

Memorial Minute for Lewis Smith Woodman
June 16, 1922 – March 14, 2019

Lew Woodman was Mr. Newtown Meeting. He knew so much about the meetinghouse and its members and was determined to be useful, and he always was useful. He is remembered for his dedication to the Meeting in terms of just about anything that needed repair or fixing. He was a whiz at that, and he eagerly embraced the challenges that periodically came up. From his work days at Niece Lumber, he was aware of many of the tradespeople in the area, and if Lew couldn't fix it, he knew where to find someone who could. The Lovetts and Woodmans were very close, and Bob was often called on by Lew to handle jobs that required more than one person, or perhaps some fashioning of a piece from wood to fit a task that Lew needed completed.

Lew was always one of the first to arrive and last to leave the annual Leaf Rake and it was only a couple of years ago that Susi and Scott brought him to help for the last time. His work ethic made us all want to help out and his quiet sense of humor helped keep it fun.

Lew was born at home in Morrisville, and joined Trenton Friends Meeting as a teenager, attracted by the values, especially integrity, service and non-violence, which guided his path to becoming a Conscientious Objector and serving in CPS (Civilian Public Service) for three years during WWII. He was active in Young Friends where he met JoAnn. They married in 1950 under the care of this meeting and raised two children, Susan and Tom, in the house Lew designed and built for the family near Wrightstown PA. Lew and JoAnn's devotion to each other over their 68 years together inspired all who knew them.

After retiring, Lew spent 10 years volunteering several days a week for Habitat for Humanity in Trenton. Over the years, in addition to being Mr. Building and Grounds for Newtown Meeting, he served on committees of oversight for Camp Onas, Newtown Friends School, and Friends Home and Village, always lending his expertise on maintenance projects. Lew kept the antique elevator at the Home going for years.

Lew had a steadying hand in discussions. He never spoke unless he had something to add, and what he had to add was usually important to the decision-making process. We can recall vividly one rare time when Lew raised his voice after President Carter pulled the US out of the 1980 Summer Olympics. Lew was furious that his son Tom, who had achieved a coveted spot on the US Rowing team, was denied the chance to compete.

In 1997 Lew and JoAnn moved to Pennswood Village where Lew evolved his love of working with his hands into a specialty of re-caning chairs. He claimed to have done over 100, and he donated the revenue to the Pennswood Fellowship Fund. Lew was one of several C.O.s who participated in annual Veterans Day commemorations. He was a role model and mentor to several generations of young men in the Meeting who had to respond to the Selective Service and live out their convictions.

We celebrate Lew's purposeful life of service with one more image: Lew's smile – how seldom we saw it but how rewarding the experience when we did!