

Memorial Minute for Rilma Oxley Buckman
(July 18, 1915 – July 28, 2015)

Rilma Buckman, Broadmead's much loved centenarian, died peacefully July 28, 2015, in the company of Friends, at Swan Creek Retirement Village where she lived for the past 20 years.

Born and raised in rural Woodstock, Vermont, Rilma graduated from Mount Holyoke College in 1937 at the height of the Depression with a degree in Economics and Sociology. After graduation, Rilma headed to New York City seeking employment. She did clerical work, wrote advertising copy, worked with Margaret Sanger and Planned Parenthood in public relations and as a secretary, and was an administrative assistant with the American Red Cross, while (in her spare time!) she earned a Master's degree in Sociology from New York University.

In 1945, just three months after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, she went to Japan with the Red Cross and also served as Assistant Public Welfare Officer for Japan, preparing their first National Disaster Plan. An encounter with Elizabeth Gray Vining, the American Quaker tutor of the Japanese Crown Prince, furthered an interest in the Religious Society of Friends previously kindled by a chance attendance at a Quaker Meeting for Worship while in college and, later, a Quaker wedding.

Upon her return from Japan in 1947, Rilma joined the faculty of Purdue University. During that time, she commuted to the University of Chicago, where she earned a Ph.D. in Sociology in 1952. She joined 57th Street Monthly Meeting in Chicago, where she served as Clerk of the Ministry and Counsel Committee. She also served as a member of the Chicago Region Executive Committee of American Friends Service Committee.

Following her tenure at Purdue, Rilma moved to Ann Arbor to pursue a Master's degree in Social Work. While there, she served as the first Recording Clerk of the newly formed Green Pastures Quarterly Meeting.

In July of 1969, Rilma peacefully demonstrated and was arrested at the Pentagon, reading the names of the American war dead in Vietnam from a copy of the *Congressional Record*.

Her professional interests in community planning and public service took her to Toledo, Chicago, and Cleveland over the next 20+ years. In each locale, she affiliated with and selflessly served her Quaker community as Clerk of the Cleveland and Toledo Friends Meetings, as Clerk of the Ministry and Oversight Committee of the Cleveland Meeting, as Clerk of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting, and as a Member of the American Section of Friends World Committee on Consultation.

Rilma retired to Toledo with her longtime friend Marie "Wink" Fox in 1980 and renewed her association with the Toledo Worship Group/Preparative Meeting and Broadmead Monthly Meeting. Over the next 35 years, Rilma endeared herself to young and old with her bright and cheerful attitude. She had a genuine interest in others and their concerns, was a mentor to many Friends in the Meeting, and was a source of wisdom and clarity. Rilma took utter delight in the children of the Meeting and took part in their lessons as needed. She authored a memoir, titled *Tales of a Vintage Vermonter*, which was published in 2001.

Despite illness and setbacks, when one inquired, Rilma declared herself to be "thriving." She left us with her wise and optimistic counsel:

"Let your hours be filled with wonder, that your days may be filled with joy."