

Winifred Smith 1923- 2017

Brought up in a Quaker family in New Earswick, Winifred was a staunch Friend. She went to Queen Anne's school in York, but not to the Mount, which she would have preferred. It was sad that she was unable, because of the cost, to take up a place at the Royal Academy of Music, as she had a good singing voice. She worked instead in the nursery school attached to Rowntree's factory until her marriage to Bentley Smith. Her marriage took her to Bristol, Kettering, Batley and Dewsbury and, after Bentley's death, to Kirkbymoorside. When she could no longer manage to live on her own she approached the changes and difficulties brought by her move to the care of Hartrigg Oaks with fortitude and courage.

She had a deep love of and catholic knowledge of music. She sang, and travelled widely, with the Huddersfield Choral Society. She enjoyed opera at Glyndebourne and concerts of the Ryedale Festival. The U3A classical music group gave her much joy. She was saddened that she had no children of her own; her affection and care was focussed on others, particularly her niece, Judith, and her family. Her generous hospitality was legendary, especially her cream meringues. Winifred embroidered gifts for family and friends, painted, and always took care of her appearance and dress. She found a balance between things of beauty and her life of the spirit.

Her service as an Elder was valued, first in Pontefract Monthly Meeting and then in Pickering and Hull Monthly (later Area) Meeting. She regularly attended meetings of Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting and Quakers in Yorkshire. There are many who remember her service as Warden of Yorkshire Holiday Schools with appreciation. She was happy to serve as Quaker representative on ecumenical bodies and to meet leaders of other churches on equal terms. She willingly described her deep Christian and Quaker faith to more than 40 groups.

To whichever local meeting she was attached, Winifred cared for the spiritual life of its members. She welcomed newcomers. Her vocal ministry, based on her own Christian and Quaker faith and prayer life, in a clear and strong voice, could be heard and brought depth to the worship. She was concerned for the right holding of meetings for worship and for business. She was willing to face and try to resolve difficulties in the meeting.

Hers was a strong personality; fine when moving in the same direction but you knew it if your paths crossed. She had a great sense of humour, sometimes naughty. She discerned that the writing of reports was not one of her gifts.

Her ministry was her appreciation of other people and her care of the meeting.

Accepted by Pickering and Hull AM on 12th May 2018