

Merryweather, Kathleen 1922 – 8 June 2022

Testimony to the Grace of God in the Life of Kathleen Merryweather

Kathleen Merryweather was born in Shadmoor, UK, where her ashes were scattered in September 2022 by her son following her death on 8 June, 2022, just short of her 100th birthday.

Kathleen became a Quaker after her husband, Bertram Merryweather, became convinced following World War 2. Kathleen and Bertram worshipped together in Leeds while in the UK then, at the age of 80, Kathleen moved to be close to her Australian family (two sons and three grandchildren) following Bertram's death in 2000. Kathleen chose to stay near the Gold Coast area to be close to family and continued worshipping with Friends within the small Gold Coast Worshipping Group.

When Kathleen was no longer able to drive, Brisbane Friend Mary Grbavac continued the monthly Gold Coast Worshipping Group partly to make it easier for Kathleen to attend a Meeting in her later years. Friends took it in turns to take Mary down to the Gold Coast to pick up Kathleen for Meeting even when she moved into an aged care facility. However, her increasing frailty meant that eventually the Worshipping Group was laid down and it was just occasional visits to take her out for coffee and cake.

Kathleen had a very positive impact that made people welcome. She brought a sense of joy and generosity to the Meeting and she did not pass judgement. Kathleen always read from Advices and Queries during the Meeting. She read in a considered tone so that listeners had time to consider what was read. What she read was not rushed, it was read as ministry.

Kathleen was a social worker and those skills enhanced the ways she dealt with others. A Gold Coast Friend remembers: 'She always had time for others and had a good memory for faces -- she remembered when she had met people and was always keen to help in any way she could.'

Kathleen's daughter in law was aware of Kathleen's devotion to Friends: "If there was anything Kathleen could do for her community that would be of benefit she would do it. Kathleen did not drive, but she gave the Quaker organisation her best. Her daughter in law compared Kathleen's efforts to the widow's mite -- "getting to one Meeting a month would have taken a lot out of her, but she did it".

Other Friends describe the 'sweetness' that emanated from Kathleen when she was speaking to others.

Kathleen travelled to Yearly Meeting gatherings when she could. Her daughter in law said: "Being with Quakers was close to her heart, and she would do whatever she could do to get to Quaker gatherings. She travelled to Yearly Meetings in Tasmania and Newcastle catching train and bus". Kathleen also joined Yearly Meetings in Brisbane when she could.

Kathleen and Queensland Friend Kaye Throssell had been good friends in the UK through their Quaker membership and, when both moved to Australia, Kathleen would travel to Brisbane to stay with Kaye and attend Meeting. Kathleen was involved in the early work on

the Queensland Friends in Stitches projects, helping with the first panel on Backhouse and Walker's visit to the Mill on Wickham Terrace.

We give thanks for the Grace of God in the life of Kathleen Merryweather.

Notice

Queensland Friend Kathleen Merryweather died on 8 June and was cremated on 13 June, according to her wishes. Kathleen was about a month short of her 100th birthday. Kathleen had been in assisted living at the Gold Coast for some time. A morning tea that will be a memorial for Kathleen has been organised and her family look forward to welcoming any Friends who would like to attend at Kirra Hill Community Centre/Cultural - Centre, 1 Garrick Street, Coolangatta, Monday 4 July at 11am.

Queensland Regional Meeting e-Notices, 27 June 2022.