

**Memorial Minute**  
**Rosa Covington Packard**  
**May 30, 1935 - February 22, 2016**

Rosa Covington Packard will be remembered by Friends for her life's work in fierce support of the Peace Testimony and war tax resistance. Rosa's faith led her to the insight that, in her words, "To obey God's law 'Thou shalt not kill' and to heed Christ's advice 'Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you' means I cannot voluntarily pay for war or preparations for war."

Rosa was born in New York City and grew up in Princeton, New Jersey. A 1956 graduate of Vassar College, she received her Montessori diploma in 1963 and worked for many years as an educational consultant to Montessori schools. She designed and led Montessori teacher training workshops around the country including on the Pine Ridge reservation where participants affectionately nicknamed her "Pepper." Her 1972 book about the Montessori method The Hidden Hinge continues to be used in teacher training courses even today.

After attending meeting for worship regularly for about 10 years, Rosa became a member of Stamford-Greenwich Meeting in 1975. She transferred her membership to Purchase Meeting in 1989, where she was an active, frank and loving presence until moving to The Hickman retirement community in 2010.

In 1980, Rosa founded the Friends Peace Center in her home, under the care of Stamford-Greenwich Meeting. Through FPC, she continued to serve as a board member and trainer for the Alternatives to Violence Project, provided draft-registration counseling to conscientious objectors, and facilitated peace advocacy programs, such as a school forum on draft registration organized by her daughter Andrea at Greenwich High School.

From 1982 on, Rosa consistently practiced war tax witness. Each year, she placed her income taxes into an escrow account and filed her federal tax return with a letter to the Internal Revenue Service explaining that her conscience compelled her not to support war-making. She would request that the government accommodate her faith by agreeing to apply her taxes only to nonmilitary uses. She utilized the government's actions to seize her money to collect those taxes, penalties and interest as opportunities to engage IRS agents and bank officials on the peace testimony and faithfulness to God's call. Through the 1990's, Purchase Monthly Meeting and New York Yearly Meeting recorded minutes of suffering for conscience's sake to reflect and celebrate her witness.

In 1983, Rosa helped Stamford-Greenwich Meeting establish an escrow account for war tax witness, which continues today as the Peace Tax Escrow Account now under the care of Purchase Quarterly Meeting. Rosa was a founding member of the Friends Peace Teams in the mid-1990's and helped nurture its growth and development for a decade. She established a task group on war tax witness within New York Yearly Meeting. She served as a representative to the United Nations for Conscience and Peace Tax International. She also served on the boards of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, the National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors, Project Hearts and Minds, as well as the peace committees of Purchase

Monthly Meeting and New York Yearly Meeting and on the boards of Friends World College and Connecticut Friends School.

In 1997, Rosa agreed to be the plaintiff in a federal lawsuit, *Rosa C. Packard v. United States of America*, challenging the government's refusal to accommodate conscientious objection to paying for war. When the District Court judge dismissed her claim as a mere tax protester, Rosa responded "my religious witness is against war, not taxes." Rosa prosecuted her claim through an appeal and a request to be heard by the United States Supreme Court, which was denied. She led New York Yearly Meeting to participate in this public witness as a Friend of the Court, an Amicus Curiae. Her vigorous pursuit of legal recognition for a right of conscience to refuse participation in warfare prompted Friends in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (the War Tax Concerns/Support Group) to write:

"As we reflected on this stunning support from her Yearly Meeting, we realized that it grows out of the many years of ministry and witness by Rosa Packard on issues of conscientious objection to war and affirmations of pathways to peace. She has plowed up fallow ground, sown seeds of wisdom and insight, and put her faith into action. Sometimes laboring alone, often enduring criticism, she has committed her intelligence, her material resources and her determined spirit to the service of peacemaking. . . . [W]e know Rosa Packard's witness is that of an authentic Quaker peacemaker."

Rosa was a loving and attentive mother and grandmother. She is survived by her children Caroline, Andrea, and Wells and six grandchildren. Her marriage to Edward Packard ended in divorce in 1972

Until she was slowed by stroke, Rosa was renowned among Purchase Meeting Friends as a superior cook and gracious host. Her home in Greenwich was a frequent gathering place for Quaker business and socializing and a welcoming shelter for traveling F/friends. She was a mentor to many and the "spiritual mother" to the war tax resistance movement, both internationally and within New York Yearly Meeting.