

Celebrating the Life of Andrea English

March 11, 1940 – March 13, 2026



Friends Memorial Meeting

Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting

October 18, 2026

Andrea English died peacefully at home at The Redwoods on March 13, 2026, surrounded by her family. She was 86 years old.

Andrea was born in Chicago on March 11, 1940, and as a young girl moved with her family across the US living in several states before making California her home for the rest of her life. Severe asthma and steroid treatments were a constant part of her life from a young age. Andrea had a brother who died from asthma at age 15.

She attended the University of California, Berkeley, earning a Bachelor of Arts in English in 1963. Having married and had her first child during college, she then raised her family as a full-time mother in Oakland and Orinda. Summer camping trips were a big part of family life. Andrea's first marriage ended in 1981.

Raised as a Presbyterian, Andrea began a lifelong association with Quakers while at Berkeley, attending Berkeley Friends Meeting. She was drawn to Quaker faith and practice, especially actions for social justice and peace. Later, she helped form Strawberry Creek Meeting in Berkeley, which began as small worship groups in peoples' homes. Andrea was a clerk of Strawberry Creek Meeting in 1986-1989 and again from 1998-2000. In 1998, during her second term as clerk, the first same-sex marriage held by the meeting took place.

Guided by her enduring commitment to learning and caring for others, Andrea earned a degree in special education teaching degree and later returned to St. Mary's College, with academic support from Samuel Merritt Hospitals to complete her nursing education. She earned her RN in 1990 and worked for about 5 years at Samuel

Merritt Hospital in Oakland, bringing compassion and dedication to the care of her patients.

Tom Whiteman and Andrea met while volunteering in support of American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) causes. They married in 1994 under the care of Strawberry Creek Meeting. After living in Berkeley for several years, they moved to Santa Rosa to help with grandchildren. Andrea attended meetings for worship at Friends House and when she and Tom moved to the Redwoods in Mill Valley, she helped establish a worship group there.



Throughout her life, Andrea embraced many callings. She was a poet, gardener, teacher, nurse, partner, mother, and a principled Quaker activist. She was a melodic, nature-centered poet, attentive to the rhythms of the living world and to the beauty found in ordinary moments. In the Redwoods poetry circle, she was a gentle guide, encouraging others to listen closely, find their own voices, and trust in the quiet power of words. Her gentle guidance reflected the respect and care she extended to others.

Music was also an important part of Andrea's life. She played the piano and, when her children were young,

learned to play the guitar for campfire moments. She loved listening to classical music and found joy in singing and participating in a Hildegard von Bingen choral group. Music, like poetry, gave her another way to connect with beauty, community, and the people she loved.

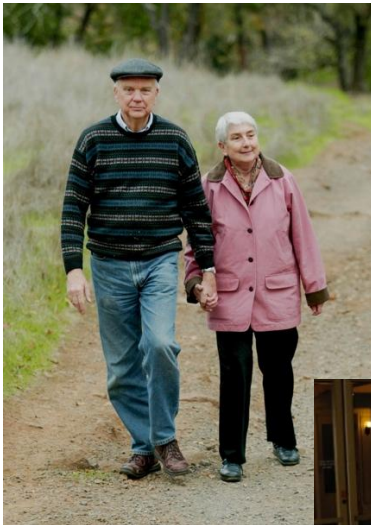


Andrea was also an active member of Seniors for Peace at the Redwoods. Her Quaker faith was expressed not only in belief, but in the way she lived—with compassion, conscience, simplicity, and a steadfast commitment to peace and justice. She believed in giving visibility to the causes she cared deeply about, and she was willing to stand up, speak out, and protest in support of them. Her activism was a natural expression of her values: thoughtful, persistent, and grounded in a belief that every person could make a difference.

Andrea had a deep love of the natural world. Gardening was both a joy and a way of being attentive—to seasons, growth, beauty, and the patient work of tending what

matters. The redwoods that surrounded her home offered a fitting place for a woman whose life was so deeply rooted in nature, poetry, music, and community. Her favorite place was sitting by a stream in a redwood forest.

Andrea is survived by her spouse and loving friend of 32 years, Tom Whiteman; her children and grandchildren; and a great-granddaughter. She leaves behind a legacy of poetry, kindness, conscience, and care. She will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by her family, friends, fellow poets, Quaker community, fellow peace activists, former patients and colleagues, and all those whose lives she touched.



We gather today to remember and celebrate the life of Andrea English

A Quaker Celebration of Life follows the same form as a Meeting for Worship, which is the core of Quaker practice.

As a community who knew Andrea, today we gather in silence to remember and celebrate her life. We come in both sadness and celebration to share our memories, thoughts and feelings. Friends believe that there is that of God in everyone. We seek to mark that of God that lived in Andrea, remembering and rejoicing in her spirit that we now carry with us.

The responsibility for the spiritual depth of the meeting rests with each attender. Those who keep silence as well as those who give a vocal message do their part when they yield their minds and hearts to the guidance of the Spirit.

As we sit in expectant quiet, we may be moved to share a message. Please do so without undue length, being mindful that others may also be moved to share. Everyone participates equally and all are welcome to speak. We ask that you use a microphone so people joining on Zoom can hear your message. Please allow a few moments to hear and reflect on each message before offering yours.

We will worship together for about an hour. The convener will open with a few words of welcome and close our time of worship by exchanging greetings with those nearby, a signal to all of us to greet those next to us.