

Memorial Minute for Richard Charles Ensign
June 6, 1938 – July 31, 2017

Richard Charles Ensign shared his joy in life and concern for peace with the Ann Arbor Friends Meeting from his arrival in 2008 and formal membership in 2009 until his move to Redlands, California, in 2013. Even after his move to California, where he and his wife, Freda Ensign, attended the Riverside Meeting, Rich kept his membership with Ann Arbor Friends Meeting and maintained contact with some Ann Arbor Friends for as long as he was able.

Rich's life in the Spirit was first awakened by his grandparents in Washington County, New York, where he had four generations of Quaker ancestors. Rich was proud of his Quaker heritage and spoke with emotion about the quiet grove of trees and burial ground behind the Easton, New York, Meetinghouse as a touchstone for his identity. Much of his adult religious life was expressed through his participation in Congregational and Methodist churches, but after a deep spiritual experience at a meeting for worship when visiting his brother in Salt Lake City, Rich turned to Quakers and quickly made Ann Arbor Friends Meeting his spiritual home.

Rich was delighted to be a part of the Committee on Peace and Social Concerns, filling in as its convener on more than one occasion and cheerfully supporting letter-writing during potluck. He was a regular and thoughtful participant in the Reading and Discussion sessions held among Ann Arbor Friends, as well as Meeting forums, retreats, and worship sharing. Fond of Pendle Hill, he served as the Meeting representative to Pendle Hill from 2010 through 2013 and travelled there several times to deepen his knowledge of Quaker history and practice.

Rich bore his physical limitations with good humor and encouraged a welcoming attitude in all he encountered. Many Ann Arbor Friends enjoyed his enthusiastic conversation about Quaker thought and history, as well as geography, geology, astronomy, and music. He cared deeply about his sons, and his abiding love for Freda (who remains in Redland, California) shone out brightly to all who met them.