc., so she joined every UK volunteering opportunity available.

She joined the "We say no!" (which became the Peace Pledge Union), went to lectures and visited many different Christian churches. She trained as a teacher in Leeds, specialising in physical education (PE) and modern dance, and started work in South Hulme, a severely depressed area of Manchester, where she always lamented her lost singing voice, damaged while trying to keep discipline. Disappointed that she couldn't register as a conscientious objector, as teaching was a 'reserved occupation', she worked over the holidays for the IVSP as a youth worker, hostel warden, even as a forester.

Margaret finally received accreditation for her IVSP work and was appointed as joint cook at the main London centre, where the first IVSP teams were being trained and equipped for service. Here she met Stan, her husband-to-be, but at that point they barely noticed each other. Stan's contingent left for relief work in Holland and Germany just before the war ended. Some months later, Margaret was dispatched to Germany with a later team.

The IVSP was one of several organisations under the umbrella of COBSRA (Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad), including Quakers, Salvation Army, Girl Guides among

others. Borders had been redrawn to the east of Germany, and as a measure intended to reduce future East–West tensions, Operation Swallow forced millions of ordinary people from their homes with only as much as they could carry, before being driven by lorry, loaded, 2,000 at a time, into trains and permanently relocated in Germany.

IVSP and other COBSRA teams collected them in batches, drove them to the camps and separated off the sick and those that had died on the journey. They then had to supervise the German officials, making sure they met the Allied Government instructions on welfare and billeting onto local German families. Latterly, Stan and Margaret managed to get official permission to set up a pilot IVSP project in Flensburg, the first after the war to include German volunteers.

They returned to England in 1947 to marry and raise a family. Margaret taught for a while in Leeds, but they moved back to Barton Moss, where Stan worked until Jill was born. They managed a fruit farm in Norfolk, where they had pigs and geese and grew flowers, raspberries and strawberries that Margaret would sell, toddler Jill in tow, to local hotels and on the seafront in Sheringham. Here, Diana was born, and Jill caught polio, thankfully recovering, disabled but alive. Two more farm moves brought them eventually to Essex in 1954 and a tenancy of French's Farm near Hempstead, where Rowan completed the family.

Margaret and Stan gave the girls a richly adventurous, colourful childhood on the farm. They shared their stories of work in Germany, their passion for peace and justice, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), United Nations Association (UNA), their fascination for the natural world, conservation projects, peace marches and singing. Their continuing involvement with refugees also brought young Germans to stay at various times. Their relief work experiences led to the Imperial War Museum creating the 'Margaret Slee Archive', currently being developed as an internet resource.

Stan nursed a growing desire to build his own house, but finances were getting tighter. They decided to wind the farm down, while Stan started to plan a conversion of the farm barn and begin probation officer training. This left Margaret to manage three daughters and the farm, while Stan's training forced him to take weekly lodgings in different cities, dashing home to begin the conversion during weekends. Margaret home-schooled the girls, rather reluctantly sending all three to Radwinter School when the time came, fearful that their education would be stunted. Margaret took on home tuition, then secured a post in Castle Camps Primary School, which to her great delight had its own swimming pool. Here she poured her enthusiasm for educating her own children into the lives of generations of village children. She enjoyed 19 unforgettable years.

She had a passion for nature, history, adventure and fitness. She took her class on residential trips to the Peak District; devised original drama productions; insisted the girls had proper hockey boots as well as boys; taught every child in the school to swim; undertook conservation projects. One project was a pond-cleaning and won a national education prize, awarded in London by Johnny Morris.

The girls became day scholars at Friends' School, Saffron Walden, and Margaret and Stan joined the Quaker community. CND demos featured, as well as more work with refugees from Uganda, and asylum-seekers. Among Saffron Walden Quakers, she was delighted to discover Betty West, a fellow volunteer in Germany in the 1940s. They became close friends and shared their love of education and young people, running lively children's meetings together for years. Margaret worried that the Bible and the rich heritage of Christian biblical stories and wisdom would be lost to a generation.

Margaret had six beloved grandchildren – Duncan, Emma, Bijon, Stephen, John, and Anna – and she and Stan increased their travelling adventures as they visited the scattered families, including Rowan in Zimbabwe, finding local Quaker meetings wherever they could.

Stan's health had deteriorated when he left farming, but life continued eventfully. They travelled on a Quakers study trip to Geneva. When Margaret retired from teaching in 1983, she and Stan hoped for a lively retirement – sadly Stan suffered a massive stroke, severely restricting mobility. Margaret's intense support enabled them to enjoy nine more active years before his death in 1992. She divided her time between visiting housebound friends, supporting local activism – CND, UNA, the Saffron Walden Footpath Association, Agenda 21 and working for asylum-seekers – her home and family, and looking after her garden.

She stayed longer in Shetland with Jill and Andrew, when failing sight ended her driving, working on her archives. In August 2017 Emma presented Margaret with Andrew, a first great-grandchild, and took him to visit her just a month before she died! Two last fiery episodes included joining the official consultation team opposing fracking, actually on her beloved Barton Moss, and wheelchairsing herself into the road to block the approach to the Defence & Security Equipment International (DSEI) arms fair at the Excel Centre in London.

Margaret was an activist in every aspect of her life. Her love for plants and animals and the outdoors was instilled into generations of children, along with a strong sense of morality and non-conformity, perhaps fed by her Methodist roots, and an antipathy to the evils of war, confirmed by what she saw at first hand among refugees at home and in Germany. Her action-packed, caring and vivid life continues to influence and inspire those who knew her.

Signed on behalf of Thaxted Area Meeting
Held at Dunmow on 10 March 2019
Gill Parker, Clerk

Rachel Smith

28 April 1934 – 20 July 2018

Dear Rachel,

I think you would be surprised at how much you are missed. You, who never rated yourself very highly, but just plodded away quietly in the background, thinking of everyone but yourself.

You always assumed that with your profound deafness you were a great nuisance to everyone, needing to have ministry recorded, and sometimes ordinary conversation repeated. Not so. Quite the opposite, in fact. You taught us to be good listeners, clear speakers, with a gentle cross face when we forgot, as we so frequently did.

As convenor of overseers, we were all astonished at your in-depth knowledge of individual people and their situations, and the lengths you went to in your personal efforts to help. You were a regular and frequent visitor to people in hospital, the housebound, and many others. Oversight, or care of others, came naturally to you, and your life expressed Isaac Penington's words when he bids us "help one another up with a tender hand".

As well as oversight, you served your local meeting well by your regular presence at regional and area meetings, and by bringing back accurate reports.

It is your gentle, musical voice that we miss most, Rachel. Your humour and your wise advice never thrust at people, just there if asked for. Your humility humbled us. You never thought your contributions were worth anything much.

You were interested in so much! Love of poetry was evident in your presence at the meeting's poetry group and in your choice of poems to be read at your funeral.

Your regular articles in the 'Noticing Nature' column of *Bosham Life* reflected your concern for the environment, and following your death the editors wrote:

"It is with great sadness that we have to report the death of Rachel Smith. She has been a regular contributor to *Bosham Life* for many years, having written well over 100 articles for the magazine in her own monthly column, 'Noticing Nature'. This was always interesting and well researched, and for many readers was the highlight of the magazine. We will miss her, and send our condolences to her friends and family."

When area meeting reflected on your life, a Friend ministered that she was blessed to have known you. She quoted *Advices & queries* no. 7, saying how relevant it was to your contribution to our meetings:

"Be aware of the spirit of God at work in the ordinary activities and experience of your daily life. Spiritual learning continues throughout life, and often in unexpected ways. There is inspiration to be found all around us, in the natural world, in the sciences and arts, in our work and friendships, in our sorrows as well as in our joys."

(From *Advices & queries* 7, *Quaker faith & practice*)

Thank you, Rachel. You were much loved.

Your many Friends at Chichester Quaker Meeting

Signed on behalf of Sussex West Area Meeting

Held at Littlehampton on 18 May 2019

Kathryn Pearce, Clerk

Claire Watkins

12 August 1942 – 1 September 2018

Mourning Claire means being sad, because we know that we will never again feel the changing of the atmosphere in a room when she entered. We mourn somebody whom we never saw angry. An American who spoke the most pleasing English, who always had time for you, who made you feel wanted, appreciated, who did things calmly, efficiently, thoroughly without letting one feel any effort. She died in the same way, being calm, dignified, fully present, thinking of the visitor's comfort. She was, in whatever she did, perfect, and she did not let you feel it. And when she sang, you heard an angel sing.

The grace of God was present in Claire's life: we could all take example from her graceful life.

Claire Lucille Watkins was born in Mineola, Long Island, New York. Her unusual American family included missionaries to China and the Middle East. Her great-grandfather George Post founded the medical school of what is now the University of Beirut. He also wrote the first botanical survey of Lebanon. Claire's grandfather, Wilfred McIlvane Post, also a medical missionary, worked for a time in the Florence Nightingale hospital in Scutari. Claire's mother was born and grew up in Turkey. She met Claire's father, Gordon Ross, at theological college in New York. They married and settled in Kentucky, where he became professor of philosophy and religion at Berea College. As an ordained minister, he was active as a student counsellor, and conducted marriages for many local couples.

Claire grew up in Berea, a small college town on Daniel Boone's Wilderness Road, which had opened a path through the mountains for early settlers to travel west, a town of white picket fences, God-fearing folks, and no alcohol (yes, the whole county is still 'legally dry'). She would hang out with the kids and jive at the ice cream parlour, occasionally visit the café run by her dad's friend Harland Sanders, before he was made a Kentucky Colonel and founded

Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC). An elderly neighbour had a horse called Bess, which Claire cared for, rode and treated as her own.

At college Claire did a degree in English, worked as a counsellor at a children's summer camp in Colorado, and became immersed in the folk traditions of Appalachia: singing, dancing and playing the dulcimer. She was a member of a team of traditional dancers sponsored by the State Department for a six-week tour of Latin American countries. The next year they were invited to dance at the White House, where she met (and shook hands with) President John F Kennedy. For representing her state, Claire was also honoured as a Kentucky Colonel.

After graduating, Claire set out on a summer trip to Europe, including visits to English cousins. Deciding she wanted to stay longer, she got a job at Cecil Sharpe House in Regent's Park, the centre of English folk culture. She sang and danced at many festivals and folk clubs. She then planned a trip to Scandinavia and Russia. On a train from Helsinki to Leningrad she met her future husband and lifelong partner, Barry Watkins, who was working in Finland.

After returning to England, Barry joined the staff at Leighton Park School. He and Claire were married on 8 October 1966 in her parish church in London. They became involved with Quaker ethos and values through the life of the school. Claire continued performing, from time to time, including a spot singing solo with dulcimer accompaniment at the Royal Albert Hall.

They bought a tiny house, 10ft 6in wide, with one cold tap, no heating and an outside toilet (a project). After three years Helen was born and they moved to a larger semi nearby. Then a year in Cardiff, where Barry did a master's degree and Claire gave birth to Sophie.

Nine years after arriving at Leighton Park, Barry moved to a job at Keswick Hall College in Norwich and they started a new life in rural Norfolk. They found another semi-derelict project, an old house with two acres of land. This was where the 'Good Life' years began.

Claire gradually accumulated ponies, goats, ducks and chickens, dogs and cats, bees and a pig called Mortimer. The children were late to school when horses escaped, goats gave birth or the old blue van broke down... Claire was also the part-time secretary of a local village school, then City College Norwich. She was a key member of three singing groups, her book group, gardening club...

Claire and Barry attended Goat Lane Meeting for many years before being part of a small group to set up a new South Norfolk meeting in Wymondham in 2001. After decades as attenders, this seemed like the right time to seek membership, applying together online and singing together (when invited) during their application visit. They both took on many roles for their local and area meetings. Among her jobs, Claire was, for many years, treasurer for both local and area meetings and an area meeting trustee. Under her editorship, the area meeting newsletter often started with a joyful celebration of the nature outside her window, reminding all of the season we had reached. Even the ladybirds that got into her clothing during a meeting in the Bridewell meeting house were returned to their own environment without unneeded excitement.

Wymondham Meeting's survival and growth owed much to Claire's quiet, organised approach: without fuss, rooms were booked, money managed, and supplies and postage paid for, all in right ordering. Her presentation of accounts was gentle, informative and helped the meeting to discern where we could put funds for best expression of Quaker values.

The girls grew up. Both went to Cardiff for their degrees. Helen had treatment for cancer, then did a master's in London and a doctorate in Vancouver. Sophie went to teach in Kenya. Claire and Barry enjoyed visiting them both. Trains, boats, planes, camping safaris, snorkelling over coral gardens, but also tiger-watching and riding elephants in India, and driving across the USA in Aunt Jane's lovely old Lincoln. The big adventure though was round the world (largely) by train. They extended their journey

of 43 years earlier, from Moscow across Siberia, Mongolia, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Australia, New Zealand. In Australia, New Zealand and the US they visited (and often stayed overnight in) many Quaker meeting houses, sharing greetings and fellowship with distant Friends.

In 2010 Sophie also needed treatment for cancer. Two years later it returned and she came home. She had to leave her horses, dog and cats behind, but here she adopted Toto, a Serbian hound rescued as a street dog from Romania and given a new life as a loving member of our family. Sophie died in 2013.

Claire had a huge zest for life, living adventurously, taking the rough with the smooth, always positive, always busy, singing, making things, working for many organisations, particularly the Quakers, and keeping a welcoming and loving home. The hundreds of messages she received in her last months show how others saw her – calm, gentle, graceful, honest, warm, loyal, serene.

Signed on behalf of Norfolk & Waveney Area Meeting

Held at Norwich on 19 May 2019

Gill Smith, Clerk

Allan N. Wright

1932 – 27 November 2011

The writer first encountered Allan Wright some 30 years ago, when he turned up to be interviewed for the post of surveyor to Six Weeks Meeting, the body of trustees of which I was then secretary. Allan was appointed, and for the next ten years I worked closely with him, caring for all the Quaker properties within the then London and Middlesex General Meeting area, except for Friends House and William Penn House.

It was quickly realised that he was a very strong-minded Friend and a man of almost demonic energy. It was routine for Allan to leave home in Clunbury, Shropshire, at around 5am, reach his office desk in Jordans at around 9am, and get to a meeting at Friends House at around midday. Declining lunch, he would go on to spend the afternoon visiting a couple of properties needing his attention, attend a meeting house premises committee during the early evening, and get back to Jordans at about 10pm. After three such days he would leave London at about 8pm and get back to Clunbury to see what his sons had been up to in the family building business before falling into his bed. Such was his devotion to the well-being of his beloved Society of Friends.

Allan was very proud of the fact that his ancestors had heard George Fox preach, had been converted and then persecuted; "were of the stuff of martyrs" in fact. There followed 350 years of continuous involvement in the life of the Society. There seemed to be cousins and kinsfolk throughout the land. According to Allan, at a "clan" gathering some years previously about 220 turned up, and the family story is told in the book *Yeomen of the Fens*.

Allan was, in a way, a Quaker dinosaur in that he was a tradesman! Born in Croydon, he was sent to Friends School, Sibford, and on leaving was apprenticed in his grandfather's building firm, where his father also worked. He spent time gaining experience in all the trades and studying

in the evenings. His great love became work in wood, as can be seen in the fine staircase in his own house, and in Ludlow Meeting House. To gain wider experience he moved on to larger London contractors, including Costain's, and, with his eventual surveying qualifications gained, rose to project management roles.

Meanwhile, on the retirement of his grandfather, Allan's father moved the family firm from Croydon to Jordans, and when Allan eventually returned on the retirement of his father, he moved the firm to south Shropshire. After some years of running it in tandem with his surveying role, the building side was gradually closed down.

As befits a Quaker with energy to spare, Allan's second passion was fast cars, and in younger days he raced both on and off the track with the likes of Stirling Moss, and was also a lifelong member of the Jowett Drivers Club. He was a fast yet safe driver, but elderly Friends have been seen to emerge ashen-faced from a journey with him to a meeting at which they were in danger of arriving late. They were not late! But the Friends' participation in the business was somewhat muted as they contemplated the journey home!

There always seemed to be several Jowett Jupiters in pieces in the Clunbury outbuildings, and eventually one beautifully restored model virtually ready for the road. Alas, Allan's final illness prevented him from enjoying the fruits of his labour of love.

Allan was a firm F(f)riend. He gave freely of his time and energy, both to his friends and to the Society. As we were reminded at his funeral, he did not confine himself to the repair of buildings; the repair of lives also concerned him, a service he performed quietly and unobtrusively. But he could also be single-minded and forthright in dealing with more public matters, and this meant that he was not always easy or comfortable to be with.

He was a master in his chosen sphere of work, and resulting from his many years of service as a member of the Advisory Committee on Property there are meeting houses throughout

the length and breadth of the land that have been enhanced by his vision, planning and practical knowledge. If the changes that needed to be made meant a battle with the local premises committee, then Allan would enter the fray with directness and firmness, as a Quaker who spoke the truth in love without flinching or compromise.

The same words were said of him at his funeral as were said of Sir Christopher Wren: "If you seek his monument, look around you." But if just one memorial to him were to be selected, then it must be the magnificent Arts Centre at Sidcot School, to the design and building of which he devoted literally hundreds of hours of time and thousands of miles of travel, without thought for the cost to himself in terms of finance or his declining health.

The whole thrust and purpose of his life may be summed up in his final journey in August 2011 to Yearly Meeting in Canterbury – a journey that, as his GP later confided, amazed her. Though very ill, he was determined to participate in a fringe meeting, recording his passionate concern for the stewardship of our financial and property resources. Five days later he finally succumbed to hospitalisation, from which he never returned to his home.

That was Allan: a committed Friend, following his truth to the end.

Signed on behalf of Southern Marches Area Meeting / CCR y Gororau Deheuol

Held at Ross-on-Wye on 19 July 2019

Stevie Krayner, 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.

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