

MEMORIAL MINUTE FOR TIMOTHY K. FIELD

August 7, 1951 – December 15, 2020

Tim Field, who became a member of Pittsburgh Friends Meeting in 2003, was Assistant House Manager and then Manager of the Meetinghouse for over twenty years. For many of us he was the only house manager we ever knew. As such, he was responsible for making sure that the physical environment for Meeting and committee meetings was set up and ready. He often had to deal with conflicting requests – not always delivered in a Quakerly fashion! – from all of us. He also had to respond promptly to the various emergencies that happened from time to time in our old building. We are grateful to him for his service, his integrity, his kindness, and his stewardship of the Meetinghouse, and are happy to dedicate our new crabapple tree to his memory.

Tim was also the person who dealt with the outside groups who used the Meetinghouse for other purposes – from service groups like AA and social groups like English Country Dancing to celebrations like weddings. Tim would manage their requests and juggle their different requirements, at the same time handling sensitive issues such as payment and conflicts with Meeting's regular use of the building. He also met individuals coming to the building seeking aid, responding to them with generosity and embodying the best Quakerly spirit. In this way, Tim represented our Meeting and the Quaker religion to the outside world; for many people using our Meetinghouse, Tim was the only Quaker they would ever meet. We are grateful for his embodiment of the Quaker mission, the peaceful face he presented to these groups, and the community he helped build that included us.

He is remembered not only for his ability to juggle many tasks at the same time, but for his thoughtfulness in small but memorable ways. One example is his putting out a bowl of candy for committee meetings; another is his care of the healing group by setting up chairs in a small circle and providing a tea candle with a lighter ready in the center of the table. One Friend has suggested that Tim's presence was a good example of "a relationship in the manner of Friends": tentative at first; then, as shared interests were explored, increasingly based on mutual respect and trust, finally lasting a long time, always flexible and caring and responding to changing needs.

In the last year, Tim asked the Clearness and Care Committee to set up a personal Care Committee to support him. Its work was and remains confidential, although its members stated that they had all grown and changed as a result of the small community created in response to his request. As much as Meeting was caring for him, Tim was caring for Meeting. He was a truly private person who opened up and allowed the committee to help him through his transition, after being diagnosed with an incurable cancer. We are deeply moved by his passing and grateful for having known him.

Friends who wish to make gifts in his name are directed to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital (ALSAC/St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105) or to Pittsburgh Friends Meeting (4836 Ellsworth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213). A virtual memorial meeting for worship was held via Zoom on Saturday, February 6, beginning at 2 p.m. Members of Tim's family were present, along with members of Meeting and representatives from groups that had been using the Meetinghouse for many years.