

## **Memorial Minute for Phil Hoffer (Ann Arbor)** **July 29, 1940 – October 29, 2025**

Phillip Geoffrey Hoffer was born on July 29, 1940, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and was raised by his mother, Monta, and his stepdad, Joe Dunkie, in Norristown, Pennsylvania, along with his sister, Debbie (now deceased) and brother, Gary (Jackie), of Virginia.

Phil developed an early love of reading and spent many happy hours going through the leatherbound volumes of classic literature and other books available in his home. He attended Sunday school at a Methodist Church because, he later said, it was the closest church in the neighborhood.

He served in the Army from 1959 to 1961 and was stationed in peacetime in Korea. There he took many photographs which are now in the Museum of History in Seoul, Korea.

He attended Swarthmore College and graduated in 1965 with a major in Engineering. It was his first experience of Quaker ways, and it was there he met his beloved wife Pam (Corbett). They married in 1966 and together moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where Phil was attending Harvard Business School.

Upon graduating with an MBA, he was hired by Ford Motor Company, where he enjoyed a successful 30-year career in quality control that took him all over the world, but his focus was always his family and community.

Phil and Pam moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where they raised their three daughters, Kaethe (Matt Morris), Lara (Todd Ansbacher), and Amy (Burke Curtis). They have three cherished grandchildren: Noah and Jane Morris Hoffer and Maggie Hoffer.

In searching for a community that would give them the same foundation that the Quaker principles of Swarthmore had provided them, they became associated with the Ann Arbor Friends Meeting. At first, their involvement was only to be engaged with AFSC and work in a program that led high school students to volunteer at the local State Mental Hospital. In those weekends, they were hosted by a Quaker family who lived a mile away from the hospital.

When, at the age of 4, their first born asked whether God was a man or a woman they responded that they thought of God as the way Love was working in their lives. When she replied “Oh, a woman like Aphrodite,” they realized that they needed to balance the reading of Greek myths with some Quaker religious education and they began to attend meeting for worship and First Day School.

Phil read stories to the children in First Day School, he served on several committees, and was a co-clerk of Ann Arbor Friends Meeting with Pam from 1993 to 1997. Friends remember that Phil made everyone feel welcome, regardless of how involved they were in the Meeting.

Both Pam and Phil devoted countless hours and energy to Friends Lake Cooperative Community in nearby Chelsea, Michigan. He served as president of the Board, on the Finance Committee, and environmental planning. He was a loyal and reliable participant in work parties and he made a significant contribution by organizing and collating all the minutes from its inception in 1963 to 2004.

In 1994, Phil was a major founder and fund raiser for the Michigan Friends Center, on the property of Friends Lake Cooperative Community. He was on the first Board of Directors (as well as in other years). He was a grunt worker, helping to clear the land, burn the stumps, generate the documents, apply for and get the 501(c)(3) status, serve as treasurer, prime the walls, mow the lawn, and help to manage parking at events.

Although he did not share much about his spiritual life, it was evident in who he was and how he related to people. When asked what was the most romantic thing he and Pam ever did, he quickly responded “to adopt our daughter Lara” (who came to them at the age of 13½).

Phil lived with Alzheimer’s for nearly 17 years. Throughout all the time at home and later in Brecon Village Memory Care in Saline, Michigan, he remained kind and comfortably happy. Over the years he was an avid Sudoku player and many of us enjoyed receiving his annual compilation of New Yorker cartoons, which he sent out around Christmas. In retirement he volunteered at a neighborhood day care,

where he read to children who sat by him, on his lap, and on his feet so he wouldn't leave. He was still able to read aloud with expression until near the end even though he did not remember what he read.

At his memorial meeting for worship, family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and caregivers all spoke of how he treated everyone with kindness and acceptance, seeing what was precious in each person and making each of us feel valuable.