

Memorial Minute for Marie Burton  
by Ella A. Fraser

Marie Denning Burton, aged 87, died on December 14, 1995 the way she had lived among us - gently and quietly. She had the ability to maintain intimate contact not only with her friends and family (5 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren) but a number of other young people in Newtown Meeting and beyond. When Overseers had lost track of a young person inevitably someone would say, "Call Marie. She might know." During her more than fifty years in Newtown Meeting, I think Marie greeted almost every baby with a present, hand-made of course.

One of the reasons the Burtons moved from Hampton Institute in VA to George School was that their two sons would have had to go to segregated schools. Billy was 8 years old when they moved to George School and Kenneth was 5 years old. This close-knit family managed to carry on through Billy's death from a blood infection two years later, and the family gained a niece/daughter, JoAnn Johnson Woodman that same year - 1941

Marie was of the generation that opted to support her husband's career rather than a career of her own. As I read the lengthy and detailed account of their lives together which Marie had lovingly assembled for her family (the pictures! In one Marie looks like a lovely dancer!) I learned a great deal about Bill's national professional involvement in the world of teaching physics. The "faculty wife world" which I shared with Marie produced lifetime bonds which survived the inevitable retirement when George School faculty scatters to the four winds.

As a couple, Bill and Marie worked together on three Mexican workcamps for the AFSC. It was also during this time that they took up camping. Camping and weaving were to become this couple's hallmark. After retirement camping also took them back to Mexico (and many places) to reconnect with Mexican friends. When leaving George School they built a house on Franklin Road and the furniture Bill had crafted and the loom he built in 1962 went with them.. They had both learned to be enthusiastic weavers.

They carried this enthusiasm with them as well as the loom when they retired to Friends Village in 1987 where they spent the last 14 years. During that time they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. After Bill's death in 1992 Marie and the family were present at the dedication of the Burton Science Library at George School in 1994.

Newtown Meeting will long remember the Burton-Woodman-McFeely clan as well as the individuals like Marie who started it.