

Memorial Minute for Elizabeth Kaufman (May 20, 1929 – September 19, 2013)

Betty began her participation in the Ann Arbor Meeting community during the mid-1980s at the time of our declaration of Sanctuary for refugees fleeing from the civil war in El Salvador. This declaration was made in the knowledge that such support was considered illegal by our government and would thus be civil disobedience. This did not faze Betty; she became an active member of the Meeting's Committee for Central American Refugees from its beginning.

After helping escort the Garay (called "Celaya") family from a church in Chicago to Ann Arbor, she was one of the most lasting and generous friends to the seven family members, arranging for *pro bono* medical and dental care, having them to her summer home on Whitmore Lake on frequent occasions, and just being there for them.

Born in Dallas, Texas and graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, Betty spent a year studying in Paris, worked briefly as a secretary for *The New Yorker*, and in 1954 married Arnold S. Kaufman. He later joined the University of Michigan faculty, and Betty earned a master's in social work, serving then as a social worker in the Ann Arbor Public Schools. After Arnold died in 1974, Betty joined the faculty at U-M Dearborn, where she headed the Women's Center and received the first Susan B. Anthony Award given to "a woman whose life and deeds exemplify the dedication, fortitude, political agitation, and involvement of Susan B. Anthony on behalf of women." Later moving to the Ann Arbor campus, she was a program director and researcher for the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, studying equality and the rights of women in the workplace. In 1986, she was awarded a PhD in social work from U-M and soon appointed to the faculty of Eastern Michigan University, where she taught social work until her retirement in 1997.

Active politically and promoting social justice and women's rights, she also served on the boards of a number of charitable organizations, including the Corner Health Center in Ypsilanti and as Ann Arbor Meeting representative to the Jackson Social Welfare Fund. She always brought a thoughtful and intelligent perspective to

deliberations of these committees. On most Sundays, she could be found sitting on a bench near the windows during the 11 o'clock worship in Ann Arbor Meeting. Wanting to sit lightly with religious institutions, she never became a member of the Meeting, but she and Wes Vivian, her partner for many years, were regular participants in a Friendly Eights group. This continued through her growing dementia which she faced with equanimity and charm. Many Friends recall her with fondness and witnessed to her effect on their lives during a specially called *Meeting for Worship in Thanksgiving for the Grace of God, as shown in the life of Elizabeth Kaufman* held at the Meetinghouse on the afternoon of September 26, 2013. At that meeting, the numerous family and Friends present were moved by the *testimonio* in Spanish by Pilar Garay (Celaya) of the abiding friendship that Betty had shown her and her family after they arrived in Michigan. This was interpreted into English by

Pilar's son, Roberto Garay, now married and living in Ypsilanti not far from his parents. The biographical remembrance printed in the handout distributed at the memorial described Betty well: "She was soft-spoken, with a natural grace, a slight Texas drawl, an irresistible smile, and a gift for listening."