

### **MEMORIAL MINUTE in honor of PALMER SHARPLESS (1922-2002)**

It was difficult to stop the outpouring of love and emotion that flowed during Palmer's Memorial Service at George School Meetinghouse. People who knew Palmer well, felt compelled to share their special relationship with him. Palmer was eulogized at Newtown Meeting before his death and for weeks after.

People treasured his friendship. He was the perfect friend. He always made time for others. He was enthusiastic, helpful, supportive, and reliable – a man of the highest character and integrity.

Palmer first appeared in my life from beneath a covering of woodchips and sawdust at George School. He immediately befriended me as he did everyone he met. His enthusiasm as a teacher was infectious and he soon had me turning bowls. He had great patience when his students made mistakes, and was always encouraging them with his positive attitude.

Palmer's life revolved around people and wood. Wood was the vehicle he used to relate to others. He breathed wood as he sanded his turnings. He carved it, caressed it, turned it, and burned it. He took a dead tree and resurrected it into creations to last generations. Almost every time I visited, he had a boyish grin on his face and couldn't wait to tell me about his latest creation. Everyone he met wanted to get in on the fun he was having. Many hundreds of people are still having that fun because Palmer introduced them to woodworking.

Palmer expressed his spiritual life through his hands and his heart, not with words. He turned bowls from meetinghouse trees and put the proceeds toward beautifying the grounds. Hundreds of daffodils blooming each spring will be a reminder of his love. His wooden rabbits in the flower bed reflected his sense of humor and joy for living. He made flower vases from limbs of our sycamore tree as gifts to Friends. He made shelves and helped maintain the meetinghouse as a member of the Building and Grounds Committee until his death.

Palmer led by example. He was a devoted husband and father to his wife and five children. Palmer was larger than life, a true present day folk hero... a giant of a man in both stature and character. His influence is felt in thousands of lives each day and his energy lives on forever.

Respectfully submitted by Alan Guokas  
February 2, 2003, Meeting for Business  
Newtown Friends Meeting