

William B. Woolf Memorial Minute  
*Port Townsend Friends Meeting*  
1932 - 2010

William Blauvelt Woolf, a founding member of Port Townsend Friends Meeting in Washington State, died on December 6, 2010 at Swedish Medical Center in Seattle in the company of his wife Shirley and daughter Heather. His death followed a long illness; he was 78.

Bill Woolf was born in New Rochelle, New York, on September 18, 1932. He attended John Muir Junior College (Pasadena), Pomona College, Claremont Graduate School, and the University of Michigan, where he was awarded the Ph.D. in mathematics in 1960.

He taught at the University of Washington from 1959-68, during which time he was a named plaintiff in *Baggett v. Bullitt*, the 1963 faculty loyalty oath case adjudicated by the U.S. Supreme Court. He spent 1963-64 in Helsinki as a Fulbright Fellow. From 1968 to 1979, he served as a senior staffer of the American Association of University Professors in Washington, D.C. Passionate about education, he served on the board of the National Child Research Center from 1975 to 1977. He had an editor's eye and temperament and thrived as editor of *Mathematical Reviews* at the American Mathematics Society in Ann Arbor from 1979 to 1990, and then moved to Providence, Rhode Island, eventually serving as that Society's Associate Executive Director.

Bill was raised an Episcopalian. As a teenager he was an altar boy until, as he told the story, he read consciously the Nicene Creed and concluded that he was not a subscriber. In 1980, Bill, his wife Shirley, and their daughter Heather joined the Religious Society of Friends and became for the next ten years active in the life of the Ann Arbor Friends Meeting in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Bill served on the Nominating Committee where he learned from Ann Arbor elders to appreciate the "good order of Friends." During this time he was a major supporter of the Ann Arbor Meeting's declaration of sanctuary for Salvadoran refugees and worked with the Sanctuary Committee to support a Salvadoran family living in Ann Arbor at Quaker House. From 1985 to 1990 he was a trustee and treasurer for Detroit Friends School. Upon moving to Providence in 1990, Bill and Shirley transferred their membership to the Providence Monthly Meeting.

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Returning to the Pacific Northwest in their retirement, Bill and Shirley settled in Port Townsend in 1995 and became active members in the local Friends Worship Group. In 2002 they became founding members of the Port Townsend Friends Meeting, where Bill served with enthusiasm as clerk of the meetinghouse committee. Bill was a strong supporter of the Friends Committee on National Legislation and watched with particular interest the greening of FCNL's building in Washington, D.C.

Bill was active in local civic life, serving on the Higher Education Access Committee as a founding member. An enthusiastic supporter of local farmers, he served on the Farmer's Market Board, as well as on the Law and Justice Council. He was an active member of the Jefferson County Democrats. He founded the Jefferson County chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union. More recently he established the Jefferson Healthcare C-Pap Support Group. He arranged for his eyes to be donated upon his death to Sight Life for medical research into macular degeneration.

Bill loved sailing. In 1969, he and Shirley bought a 30-foot sloop christened *Mutiny* and, with baby Heather, sailed the Intracoastal Waterway from Washington, D.C. to Florida. After retiring, they acquired a motor cruiser and named it *Aftermath*. As fascinated with building houses as with sailing boats, Bill was proud of the two homes he helped design, one in Great Falls, Virginia and the other in Port Townsend. He loved animals and he loved to cook. He was an avid court-watcher who believed voting in a presidential election was, at heart, about predicting a candidate's likely Supreme Court choices. As a person he was amiable, generous in his friendships, intellectually tough-minded--and occasionally curmudgeonly.

Survivors include his wife Shirley; daughter Heather McRae-Woolf (married to Jeffrey Clark) of Ann Arbor; sister Peggy Grier of Carmel, CA; and granddaughter Orlanda Kaddy McRae-Clark. His Siberian husky, Lucia, also survived him.

A memorial service under the care of Port Townsend Friends Meeting was held on March 6, 2011 at the Northwest Maritime Center in Port Townsend. Bill encouraged that any memorial contributions be made to the Friends Committee on National Legislation Education Fund.