

Dick Bellin

It is with great sadness that the Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology announces the passing of Dick Bellin. Dick was a member of FCRP for half of its 70-year history and a vital part of its leadership for the last quarter century.

Dick has alternately been called a smiling Buddha and a trickster, a peacekeeper and a fixer. Dick wore many hats on FCRP's Planning Committee. But as he sat at meetings in his favorite corner on one of Pendle Hill's legendary broken-down sofas, he was always musing on which hat he could get on another FCRP member's head. Though Dick never served as Clerk, most everyone thought of him as the team's manager. He used his pianist's skill to place the right strokes in the right place. He called on his engineer's common sense to recognize which gears would mesh well to keep the machinery of FCRP up and running—and which gears might require some oil.

Dick was an enormously practical, intelligent, hard-working man. He brought more than was required to any task at hand. He served as both FCRP Treasurer and Registrar, the latter for more than a decade. Dick also acted as our correspondence secretary—often contacting old members to find out why they no longer attended. He had ideas about everything—including the many Plenary Speakers who were invited at his suggestion. He also was known for stepping into the meandering nature of Quaker business meetings with his keen analytic ability. He was ready with data that no one had thought to request whenever he thought it might further the life of the Conference. So we learned: how many Conference registrations were necessary for our organization to break even; when it was time to raise fees; and that new members formed a third of those attending our Conference, and so deserved special attention. Information one did not wish to hear—whether delivered to the group or one on one—was often presented with a knowing giggle.

Even more significantly, Dick thrust our Quaker organization, which had been born into a world that tuned into radios, into the digital age. In 2001, before most of us had not yet mastered e-mail, Dick had created an FCRP website. Next he drew on his scholarly side to fill it with FCRP history. At Swarthmore College Library, working with George Sinnott, Dick tracked down archives documenting FCRP's history. Thanks to Dick and George, the FCRP website now offers many seminal essays from FCRP's early days, including back issues from the Conference's one-time regularly published journal, *Inward Light*.

Quakers believe that there is that of God in every individual. In Jungian psychology, that is paralleled by the notion that our unconscious is always ready to bring forth signs and symbols that will lead us closer to wholeness—make us bigger people, more complete spiritual beings. Dick had his own way of birthing the hidden gifts of others, bringing those gifts into the Light, and teasing them into action. Many folks have spoken of his support which helped them grow beyond their comfort level—whether it was to convince them to come to the Conference, join the Planning Committee, lead a small group, or lead an entire Conference. Dick would spot someone's sleeping energy and talent and try to wake it up gently; if that didn't work, he wasn't beyond giving it a good kick.

In an essay now available online thanks to Dick, one of FCRP's earlier leaders, John Yungblut, elucidates the parallel between Quaker worship and Jungian psychology at the heart of the long-lived FCRP: Both cultivate Spirit from the inside and move it outward. Adherence to a path that explores the messages of this Inner Light or Inner Spirit—whether it reveals itself in the silence of Quaker worship or in dreams and other forms from the Unconscious—promises transformation of mind, body, and soul.

Dick first attended FCRP in 1977 at Haverford College and when John Yungblut was still with us. Those of us who met Dick then—and knew him in his early years on what was then the Executive Committee—remember a somewhat awkward man who decided he had found home and was going to stay no matter what. He would build a place for himself with us.

And there was some delicious irony in the fact that Dick staunchly maintained that although he was a Quaker, he remained a Jew who did not believe in God. Yet if the measure of the Spirit moving within the individual is best measured by a person's growing and truly changing—or transforming as we Jungians like to say—Dick is one of our Conference's most colorful flags.

Those of us who have known Richard Bellin's passion and love for the Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology—and his gallant efforts to keep our Conference vital—also know that not just his memory, but his great Spirit lives on.

--Lorraine Krehling