

Our member Nancy Caldwell Sorel died on February 5, 2015 at the age of 80 from Lewy Body Dementia. Nancy had been a long time member of Bulls Head-Oswego Meeting, along with her husband Edward Sorel and their daughters Jenny and Katherine, who attended First Day School at the Bentley Farm space in the 1970s. Towards the end of Nancy's life we saw her with her daughters and grandchildren. From first to last she had a generous, kind and loving spirit.

Nancy was a noted historian and author. Her body of work included the books "The Women Who Wrote the War" and "All about Eve: Personal Reflections of Childbirth" and essays that appeared in Esquire, The Atlantic, and the New York Times Book Review. She collaborated with her husband, the artist Edward Sorel, on two books: "Word People" and "First Encounters." She also used her interest in history as a contributor and editor of "Quaker Crosscurrents" a history of Quakers in New York State, especially on the sections on Peace and Social Justice.

Nancy Caldwell graduated from Ohio Wesleyan in 1956 where she majored in English Literature. She continued to pursue her study of literature at the University of Edinburgh and later NYU. Nancy lived briefly in London where she was introduced to the Religious Society of Friends. In 1961 she volunteered for the United Nations Association International Service in Linz, Austria, building homes for World War II refugees who were still stateless sixteen years after the end of war.

Nancy and Ed met in 1963 at Morningside Friends Meeting, which they later joined and where they were married in 1965. They became active in the anti-Vietnam war movement; and in 1967, carrying their infant daughter Jenny, they participated in the (illegal) Easter Sunday pilgrimage across the Peace Bridge to Canada to deliver medical supplies destined for both North and South Vietnam.

When the family moved to Putnam County, Nancy cherished the time spent in nature with her children and Newfoundland dog. A music lover, she was instrumental in starting the Putnam Concert Society. The family transferred their membership to Bulls Head - Oswego, and Nancy participated in a worship group at Green Haven Correctional Facility as well as the Youth Program at Powell House. She had the rare ability to speak truth from love.

Nancy lived the last 33 years of her life primarily in New York City where she relished doing research at the Morgan and New York Public Libraries and writing at one end of their TriBeCa loft while Ed drew at the other. During those years she attended meeting at Bulls Head - Oswego when she could and continued her faithful attendance at Yearly Meeting Sessions at Silver Bay. She served on numerous Yearly Meeting committees and acted as recording clerk for multiple terms. For a long time she roomed with her good friend Marge Currie in the Inn to be "close to the action."

Throughout her life Nancy emanated kindness, generosity and warmth. Even as the disease progressed, her grace and spirit prevailed. During Nancy's last Meeting for Worship with us near the end of her life, she gave moving vocal ministry and after meeting played joyfully with her youngest grandson Thelonious. We were fortunate to know her.

In addition to her husband, Ed, she is survived by her sisters, Suzanne Smith and Virginia Craig, both of Kansas; her beloved children and step-children, Jenny Sorel, Katherine Sorel, Madeline Sorel Kahn and Leo Sorel; and her six grandchildren, Saskia, Sabella, Walter, Adam, Dulio and Thelonious, whom she adored.