

## **Record of Remembrance for Maureen Dale/Mandelstam**

Our dear friend Maureen Mandelstam, who has died in Jerusalem, became a Quaker by conviction in 1981 at Oxford meeting. She was born Mary Maureen Dale in South Africa in 1926 and learned early to deal with adversity: her mother was hospitalised when she was a child and she was brought up partly by two strict great-aunts. Later, Maureen was undaunted when her stepmother opposed her training as a doctor. Maureen financed her medical studies by working in a laboratory and became one of the 'boffins of 1945,' as her Medical BSc class was known: a stellar group of medical students who included a Nobel prize-winner and ground-breaking scientists (such as the team that developed the implantable cardiac defibrillator). Maureen became famous in medical circles for her best-selling textbook, *Pharmacology*, written with Dr Humphrey Rang.

While in South Africa, Maureen campaigned actively against apartheid. After qualifying as a doctor, she joined the Institute of Family and Community Health in Durban, which was a progressive, multiracial training scheme for medical staff to work in a network of health centres throughout South Africa. Maureen wished to work as a family doctor in one of the Institute's teaching health centres in Durban, but agreed instead to take over for a time the training of prospective laboratory workers. Meanwhile the apartheid government was becoming suspicious of the Institute's activities.

Soon after she was arrested on a demonstration against the pass laws, Maureen was told by a government representative that it was ridiculous to think of blacks being laboratory technicians, that the course must end, and that she would be transferred to a leprosy institute as a laboratory technician. Maureen promptly resigned, and was invited to join the faculty of the newly-established Durban Medical School to head the sub-division of Pharmacology. She had no experience in pharmacology beyond what she had learned as a medical student, but responded heart and soul to the challenge.

In 1961, she accepted a position in the Pharmacology Department at University College in London, where she taught, researched and gained a PhD in immunopharmacology. Before she retired, her medical research focused on the immunopharmacology of asthma and rheumatoid arthritis. Maureen's innovative teaching methods found their way into *Pharmacology*. Now in its eighth edition, the textbook has been translated into Chinese, Greek, Portuguese, Polish, and several other languages and has sold over half-a-million copies. The latest editions include an interactive programme that uses high-level animation and graphic techniques: Maureen was adept with her beloved Apple computer. Knowledgeable conversations with teenagers about the best apps continued into her 80s.

After moving to London, Maureen married Joel Mandelstam, whom she had known in South Africa, and who was Professor of Microbiology at Oxford University. For 25 years Maureen commuted daily by train to London, marking her students' papers on the way, and developing long-lasting friendships with fellow-commuters. After her retirement, one of them introduced her to Racing Demon. She enjoyed it so much that she played regularly with a group of friends. Although the constant travel made it hard to attend Quaker meeting until she retired, Maureen attended regularly thereafter, both at Oxford meeting and with North Oxford Friends.

Susan King writes: “I met Maureen at the Oxford Meeting House and four of us decided to get involved in a “friendly four”. The four were Maureen, Linet Arthur, Rosemarie Marks-Crockett and myself. Our chosen activities were:

1. Getting to know each other.
2. Poetry.
3. We viewed twenty paintings at the Ashmolean Museum and then discussed them.
4. Evensong service at a candle-lit Oxford chapel.

“I feel blessed and am very thankful to have known Maureen.”

Following Joel's death, an old friendship with another South African medic, Joe Abramson, blossomed into romance. Joe had proposed to Maureen when she was 19 and he was 21, but she felt then that they were too young to marry. He asked again, using the same book (*Will you marry me?*). This time Maureen said “Yes,” and they married when Maureen was 85 and Joe, 87. She already had two stepchildren, Michael and Annie, and 4 step-grandchildren from her marriage to Joel. She acquired three more stepchildren – Joe’s two sons, Larry and Howie, and his daughter, Cara from his first marriage – as well as 8 step-grandchildren and 5 step-great grandchildren. She revelled in them all. Maureen moved to live with Joe in Jerusalem, where she was “verrrrry happy”, as she wrote on numerous occasions. She was typically brave about her final illness, mentioning to friends only the annoyances of dizziness and difficulties with her sight, without ever revealing the seriousness of her diagnosis.

Judith Atkinson writes: “Although I only got to know Maureen when she was already spending most of her time in Israel, I really valued our Ffriendship. Even at the stage when she was rarely in Oxford, she loyally kept in touch with North Oxford Friends, sending us bulletins and gorgeous photos, so we knew she was keeping us in mind, as we were her.

“Because her flat was just round the corner from our house, she often walked past and it was a joy to welcome her in for coffee and chat about Quakerism, medicine, family relationships and much more. Maureen had lost her first husband to cancer, and I got to know her shortly after my own husband had been diagnosed with myeloma. She was a kind and very sympathetic support to me when I was struggling to cope with shock and fear. As she began to spend more time in Israel, she remained very loyal to Friends in North Oxford and sent regular bulletins about her life there. I think we always hoped she would return for more visits - and we shall miss her.”

While Maureen was in Jerusalem, she welcomed visiting Quakers to her home and enjoyed with them short but much appreciated silences and worship. Gwithian Doswell writes: 'I went to see Maureen in her flat in Oxford, but it was on my short visits to Jerusalem that I connected most deeply with her. During a time which was very challenging for me personally, Maureen's friendship and welcoming smile were invaluable. The profound gathered silences we shared were very precious, a special gift for both of us.'

Linet Arthur writes: “I am really going to miss Maureen. She was such fun to spend time with - her joie de vivre had extended into her 80s and she was a wonderful raconteur. Maureen's intelligence shone through too, not just in her conversation, but also in her medical career. She continued to write and update her textbooks until the last few years of her life. She was

exceptionally kind-hearted, always eager to help others. She rescued me when I temporarily had nowhere to live - she invited me to stay in her top flat for as long as I wanted. I am particularly glad that I accepted her offer, because it gave me a chance to get to know her and I feel that she has been a major blessing in my life.”

*Maureen Mandelstam Dale. Born in South Africa 1926. Died in Jerusalem, 2016. Record of Remembrance collated by Linet Arthur and edited by Marieke Faber Clarke, August 2016*