

Memorial Minute for Cathryn (Cappie) Miller Fleuchaus
March 10, 1930-December 27, 2018

When Cappie joined the Newtown Meeting community in the early 1990s and became a member in 1997, she had been living for several decades adjacent to the Delaware Canal in Washington Crossing. A next-door neighbor, a friend also of Edith Gowin, recalled that “Cappie had been a civil rights activist in the South as a young mother and wife, and had many stories to tell about that time. She had also fought development of the wetland woods next to the canal – and her home – in Washington Crossing. She cared deeply about many issues and injustices in the world...Gardening was one of her passions, as was music, and she sang with Princeton Pro Musica for many years.”

Cappie’s two daughters had attended George School, and in 1992, after working for LSAT in the corporate world, she moved to a job as Administrative Assistant to the Head of School, David Bourns, who appreciated her high professionalism and confidentiality. Kingdon Swayne was then serving as the school’s archivist, and David recalls that Cappie would protect Kingdon’s privacy while he stretched out on David’s carpet for a power nap. After Kingdon moved to Friends Home and gave up his car, Cappie provided him with rides and companionship.

Those who knew her at George School remember that Cappie had unfailing good humor, that she baked wonderful treats for Christmas and Easter, and that she considered Halloween her favorite holiday. Each year on that day a very life-like witch would sit in a chair outside Cappie’s office.

After retiring in 2001, Cappie took on several important commitments to the Meeting. She clerked the Nominating Committee, served on Building and Grounds and the Furnishings committee, and at the completion of the new addition, she headed up the Expansion Project Celebration in January 2004. As a member of Worship and Ministry, when Newtown Meeting hosted the World Day of Prayer service in March 2004, Cappie was in charge.

While some of us were aware of Cappie’s unusual childhood as the daughter of Lutheran missionaries in Liberia, we learned more when she gave a presentation to Adult Class in October 2005 that conveyed admiration for her parents and other dedicated missionaries and provided insights into lives lived in the service of God. Cappie’s talk was one in a series that featured members of the Meeting speaking of a favorite or an influential book. Her choice was *The Emblem A Suitcase*, an autobiography by Roslyn Sadler that tells the story of accompanying her missionary husband to Liberia where they raised two sons. Cappie’s mother played a role in Sadler’s story and is mentioned several times in the book. The transcript of this inspiring talk is available on the Meeting’s website.

Cappie moved from Washington Crossing to Chandler Hall in 2009. Two years later she moved to Friends House in Sandy Spring MD to be closer to family.