

Minute for Helen Lovett

Helen Fay Lovett's gifts and contributions to Newtown Friends Meeting have left a quiet but indelible mark. For many years Helen and her husband Bob were a familiar presence at Meetings for Worship and Meetings for Business, serving wherever a helping hand was needed. Both shared an interest in Bucks County history and the origins of the Meeting. Bob served on Building and Grounds for many years while Helen devoted her time and attention to the interior. During the years that the Meeting House space was jointly used by Maple Leaf Day Care Center, Helen supervised the physical care and cleaning of the Meeting. Perhaps most memorable, however, is Helen's unwavering interest in the Peace Testimony, a central focus throughout her life.

When the Peace Center refocused the mission of BAND (the Bucks Alliance for Nuclear Disarmament), Helen and Lorraine Cleveland headed a committee to study positive approaches to peace. Then, as the Center's goal shifted to emphasize education and conflict resolution in communities and schools, Helen, a careful and thorough librarian, gathered lists of books and other peace materials for the center. Those lists led to a collection at the Peace Center which remains an outstanding resource to this day. Concurrently, she recommended specific peace literature for the library at Newtown Friends Meeting.

Helen served for many years as Clerk of the Peace and Justice Committee. As our representative to the Peace Center she kept the Meeting informed of issues and events there. When the committee was laid down for a time, Helen continued to inform Meeting members about issues and events at the center. She also served as Newtown Meeting's contact person with FCNL.

In the fall of 1998, drawing on her interest in Newtown history, Newtown Friends Meeting, and the Peace Testimony, Helen organized a Quaker Heritage Celebration Program. It was titled "Edward Hicks: Lessons from the Peaceable Kingdom." She invited William Kriedler, a noted author involved in Conflict Resolution, to present a slide show on Hicks' vision, and she wrote a short history of Edward Hicks and Newtown Friends Meeting for visitors. She arranged for child care and guides, and for refreshments and a table of literature. The event attracted the largest group of people that had ever visited Newtown Friends Meeting.

While Newtown Friends were aware of Helen's interest in Bucks County history and of her personal commitment to peace, Helen's professional commitment to public library service continues to benefit all Bucks County library patrons to this day. During the early 1980's, as the first Adult Services Coordinator, Helen worked with every library to draw up a plan that would enable each one to better serve its particular reading public. Her plan included guidelines still considered of great value in collection development and library programming. People who worked with Helen recall a tactful and resourceful professional whose listening skills and discretion could always be trusted.

Helen and Bob Lovett were nurtured over a long period of time by the spiritual life of this Meeting community. In turn, they graced our Meeting with their thoughtful, peaceful and steadfast presence. They are remembered for their loyalty, integrity, kindness and commitment; Quakers who quietly lived their values and beliefs.

Caroline Wilson and JoAnn Woodman