

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

As a community who knew Caroline Duhem, we gather today in silence, to remember and celebrate her life. We come to share our memories, thoughts and feelings. Friends believe that there is that of God in everyone. Today we seek to mark that of God that lived in Caroline and to affirm those things 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 silence, we may be moved to share a message. Please do so without undue length, being mindful that others may be moved. Everyone participates equally and all are welcome to speak. You may be moved to share prayers, poems, anecdotes or a song. Please allow a few moments after someone has shared to hear and reflect on their message before offering yours.

We will worship for about an hour. The clerk of our Meeting will close our worship by shaking hands with those near to him to signal to all of us to shake hands with those nearby.

There will be a reception after the Memorial Meeting.

Celebrating the Life of Caroline Anker Duhem

May 16, 1942 – May 31, 2012



Friends Memorial Meeting

July 28, 2012

Strawberry Creek Friends Meeting

Caroline was born in Albany, New York, May 16, 1942. As she was the oldest of four children she was always 'big sister' to her brother George (1945), sister Elizabeth (1947) and brother David (1951).



They grew up in a country farmhouse, north of Albany, where her parents had flower and vegetable gardens along with a goat, chickens, cats and dogs.

Her mother, Ruth, graduated from State Teachers College and taught high school English. Later, she worked with developmentally disabled children. Ruth loved her students and their families, and often invited them to picnics and other gatherings where there was food and fun. Her father, George, graduated from New York University and was a professional engineer working for New York State.

Caroline began her education in a three-room schoolhouse a short walk from home. She played in the woods and listened to stories on the radio with her siblings. The family spent summer vacations in the Adirondack Mountains, near Lake George, out in nature, camping, boating, swimming and hiking.

At age 21, with a year left in college, she married Hal Noakes, the son of her mother's best friend Roama. A year later, Caroline received her Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry from Russell Sage College. After Hal graduated from college, the young couple moved west to Utah. Caroline found work at the Medical Center on campus and they lived in town. After their marriage ended, she moved farther west to San Francisco, California and after a short teaching job she found work as a microbiologist at UCSF. Her sister Elizabeth followed her to attend graduate school at the University of California, Berkeley.

Only 30 years old, Caroline decided she wanted to go to Medical School.

After being rejected at US schools she applied and was accepted in France.

She packed up her stuff and flew to France, spending four years in southern France taking the 'first year' of Medical School, three times. She just missed the top 100 each time, and was not allowed to go on to the 'second year' classes.



A few years after returning from France, at age 39, Caroline was diagnosed with breast cancer. She had already met Roger Duhem at a singles gathering, and he would prove to be her greatest support during surgery and chemotherapy. Doctors told her she couldn't have any children because it might cause her cancer to return. Roger nursed her back to health and a full recovery. Caroline and Roger were married under the care of the San Francisco Quaker Meeting in 1981.

They bought a lovely home in El Cerrito only a few blocks from her sister Elizabeth's home. Caroline started a tradition of Christmas Day brunch at her house and invited her extended family. She made a delicious crab and rice salad she had learned to in France, and she served noodle pudding along with bagels, lox and cream cheese to honor other friend's traditions

Caroline was a wonderful aunt to Erik and Martin. After Elizabeth's husband, Bill, transferred to Denver in 1986 and the family moved away, Caroline came to visit in Denver every year during the week after Christmas. She also continued to take summer vacations at Lake George to visit with her mother, brothers and nephews.

In 1991 Caroline became a member of Strawberry Creek Meeting in Berkeley. She served in a pivotal role in the First Day school program, Overseers committee, and more recently she was the heart and soul of the Loaves and Fishes committee.

Caroline loved education and went back to school to become a nurse while she continued with her computer programming jobs. She became an RN at age 55 and enjoyed the requirement to continue taking courses every year to keep her license current. She did foot care at the El Cerrito Senior Center and got to listen to many life stories while she worked.



As she had a passion for driving, she bought a yellow standard shift Mini at age 61, and had almost ten years of fun driving her brand new car. She loved to drive up to the wine country with a friend or family, when they were in town, stopping at the cheese factory to eat a picnic lunch by the pond with the ducks. They would go to Sonoma and St. Helena for picnics of cheese, salami and French bread, and go to the Olive Oil Factory for her supply of olive oil.

After her mother died in 2004, Caroline decided to go back to school again. This time, she got a special certificate for teaching math, allowing her to tutor children, both privately and at elementary schools, and she worked with young adults who were trying to get their G.E.D.

After almost 30 years of being cancer free, Caroline was diagnosed with stage four breast cancer in August 2010. It was then that she decided to take lessons on the Dulcimer, which had been made for her and given to her, back in the 1960s. Playing the dulcimer was a joy. She also loved to read and she collected many books including treasured children's stories and young adult books.

Caroline died peacefully, on May 31st, 2012