

Record of Remembrance for Joan Margaret (Janet) Mandeville nee Beechey 24/11/1915 to 07/01/2019

Janet's life was inevitably influenced by the First and Second World Wars, but in spite of this (or perhaps because of it) she employed her gifts and opportunities to live life to the full and to enable others to do so – her own children, her students, her youth club participants and the many people she assisted and encouraged in her work with the Samaritans.

Janet experienced great sadness as well as joy in her life: the ending of her marriage and the death of her son John were enormous losses, which she encountered bravely. Janet's family included Quaker forebears, and when spirituality became important to her she went back first to the Anglican church, then, concerned by its failure to support disarmament, she came to Friends. She became a member in Clacton-on-Sea, moving later to Cambridge Oasthouse and lastly to Oxford Local Meeting.

After some years in sheltered accommodation in Cambridge, Janet's health suddenly deteriorated and she moved to a care home in Oxford to be near her daughter Judith Atkinson. Increasing frailty limited what she could do, although for a while she regularly attended Oxford's Wednesday lunch time Meetings for Worship. Friends enjoyed her interesting conversations and appreciated her attendance. The meeting felt an ongoing sense of connection with Janet through Judith.

In the last years of her life Janet became increasingly confused. The Meeting kept in touch with her, largely through Judith but also other Friends who visited her in the care home on occasion. At her funeral, held after the manner of Friends, vocal ministry by her four daughters, one of her sons-in-law and one former student gave eloquent testimony to the grace of God as shown in the life and service of Janet Mandeville.