

## MEMORIAL MINUTE FOR LOIS (LOIE) GILBERT, 1947–2023

Lois “Loie” Gilbert was born on April 27, 1947, in the Bronx, New York, to David and Ruth (Jaffe) Gilbert and died on August 28, 2023. She is survived by her wife, Sally Ryon, and her two sons, two daughters-in-law, and five grandchildren. Loie believed strongly in the Oneness of all humans and the Holiness of all human beings respecting one another. Following her beliefs, her profession was as a social worker who worked in a variety of fields: Neighborhood Senior Services, Public Housing Projects, Employee Assistance Programs, and programs for troubled adolescent boys in the Ann Arbor and Detroit areas. She loved advocating on behalf of those whose voices were not heard or taken seriously.

Loie was a compassionate Friend, committed to discovering the spiritual richness of both her childhood Jewish upbringing in the Bronx and in the Quaker Meeting she found as an adult here in Ann Arbor. In her application for membership, in 1990, Loie described how she first came to AAFM purely as a seeker and gradually became part of the Meeting:

[The] Meeting has, from the beginning, been a special pleasure in my life; in recent years the event that defined the weekend, that centered and reminded me of that which is best in us all. At first, I believed that I would, if I “did it” right, experience a transcendent, transforming experience of Light here, The Light, whatever that was .... I imagined it as physical light that I would “see” in my meditative state. That has never happened, but it comes to me now, as I write this, that I have had a transforming experience here with you in these last 10 years – slowly over time with no explosions of Light (or light either), ... simply the slow accretion of trust and love over time. And I have come to know this Meeting, this Meetinghouse, and the unprogrammed tradition of Quaker worship as my spiritual home.

At that point Loie began referring to herself as a Jewish Quaker, and she asked for, and was granted, acceptance as an Affiliate Member of the Ann Arbor Meeting in the autumn of 1990, so that she could honor both of her faith traditions.

During her 32 years with us, Loie participated in the Ann Arbor Meeting in numerous ways, serving on the Membership and Outreach, Nominating, Care and Visitation, and Contributions Committees and supporting the Gay and Lesbian Concerns group, the Meeting Library, and a Celebrations group. Her experience as a social worker and her deep knowledge of community resources for people in need were especially helpful to the Care and Visitation Committee.

Loie and Sally had a commitment ceremony in the Ann Arbor Friends Meetinghouse in August 1994, followed by a legal marriage in July 2015, after that became possible. They blossomed in their rich and rewarding partnership of 42 years.

Loie was forthright and stood up for causes she believed in, protesting in New York against the war in Vietnam and in Ann Arbor for women's rights and LGBTQ rights. She was a devoted vegetarian, believed in never eating or killing a living being, and dearly loved her pet cats and

dogs. Loie loved to read and write, especially poetry, until memory loss took its toll in her later years.

In the spring of 2023, Loie and Sally came to say farewell to the Ann Arbor Meeting before moving to Traverse City, Michigan, to be closer to family. We were very grateful for that opportunity to say good-bye to Loie. Within months, on August 28, 2023, she lost her life in an auto accident. She will be long remembered as a spiritual seeker with a loving, caring, and generous nature.