

Memorial Minute for Margaret Kanost (Birmingham)

March 13, 1929 – June 23, 2022

Margaret (Eme) Jenness Rinden Kanost was born on March 13, 1929, in Fuzhou, China, to missionary parents, Arthur Owen Rinden and Gertrude Jenness Rinden. With older brother Paul and younger sister Edaik, she spent her childhood in China and in New Hampshire at the Jenness family farm. She was always proud of her background in China, loved to recount stories from that time, and later in life earned a master's degree in Asian Studies. As an undergraduate at Earlham College, she met husband Richard (Dick) Kanost; the couple married following her graduation in 1950. Her Earlham roommate taught Margaret to knit, which led to a lifelong practice; she was usually seen with a project in her hands, and she knit sweaters for many friends and relatives.

Margaret and Richard moved to Saipan in the Mariana Islands in 1965. They lived in Saipan from 1965 to 1973. She was the proofreader for the new Congress of Micronesia, while Dick was personnel officer for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Civic volunteering and political activism also characterized Margaret's life. In her 30s she was the Democratic precinct chairwoman in her neighborhood, campaigning for JFK and then LBJ, and later was an active participant in the Prisoner Visitation Service while researching policy issues regarding the prison system for the Oklahoma League of Women Voters. In Oklahoma, she studied Chinese history, while Dick got his Ph.D. She moved to Michigan, where Dick taught Political Science, and she received an M.A. in Ancient Chinese Cosmology. In Michigan, her activism with the League continued, with a focus on public policy related to gun ownership, peace issues, and prison visitation.

Margaret was an active Friend. As a member of Birmingham Friends Meeting, she held various positions including serving as clerk. She opened her home regularly for Christmas celebrations. She was active in LEYM, serving on various committees. A special passion for her was her service with the Friends World Committee for Consultation as a

representative of LEYM. A highlight was attendance at the FWCC Triennial in New Zealand, which was among her last voyages in a life filled with travel. A member of the Birmingham Monthly Meeting at the time of her death, she also worshiped at Kendal Meeting in Oberlin. The great love and friendship of Friends from both meetings brought her joy and support through the final moments of her life.

Margaret and Richard had three children: Ruth, Beazley, and Andrew. She is also survived by three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.