

Memorial Minute for Kyo Takahashi (November 25, 1929—August 11, 2014)

Kyo Takahashi, a long-time member of Pine River Friends Meeting, died on August 11, 2014 after a prolonged illness from cancer of the colon and the complications of an operation for it. He was born in Tokyo on November 25, 1929 and was raised in Yokohama. His given name was Kamimura Manju. The name Manju was given to him by his uncle, who was the chief priest at the Buddhist Temple, Rendaiji, and came to be renowned in Japan. For a time in his early life, he lived on the temple grounds with this uncle, who became a primary childhood and adult influence in his life. After his parents separated in 1948, Manju and his sister took their mother's last name, Takahashi, as their own. His first name was changed to Kyoichi, and, after he became an American citizen, to Kyo. Nearing the end of 1944, Japanese society as a whole was suffering and schools were widely emptied of students. At age 14 he enlisted in the Naval Air Force, the kamikaze division, but did not undergo training as a pilot, because of his age and his status as a first-borne male child.

During the years after the war, he studied art in Japan and then immigrated to Los Angeles, where he continued to study and became an American citizen. Kyo worked as an art director for advertising agencies in Los Angeles, Tokyo, New York, and Detroit, specializing ultimately in automotive accounts. In addition, he illustrated children's books, such as *The Musical Alphabet* by Kohchi Hartori (1977) and *Ku-Chan* by David Riessen (1979). His own writings include: *Overview of Technical Illustration* (1981); *Japanese of No Return; 100-Year History of Japanese Immigrants to North America* (1991). He translated *Whimsically Grotesque: Early Writings of Lafcadio Hearn* (2004). Throughout his life, he read widely of the cultural and social aspects of Japanese and American history. He published *Seven Lives*, an autobiography sequenced with a history of the W.W. II between the U.S. and Japan in the Pacific illustrated with his own stippled drawings of photographs, that were remarkable. He was a passionate advocate of the Quaker peace testimony and loved the history and personality of Inazo Nitobe, the Japanese diplomat and educator in the nineteen-twenties whose life was so illustrative of that testimony.

His life of service to Pine River Monthly Meeting, Birmingham Monthly Meeting, Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting, and Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, and the Friends School in Detroit was reflected in unusual artistic, sensitive and unostentatious behavior as expressions of the "habits of his heart". He and his wife, Mary, regularly made the eighty-five mile drive down to Mt. Pleasant to open up the building, set up the Meeting Room and prepared for the post-meeting snacks on Sundays. He created special storm windows, library and equipment shelves, and maintained program video equipment for the Meeting. He also installed and supervised the Meeting's website which he designed for outreach and inspiration. Kyo had a way of surprising Pine River Meeting with spontaneous project ideas. Several years ago, one was to produce a "peace pole" and install it on the grounds of the Montessori School, where Pine River holds its meeting for worship, only with eight languages and a dove carved by the parent of a Meeting attendee. His written and photographic and artistic display on the fifty-year history of the Lake

Erie Yearly Meeting was beautifully done. Japanese visitors invited to the Yearly Meeting's annual session were graced by his and Mary's hospitality, as were all who knew him throughout his life. He was a model of humility and compassionate regard for the people of the world and our Society.