

Memorial Minutes

2022 Annual Sessions, Illinois Yearly Meeting

Jeanette H. Baker (1932-2021)

Alice Jeanette Harcourt Baker, 89, died on August 4, 2021, in Burlington, Vermont. Jeanette was born on March 25, 1932, to Dr. Allan Kenneth Harcourt and Alice Louise Shaw Harcourt in Indianapolis, Indiana, where she and her brother grew up. Indianapolis First Friends Meeting was her spiritual home as a child, and she went on to graduate from Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. After being introduced by mutual friends, she married Clyde N. Baker, Jr., in October, 1955, the last couple married at First Friends Meeting's location at 13th and Alabama Streets.

Jeanette and Clyde spent most of their married life in Chicago's northern suburbs, where they raised their three children, Mark, Lynn, and Glen. They subsequently welcomed six grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Sadly, Lynn predeceased Jeanette in 2015 as did her grandson Mark-Allan Baker, Jr., in 2010.

Extended summer visits to their property on Lake Champlain, Vermont, were a tradition for the Bakers. Clyde has spent time there every year of his life, and relatives live on the same road and nearby. Jeanette enjoyed being at the cottage, and this is where she spent her final days before a brief hospitalization.

A lifelong Quaker, Jeanette transferred her membership to Evanston Friends Meeting in 1967, when the Bakers moved to Evanston, Illinois. Over many decades, Jeanette was continuously and deeply engaged in Evanston Meeting. She served in many capacities, including several terms as Clerk of the Meeting and participation at some point in every committee. She clerked the First Day School Committee and actively engaged in its education programs for young persons. Following her belief in the importance of the religious education of children, Jeanette enrolled at age fifty-six in Garrett Evangelical Seminary in Evanston and earned a Master's Degree of Religious Education.

Beyond the meetinghouse doors, Jeanette was Evanston Meeting's delegate to Interfaith Action of Evanston for more than a decade and received its Vision Keeper Award in 2014. She also served on the administrative councils of affiliated yearly meetings and was the monthly meeting's representative to quarterly meeting, FCNL, AFSC, Evanston Council of Churches, and other organizations.

Jeanette held several positions dealing with the education of children, particularly those with disabilities and mental problems. She was cited for her work in open housing on Chicago's North Shore and, over time, opened her home to thirty-two people from other countries and three people with serious problems.

Known for her beautiful voice, Jeanette employed it in varied capacities—she traveled internationally as a member of the Community Renewal Chorus, beautifully sang “Oh, Holy Night” at Christmas Eve services, and arranged carol singing and visitation with elderly or homebound members of the meeting. Along another artistic path, Jeanette liked to paint in watercolor or oil, generally depicting flowers, houses, and landscapes.

Jeanette tended and collected people, with a special place for family members. For many years, she and Clyde made annual trips to Florida and to the southwest, where they visited former members of Evanston Meeting, friends of hers from Indianapolis, and elementary school friends of Clyde's, among others. Once you were a friend, she retained you forever.

Without doubt, Jeanette took seriously the guidance found in James 1:22: “Be doers of the Word and not hearers only.” Jeanette is survived by her beloved husband and sweetheart Clyde, two sons, five grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews. Memorial services in Burlington, Vermont, Evanston, Illinois, and Indianapolis, Indiana, gave witness to the many lives she touched and graced during her years on earth.

Ellen Baranowski (1956-2022)

Ellen Baranowski was a member of Urbana-Champaign Friends Meeting, an outstanding teacher, amazing artist, lover of nature, and a giving friend. Ellen earned a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago and a Master's Degree in Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Ellen spent the majority of her teaching career at Kenwood Elementary School. In 1995, she worked in the BOAST after-school program at Kenwood, which provided science enrichment for academically at-risk children. In 2001, she received the Women of Distinction Award from the Girl Scouts-Green Meadows Council for her outstanding work as director of the program.

In 2000, Ellen began teaching second and third grade classes, while continuing to direct the BOAST program. Several Friends volunteered in her classroom over the years and witnessed her creative and active educational approach. She showed a remarkable understanding and respect for children who struggled both academically and socially. She found ways to incorporate her love of nature, art, and peacemaking in her classroom and to create hands-on learning projects. In 2005, the Champaign-Urbana Schools Foundation awarded Ellen a grant for a project integrating history, science, and writing into her classroom.

Over a period of several summers beginning in 2002, Ellen and a friend traveled to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota where they participated in work camps, organized by Project Lakota. Under the care of St. Louis Friends Meeting, Project Lakota partnered with non-profit agencies to build new homes and rehab others for the Lakota Nation. Although federal loans were available for first-time home buyers, many individuals needed assistance in filling out applications for the loans. Ellen and a friend donated their van, which served as a private space for volunteer financial advisors to meet with the applicants. Over the years, Ellen collected and delivered thousands of books to the Oglala Community College.

Ellen's love of nature led her to explore other places, near and far. Fear did not slow her down. Sometimes she traveled with a friend, camping in her tiny Scamp trailer; other times she was happy to go by herself. Although she enjoyed researching possible destinations, she allowed her curiosity to lead her. She often ended up in fascinating places and had wonderful adventures. She could sit for hours in one place, watching Monarch butterflies mate or waiting patiently in case a bear or a wolf should appear.

After Ellen retired in 2018, she spent her summers as a volunteer in national, state, and local parks, including the Gila Cliff Dwellings in New Mexico, Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in Nevada, Middle Fork River Forest Preserve in Champaign County, Illinois, and Clam Gulch State Recreation Area in Alaska. Her duties ranged from cleaning toilets to serving as a camp host. Closer to home, she completed training for the Master Naturalist program at the University of Illinois Extension in 2021. As part of her service requirements for the program, she volunteered at the Anita Purves Nature Center.

Ellen was a talented and creative artist. She took photographs of nature wherever she was. Her photos were featured in the most recent Master Naturalist Calendar and in the calendars she made for her family and friends. Ellen enjoyed Zentangle, a method of drawing that combines art and meditation. She became a certified teacher and taught classes in a variety of venues, including the Champaign County Jail. Ellen's co-teacher recalled one of the women in the jail telling Ellen, "You don't know this, but you have saved my life. When I feel the need to use (drugs), I just take up my pen and paper and Zentangle instead."

Ellen enjoyed visiting with friends, watching basketball games together, and doing Zentangle, among other things. She found so many ways to give to people: tending to memorial objects, taking people for walks, building and fixing things, accompanying people to medical visits, helping them with therapies, giving away her art and finding gifts to gladden hearts.

Ellen Baranowski found her path by doing the things she loved. At the same time, she enriched the lives of many and worked to protect the natural world.

Marjory Wood Crawford (1930-2021)

Marjory Wood Crawford was born on May 30, 1932, in Chicago to John Curtis Wood and Nancy (Farley) Wood. She passed away on May 2, 2021 at the age of 88. Marjory's father was a member of 57th Street Meeting in Hyde Park in Chicago and both her parents were active in conservation and social issues, setting Marjory on a similar path of activism and an affinity for Quaker spirituality.

As a resident of Chesterton, Indiana, Marjory first came to Duneland Friends Meeting in 2001 seeking a spiritual community for worship and social activism. She became a member of Duneland Friends Meeting on March 16, 2003.

While Marjory felt led to explore a variety of worship communities in northwest Indiana, she faithfully attended Duneland's Bible study for many years. She enjoyed conversation about matters of importance. She was clear in her beliefs and forthright in expressing her views. She sometimes expressed impatience that others were not as eager as she to take action. Among her many causes, Marjory joined protests against capital punishment at the State Prison in Michigan City. She was active in local political, conservation, and arts organizations and was a frequent contributor of letters to the editor in the local newspaper. In recognition of her efforts, Save The Dunes awarded her the Paul H. Douglas award in 2007 for her service to the cause of preserving and protecting the Indiana Dunes.

Marjory was a talented artist; a plein-air painter and a sculptor, having studied at Indiana University and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Later in life, the sale of her family's business allowed her to buy the historic Chesterton Town Hall and turn it into Coffee Creek Studios. It became an art gallery and meeting place in downtown Chesterton. At Marjory's invitation, Duneland Friends held meeting for worship and potluck meals there several times. Her studio was also the site of concerts, poetry readings, peace vigils, and gatherings of local activists for social justice.

Marjory will be remembered among Duneland Friends for her contribution to our Bible study, for her plain speech and for her example of putting her beliefs into action.

Roger Hagen Laughlin (1926-2022)

Roger Laughlin was born in Evanston, Illinois on March 2, 1926 to Thora Hagen and Owen Seth Laughlin, a third-generation Quaker family. His brother, Owen, Jr. was 4 years old. His father was a civil engineer working for the railroad.

Living in Des Plaines, the family regularly attended Chicago Monthly Meeting on the south side until 1936 when Evanston Monthly Meeting was formed, his father being one of the charter members.

After graduating from high school in Hanna, Indiana, Roger joined the USNR, reporting for duty on March 1, 1944 in Madison where he studied Naval Engineering at the University of Wisconsin. The resident dorm students let on that the best-looking girls were at the local Methodist church, and they were right. His first date with Jinny was on October 12, 1945.

He was discharged in June of 1946 and returned to Madison where he graduated in 1947 with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and got his first job at Western Electric in Chicago. Jinny and Roger became engaged on October 12, 1947 and were married the following year on March 20th in Madison.

After returning to the Chicago area, they both attended Evanston Meeting regularly. Roger served on many different committees at Evanston Meeting, including Trustees, House & Grounds,

Religious Education, Ministry & Counsel, Nominating, and as Treasurer for over 25 years. He also served as Treasurer for Illinois Yearly Meeting and for other organizations.

Roger and Jinny's first child, Luanne Kay, born in 1950, died shortly after birth. Kenneth Roger was born in 1952. In 1953, Jinny suffered a ruptured uterus causing them to lose a baby boy. They adopted Laurie Kay in 1956.

Roger began working at H.M. Harper, and he and Jinny purchased a house in Prospect Heights in 1955. In 1958, Roger began a job at Signode Steel Strapping (now ITW), where he worked until his retirement in 1986, the same year granddaughter Allison was born. In 1964, they moved to a larger house in Prospect Heights, where they lived until Jinny passed in 2015. They were involved with the AFS program and hosted several exchange students. They loved hosting Memorial Day Picnics that always included the Evanston Meeting community (a tradition his parents started in the fifties). They were active in the peace movement and enjoyed hosting hootenannies where Roger and Jinny both loved singing folk songs and playing guitar. Roger had a particular wit about him and wrote poems and limericks for friends and relatives on special occasions. They both kept busy with their antique business. Roger enjoyed restoring furniture and making lamps using objects such as coffee pots, tea pots, and converting old oil lamps to electric. He also had a strong interest in cars and bought, fixed, and sold over 30 cars.

Roger and Jinny loved traveling with the family all around the country. They also visited the homes of former AFS students overseas.

After Jinny passed in 2015, Roger closed the business, sold the house, and moved into a rental condo in Des Plaines. He maintained his independence for almost five years, but with the progression of his Alzheimer's, Laurie left Seattle and moved in with him in July of 2020. By the following summer, it became clear that he needed to be in a facility that could care for his medical needs. He became a resident of Dobson Plaza in Evanston in August of 2021.

He spoke about his paternal grandfather, Preston, who on the day of his death, had worked in the garden, eaten a good meal, and laid down to rest, then passed. He always thought that would be the way he'd like to go. On his first day of hospice care on January 26th, the family learned he had a good day; he was able to eat a little bit and interact with other residents. At 5:15 that evening, he passed... very much like his grandfather.

Roger was preceded in death by his wife, Virginia; his brother, Owen; and two infant children. He is survived by his son, Kenneth; daughter, Laurie; and granddaughter, Allison. A Memorial Meeting for Worship was held May 14, 2022 at Evanston Monthly Meeting.