

## **Memorial Minutes**

### **2021 Annual Sessions of Illinois Yearly Meeting**

#### **Pat Berg**

Patricia Berg, died early in the morning on June 19, 2020, after a long battle with the debilitating after-effects of the COVID-19 virus. She was unconscious on a ventilator when she died. She was receiving comfort care, and showed no signs of anxiety, pain, or suffering. Her daughter, Ella, wrote "My mom was a caring person, a former nurse, always involved in social justice, anti-war, fair elections, and environmental activism. In recent years, she had developed dementia, and that made her vulnerable to a more severe case of COVID-19." Pat was a member of St. Louis Friends Meeting for over 30 years.

#### **Daniel A. Dresner (1942-2020)**

Daniel August Dresner passed away on June 9, 2020 at his home in Beverly Shores, Indiana at the age of 78. He was born on December 30, 1941 to Miriam Stein Dresner (later Buhman) and Bernard Milton Dresner. He received his undergraduate degree from Roosevelt University in Chicago. Later he attended Stanford University in California where he received his master's degree (1969-1973) and nearly completed a PhD in marine biology at the Hopkins Marine Station in Pacific Grove on the shore of Monterey Bay.

He found his passion teaching biology and chemistry to high school students at North Salinas High School, California, from 1983 to 2001. He had much to contribute in knowledge, and in love and passion for drawing out the best in young people as students, and for encouraging their inquiry into living life in its entirety. He often took his classes to San Francisco to attend concerts and other cultural events. He also took them on field trips, for example, to Point Reyes National Park to learn about earthquake geology and biology. When Dan was a high school teacher at North Salinas High, there were many students whose lives he touched, many of whom went on to have very successful careers and credited Dan for it.

Dan had many interests. He loved the ocean and nature in general and talked passionately about it. At various times in his life, he engaged in woodworking, stained glass making, and playing guitar and piano. He loved music, especially classical music, and was always involved with the music community wherever he lived. He had a sensitive nature and enjoyed engaging with those around him, including getting to know staff members of the restaurants where he was recognized as a regular customer. In the words of a former student who became a close friend, "He loved fine food, sweet getaways in unique places and making important occasions special."

Dan moved to Beverly Shores, Indiana when his mother's health was failing so that he could care for her. There he joined a group of men, "The Wise Guys," who discussed all kinds of cultural, social and political issues. One member of the group remarked that "Dan was a voice of reason, and an advocate for understanding of differing points of view." Soon after The Wise Guys disbanded, a member of Duneland Friends Meeting invited Dan to attend the meeting in Valparaiso Indiana. Not being a morning person, he rarely attended meeting for worship, but he found a home in Duneland's bi-monthly Bible Study where he was able to discuss temporal and spiritual issues at the intersection of Quakerism, Christianity, and his Jewish heritage. He came to embrace the Quaker testimonies and held a vision of a compassionate world where people could love one another in spite of their differences.

Dan and his mother were supporters of Save The Dunes. Dan supported other community groups, including the Michigan City Chamber Music Festival. Dan is greatly missed by all whose lives were touched by his caring and inquisitive nature.

### **Ichiro Matsuda (1931-2020)**

Ichiro Matsuda, fondly known as "Ich" among his Friends at the Columbia MO Meeting and widely known and celebrated as a runner/used car ("the 1931 Model, Made in Japan, Still Runs") was born on January 20, 1931 in Kagoshima, Japan and died peacefully in Columbia, MO on April 29, 2020.

Though born into an eminent and comfortable samurai family, due to a series of family tragedies and the experiences of WWII, Ichiro was forced to quit school and go to work at the age of fourteen, first as a laborer and then as a translator for the U.S. Occupation Forces. Thus began an engagement with Americans and the Christian faith that would come to define his life's journey. After an educational journey that was both practical (chemistry, math, optometry) and deeply spiritual (theology) he embarked on a diverse group of occupations (working as a pastor, optometrist, doing mission work abroad and among under-serviced populations in the US, teaching Japanese in public schools, delivering flowers) all of which allowed Ich to express his core need to be of service to others. Ichiro's professional life was intertwined with getting married and starting and growing a family, including raising three very accomplished children and enjoying seven grandchildren and three great-grand-children.

A pivotal milestone in his faith journey was being introduced to Mennonite and Quaker faiths during the Vietnam War. He walked with the Buddhist monks as they traveled through St. Louis protesting the war. He had a monk like playfulness and gentleness as he taught children how to write their names in Japanese, use chopsticks, or fold a paper crane. He gave away thousands of peace cranes teaching anyone who had the time, how to make them. Besides teaching math and science, he taught Japanese arts to children at the MO Botanical gardens for many summers. They learned to arrange flowers, write haiku, make kites, do calligraphy, and sing folk songs.

Ichiro began attending the St. Louis Friend's Meeting in the early 70's and served as the live-in caretaker for 12 years while also being pastor to a small community of Japanese Christians living in St. Louis. At meeting he met Sandy Feitshans, whom he would marry in 1978. After the Matsuda's headed West to Columbia, a St. Louis Friend wrote, "we really appreciate the way you shared your Japanese heritage and sensibility with us. We are blooming as a meeting- in no small part because of the devoted tilling that you did when you were here." The couple's association with Columbia Friends Meeting began in 1994 when the Matsudas moved to Columbia so that Sandy could begin teaching occupational therapy at the University of Missouri.

Ichiro's life's journey testifies to the beautiful qualities that Ichiro revealed to his friends in Columbia: kindness, humor, humility and a deep abiding faith in God – qualities that are also reflected in his signature motto from Micah 6:8: "What does the Lord require of you but to act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." When asked how he would encourage another person's faith journey, he said, "Be awake and follow where God leads you." Near the end of his life, he said his goal was to "be present." When dementia and illness took away his ability to speak, he wrote his last words: "love, love, love everyone." He ran a good race and finally traded in his body, the "1931 model," for the freedom to fly home as "those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary" (Isaiah 55:5). Ichiro's life and person radiated the value of keeping it simple, and simply practicing what you believe in a selfless and whole-hearted way.

### **Barbara Matt (1927-2020)**

Barbara Jipson Matt died May 9, 2020, in Bettendorf, Iowa, after a long illness. She was born in Oelwein, Iowa, on March 24, 1927. From a young age, Barbara developed an abiding commitment to peace and social justice, which she carried through her life.

In 1961 Barbara married Joseph Matt, a research chemist in Chicago. She was a questing spirit and willing to explore—explore cultures, faiths, herself—and to try new things. In Chicago, she embraced the excitement, diversity, and variety of the city and was an activist, marching for civil rights in the 1950s and 60s, in anti-nuclear protests in the 1980s, and in protests against both Iraq wars. She attended her last protest in her wheelchair, proudly holding a sign declaring "90-year-old for Science (It helped me reach this age)." She also volunteered for many political campaigns.

Barbara didn't like what she termed "pat" answers or "pat" endings to stories and poems. If something was tied up too neatly, it struck her as unrealistic, too easy. Her taste in bumper stickers reflected this sensibility. One of her favorites was "There is no answer. Seek it lovingly." Another was "I don't know and neither do you." She was willing to embrace ambiguity and to value it, as well.

Barbara was incredibly empathic and a wonderful listener. This attitude reflected her belief in one of Quakerism's core tenets—that there is that of God in every man and that there is a light within each of us. Everyone who knew Barbara was fortunate because she had a little light (actually more than a little) and she did let it shine.

Barbara is survived by her daughters and their husbands, Elizabeth "Betsy" Matt Turner (Jonathan) of Bettendorf, IA and Susan Jipson Matt (Luke Fernandez) of Ogden, UT, and grandsons Alexander and Joshua of Bettendorf.

### **Glenn Neumann (1950-2020)**

Glenn Neumann was born August 20, 1950 to Earl R. Neumann and Betty Jean Haworth Neumann, and grew up in West Chicago, Illinois. He was the middle of three siblings with older brother Bob and younger sister Becky. Glenn had recently turned 70 when he died on September 29, 2020 of a stroke in Louisville, Colorado. Becky and Mennonite Pastor Randy, Becky's pastor and Glenn's friend, were at his side playing classical music as he died.

While Glenn took several years in deciding on a career path, his explorations centered on service professions: ministry, social work, teaching and library science. In each instance, he prepared academically, earning a BA in Education, MSW in social work and MA in Library Science. Ultimately, library science captured his focus and in this he worked until retirement. Initially he served as reference librarian for a state prison located south of Chicago, later transferring to the City of Chicago library system, retiring from the Harold Washington Library.

Glenn was a researcher! He researched family history, opera, and any topic which might arise during a conversation. It was always fun to converse, hear his most recent findings, and see what topic would send him to his trusty computer for more information that day. Another aspect of his research led him to delve into his own psyche. He found that writing his thoughts led him to greater self-understanding and clarity. Eventually, he wrote opinion pieces regarding current issues; one of these essays was published in Louisville area newspapers.

Glenn was quiet in groups, but he listened thoughtfully and non-judgmentally. He displayed empathy and would respond thoughtfully in more intimate settings. He enjoyed a laugh, and had an infectious, catching giggle. He was generous and caring: Glenn wrote to and conversed weekly with a man in a New Hampshire prison for over six years, helping the man obtain items to make his prison life more bearable. He donated funds to stranger because he heard of this man's financial difficulties during the pandemic. He gifted another friend with his new favorite tea, and provided a tea pot as well. These

are small, personal indications of his generosity. On a larger scale, he championed environmental causes including the Audubon Society, American Friends Service Committee activities, and the Environmental Law and Policy Center.

We have Glenn's own words about his spiritual journey shared with Northside, "How would I characterize my spiritual life? I would say I've adopted an eclectic system of belief that incorporates my Protestant past; influences from Catholic traditions such as reading authors, being baptized by the Holy Spirit, and attending a Catholic pentecostal service in the '70s; following various New Age authors and ideas; practicing in the Quaker faith for 20 -25 years; and taking a strong interest in Buddhist beliefs and practices finding them a compliment to my Christian practice." Over his adult lifetime, Glenn attended mindfulness retreats sponsored by various branches of Buddhism, and for a time attended synagogue with a friend. However, the most consistent focus for his spiritual life was with the Quakers. We benefitted from his presence within Meeting!

Not only did he make an effort to refine his spiritual search internally, but he put his faith into action: During his years with Northside, he fulfilled many positions, including archivist, treasurer, and as a member of nominating and ministry and counsel committees. He faithfully responded to inquiries about Quakers via Northside's website, served on support committees, visited Friends who were hospitalized or in rehabilitation, and attended Friends for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Concerns (FLGBTQC) gatherings.

In his later years, Glenn developed cataracts and glaucoma which led to the loss of most of his eyesight. Northside Meeting formed a support committee to take him to doctor's appointments and help in other small ways. Ultimately, he moved to Louisville, Colorado to be near his sister. He worked at building a new community around himself to meet his spiritual needs, and found a path to further understanding and growth.

Glenn is greatly missed by his F/friends because of the quality of his life shared with us. His being was filled with kindness, spirituality and intellectual curiosity.

### **Judy Richards (1940-2020)**

Judith Mathis Richards, known affectionately to us as "Judy," was born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1940. She died peacefully on Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2020, in her daughter's home.

Judy's family moved to Columbia, Missouri when she was young, and she graduated from Hickman High School in 1958. Two years later, she married her high school sweetheart, Lon Davis Richards. They had two daughters, Kirsten Richards and Regan Richards. Lon served as a Captain in the US Air Force, and died in 1968 in Vietnam. Judy never remarried, saying he was the love of her life.

Judy went on to raise her daughters by herself. She earned an MA in art from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1971, and she was a wonderful artist, crafter, and seamstress. She was also a lifelong Girl Scout and was active in the American Red Cross, Locust Grove Baptist Cemetery Association, and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, in addition to our Friends Meeting.

Judy shared so many talents with our meeting. Her own experience as a single parent inspired her to give young parents quiet meeting time by teaching at First Day School. She planned lovely lessons and outings using simple, natural materials. Teachers used her Friendly Play creations for telling stories of early Friends. Children learned about plants and natural remedies for things like poison Ivy on hikes through the woods with Judy. Judy often led Family Fun Night art activities, for instance using natural dyes to make traditional Polish Easter eggs called "pisanki." Judy also played the piano by ear and accompanied us when singing Christmas carols.

Judy also served as Recording Clerk for many years. She was also a keen listener, observer and editor. She listened intently and labored to capture the sense of the meeting in her written minutes as

recording clerk. She was steeped in Quaker process and history of our meeting. She also used her writing skills to help those outside the meeting. She worked with many international students helping them edit and complete manuscripts for their degrees in her professional work.

Judy used her artistic talent in our meeting. She noticed quiet beauty and painted it in lovely watercolor landscapes. Some of her original drawings were inspirational and informative in the vision of our future meeting house.

In Judy's later years, illness made it difficult for her to stay active, but she continued to serve our meeting with determination and humor. Judy, we miss you dearly.

### **Eileen Rooney (1946-2020)**

Eileen Rooney was a great gift to her family, friends, community, and especially to the Quakers. She died May 11, 2020.

Born in 1946 she was a devoted Catholic through most of her life. Commitment to her faith led her to join the School Sisters of Notre Dame in 1964 where she remained for more than 30 years. Her roles included teaching high school math and sixth grade, serving as Director of Religious Education, and eventually working in the payroll division. In 1991 she began working at LMI Aerospace. After withdrawing from her religious community, she continued her spiritual search, and was led to Quakers. She became a member in 2017.

She found that the silence of Quaker meeting allowed the deep faith and spiritual depth she had developed as a Catholic to flourish. She was one of those people who brought spiritual blessings to meeting and helped deepen the worship. She was a woman of much love and compassion and touched many lives. She served on Ministry and Caring, worked with Friends Shelter, helped with First Day School, and participated in a spiritual direction group. One of her deepest ministries was to members who were sick and dying. She spent many days with them and sometimes stayed late in the night.

She accepted the position of rising clerk of the meeting, but shortly after assuming that role, she was diagnosed with a terminal illness. During the time of her illness, she continued her spiritual journey and often spoke of feeling called to "being rather than doing." While many members of our Meeting ministered to her physical needs, she also ministered to our spiritual needs.

We are grateful for the gift of her presence, and she is missed.

### **Burke Shipley (1923-2021)**

We honor the life of Burke Shipley, born in 1923 and died April 7, 2021. He was a member of OPFM since the 1960s and our faithful Treasurer for many decades. He acted on his concerns, primarily around the Quaker Peace Testimony, He felt especially deeply about conscientious objection to war and the abolition of the death penalty in Illinois. His actions included steadfast personal and political witness and advocacy (including letter writing, letters to the editor, and repeated trips to lobby in Springfield), and we were always encouraged to add our voices. Quaker House in Fayetteville, NC (which counsels Fort Bragg military service members who are questioning their role in the military) was unknown to most of us when he suggested we support it; ever since then we have included it in our annual donations. We will miss his gentle humor, intelligence, and wisdom in helping us discern complex issues and in participating in all aspects of the life of the Meeting.

## Sylvia Spotts (1936-2020)

Sylvia Kelsey Spotts, 84, died comfortably Dec. 22, 2020, in Columbia, Mo. from respiratory issues caused by COVID-19. Sylvia Kelsey was born in Hartford, Connecticut on April 14, 1936 and raised in North Canton, Connecticut. Her parents, Luman and Dorothea, were artists, and members of West Hartford Monthly Meeting. Her sister, Sally, still lives in Connecticut.

Sylvia attended Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's George High School, in Pennsylvania. She took a train there and back home two times a year for breaks. George School students volunteered for "week-end work camps" in the slum areas of Philadelphia. Sylvia was much inspired by the camp director, David Richie, a noted Quaker activist.

Sylvia graduated from Hartt College of Music in Hartford, Connecticut with a degree in music education. There she met Carleton Spotts, a cellist who played in the U.S. Air Force band. On a tour of duty in Connecticut, he bought a cello from a woman who then also introduced him to Sylvia. Sylvia's father "was elated [about Carle courting Sylvia] because he loved the cello." Sylvia also decided to play the cello. Sylvia and Carle married two years later on June the 7th of 1958 at West Hartford Friends Meeting.

A couple of years later the newlyweds moved to Columbia where Carle had accepted a job as professor of music at the University of Missouri. He taught cello and became part of MU's Esterhazy Quartet, which played locally and as far away as South America. Their children were born -- Peter in summer, 1961, and Dave in winter, 1964.

Sylvia taught orchestra classes at West and Jeff Junior High Schools, played in the MU Orchestra, and taught countless cello and piano lessons. Sylvia enjoyed writing about natural and philosophical topics and wrote poems. She and Carle maintained a garden, and Sylvia also worked in a commercial greenhouse.

Sylvia's simplicity, kindness, understanding and respect were well-matched by a wry and mischievous wit and a ready, sparkling laugh. She valued Quakers' "dedication, honesty, caring, and [practice of] searching the way." She helped other Quakers promote peace and social justice, and with community outreach. Sylvia and Carle, John Schuder, and others established the Columbia Friends Meeting. One of the Friends' first meeting places was the Spotts' home on Donnelly Avenue. Sylvia played the cello for Christmas caroling.

After 56 years of marriage, their time together ended when Carle's health concerns quickly worsened, and he died in the spring of 2014. Even though parted in the material sense, Sylvia felt she would always be with Carle, mentioning an early Quaker idea: "We are still married, for one of us is still living. It's good when you can let go of someone you love and celebrate the memories." Now that Sylvia has died, we, her Friends, strive to remember Sylvia the way she remembered Carle.

The Columbia Friends Meeting's newsletter has printed many of Sylvia's poems and essays. Her writing has been published in *Among Friends* and a few literary journals as well. The poem, "Portrait," from her book, *Quaker Cellist*, describes Sylvia's and Carle's marriage.

Sylvia is survived by her sister, Sally; numerous nieces and nephews; sons Peter (Dawn Warren) and Dave (Martha); three grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

### Portrait by Sylvia Spotts, 1987

The years were young, and he came to her when she wasn't looking, invading her life with a kind of desperate sincerity – as though he knew something she didn't.

They were young, back then when he came to her like that, from nowhere, climbing the sky; vigorous, fresh, and innocent – with an empty canvas spread before him.

And the years were good, with challenges, trials; fulfillments and longings; disappointments.

A mix of elations, despairs – caught up together in the surging journey.

And the canvas filled with colors: reds and yellows; blues and greens; and the colors in-between, not one or another – spreading, liquid and fine, on the surface.

And the years were kind; they tumbled on softer now; suffused and brushed with a kind of deepened beauty – a fullness born of tranquil balance.

And the canvas breathes tender, with grace. They're old, now. Side by side slowly, hand in hand --they walk together down the sky.

### **Gertrude (Trudy) Wood**

St. Louis Meeting was given sad news that Gertrude (Trudy) Wood had passed on January 29, 2021. Her daughter (Margaret) sent a card stating that Trudy suffered a stroke on October 25th and was hospitalized for five days. She returned home and tried to regain her health for 3 months. Trudy celebrated her 100th birthday with close family on October 4, 2020.

Both Trudy and Ed Wood were deeply committed to the Meeting for decades. Trudy's warmth and her love of children was expressed in the Meeting through teaching First Day School.

Trudy was truly conscientious and confirmed that the independent SLFM became affiliated with ILYM from her mother-in-laws (Verna Wood) note. Trudy served on many committees including membership clerk, kitchen, library, newsletter, Burundi Sunday snacks and First Day School. Also, she wrote a history of our Meeting which is in the library.

Trudy was the mother of the Meeting, never the boss, but always the mother or big sister, there for whatever needed to be done. She was the kind of Quaker that we all strive to be and her kind lovely Spirit will live on in our hearts forever.