



## Doris B. Ferm

August 13, 1924 - May 3, 2013

Doris Ferm, 88, died peacefully at her Bellingham home on May 3 after a brief illness. She will be profoundly missed by her family, the Bellingham Friends Meeting, and the peace and justice and environmental advocacy communities. Her humble yet determined leadership and quiet faith provided steadfast support and set an example of dedication and integrity.

She was born Doris Lippincott Bye in August 1924 to Raymond Taylor and Virginia Higgins Bye, in Philadelphia, PA. Raised a Quaker with a lifelong commitment to peacemaking, Doris in young adulthood had a profound spiritual experience of oneness with all creation. This became the guiding focus of her life: to live in respectful coexistence with all Earth's creatures, to seek harmony and justice in local communities, and to advocate for peace among people everywhere.

Doris graduated from Swarthmore College with honors, and earned an M.S. in Geology from Penn State University. In June 1949, she married John Charles Ferm. They had three children over the course of the next dozen years, and raised them in Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, and South Carolina, returning to Kentucky in 1979.

Doris helped found the Columbia, SC, Friends (Quaker) Meeting in the early 1970s, served as editor of the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and

Association newsletter, and was a charter member of the Columbia Audubon Society. It was during this period that she began to change her life in accordance with her beliefs about Earth: she became first a vegetarian, then vegan; redoubled her efforts to live simply; and began recycling long before it was common or convenient. In 1980, when she and John returned to Lexington, KY, Doris became active in the Lexington Friends Meeting, in Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting, and as a board member of the Central Kentucky Council for Peace & Justice. She also helped found the Central Kentucky Fellowship of Reconciliation.

In 1993, she wrote a poem entitled Journey:

Through all my living

how the wilder lives of Earth

brought forth my joy,

and taught me how to be

myself.

And I, slow learner,

at last have opened up to that within,

to that which teaches

how to love, to trust,

to care for

all that breathing, growing, feeding, glowing, is.

And in the coming dark,

Across the western sky,

May homeward flights of birds

Now guide me toward the light.

Although she was painfully shy as a child and a young woman, later in life Doris became an able public speaker, and was several times asked to address large gatherings on the subject of peace and the environment. A longtime member of Quaker Earthcare Witness, she gave the keynote address at Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting Annual Session in 2006, concluding: Let us live in communion with all Life Spirit, knowing that wherever we are, we are walking on holy ground.

A faithful matriarch to her family, Doris moved to Bellingham, WA, after John's death in 1999, to be closer to her daughters, their partners, and her two grandchildren. Here, peace-making and the current environmental crisis became the focus of her activism. She volunteered at Northwest Ecosystem Alliance (now Conservation Northwest) for many years, becoming a valued part of the Bellingham office, and also was awarded the Lifetime Peacemaker Award in 2008 by the Whatcom Peace and Justice Center. Doris enjoyed gardening, corresponding with friends, giving gifts to her extended family and close friends, and caring for her beloved cat, Sunshine.

When word of her final illness reached her community, nearly fifty people

gathered in her small backyard May 3, to serenade her with songs of love and peace. Among the songs raised was her request: There are Angels Hovering 'Round. She fell asleep to the sound of singing, and died a few hours later, surrounded by the love of her family. In accordance with her wishes, her remains were given a green burial at the Greenacres Memorial Park Meadow.

She is survived by her daughters, Peg Ferm (Gregg Hoover) of Monroe, WA, and Carol Virginia Ferm Herrick (Mark Herrick) of Bellingham; her grandchildren, Kendra and Ian Herrick of Bellingham; her sister, Florence Satterthwaite of Moscow, ID; a numerous devoted nieces, nephews, and great-nieces and -nephews. She is preceded in death by her husband, John C. Ferm; her son, John Barclay Ferm; and her sister, Elinor B. Harry of Bellingham.

#### Farewell Tribute Information

A Quaker memorial service, hosted by the Bellingham Friends Meeting, will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday, June 16, 2013, in the social hall at the First Congregational Church of Bellingham, 2401 Cornwall Avenue. All friends of Doris are welcome! Donations Information

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to: Bellingham Friends Meeting, P.O. Box 30144, Bellingham, WA 98228-2144; Whatcom Peace & Justice Center, P.O. Box 2444, Bellingham, WA 98227; Quaker Earthcare Witness, 173 B N. Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401-1607; or Conservation Northwest, 1208 Bay St., Bellingham, WA 98225.

# Tribute Wall

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“ *Doris Ferm our Beloved Friend, Sister, Mother, Aunt, Grandmother, and Longtime Peace Activist. Video talk from her being awarded 2006 Howard Harris Lifetime Peacemaker Award can be found by google of her name.*

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**Heather K** - May 03, 2013 at 12:00 AM