

## **Memorial Minute for Bev Thompson**

**8.11.1953 – 5.17.2024**

### **Memorial Meeting under the Care of Old Chatham Quaker Meeting 6/8/2024**

Bev Thompson became a member of Old Chatham Quaker Meeting in 1980 and over the years contributed to the life of the Meeting in many ways. Whenever we asked her to address a particular concern, we knew that her response would be creative and well-thought out. For example, after we settled into our new meetinghouse, as treasurer she came up with an ingenious plan to quickly pay off our mortgage. She also served as clerk of Ministry and Counsel.

In worship sharing sessions each Tuesday evening for many years, where Friends share thoughts about a particular word, Bev always spoke wisely and with deep consideration. During the last year of her life, when she had to stop attending, she was greatly missed by all who participated.

Born on August 11, 1953, in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Bev grew up in Mountain Top, PA. She graduated from RPI where she met Bill Thompson. They married in 1976 and later formed a company that developed artificial intelligence systems. Their son, David, was born in 1981 and died in 2016.

Living in Nassau, NY, Bev appreciated the rural nature of her surroundings. She spoke often of the beauty of the valley where she and Bill lived, with its dirt road, creek, surrounding hills, big sky, and wildlife. Living close to nature, Bev felt a sacred reverence for life: she made friends with the chipmunks and squirrels. She also had a sense of adventure: for several years she rode a motorcycle on the back roads nearby.

While an active member of our Meeting, Bev was also a practitioner of Buddhism and member of a local sangha. She and Bill built a meditation hut to further her practice. Her dual path led her to treat all creatures with kindness.

It was this sense of open-heartedness that led Bev to help others. She was known for her generosity and commitment to members of our Meeting who were ill or facing death. During the last 10 years of her life, she took on an enormous

responsibility for others by volunteering with the Hoags Corners ambulance crew. When she was on call and heard the alarm, she would drop everything and dash out the door to provide help in whatever emergency was occurring. Often the tasks included accompanying individuals to hospitals in Albany, NY, where she would spend hours providing support.

Although wiry and physically active when she was healthy, Bev experienced serious health conditions. In 2012, she underwent a liver transplant. Later, in the last two years of her life, she dealt with much pain and uncertainty involving pancreatic cancer. But between treatments, when able, she created a wonderful solution to keep herself healthy and strong: she bought an inflatable boat and took herself around to local ponds and lakes, thoroughly enjoying the feeling of independence and joy that came from rowing in the water.

Bev faced the end with eyes open, accepting the reality of her death and appreciating Bill's loving care throughout her ordeal. When she died, Bill and family member Pam Russell were by her side. We miss her strong, steady, and kind presence among us.