



Inside Friends House

Everyday Life Inside the Friends House Neighborhood

Resident Profile: Harold and Amy Bush

by Barbara Hodgkinson



A long and happy marriage has benefits! In 2007, Friends House residents helped celebrate Amy and Harold's 70th wedding anniversary. Now, both 96 years old, they are healthy and active in the community. At 94, Harold renewed his driver's license for five more years.

Growing up on farms in Iowa (Harold) and Nebraska (Amy) at the height of the depression and in the dust-bowl years, they each felt that business college would be their key to economic survival. They met there in 1934 and were married three years later, after both had found jobs. Harold decided to become a CPA and, to that end, took correspondence courses and night classes. He knew he wanted to leave the Midwest and learned of an opportunity in Berkeley at USDA's Soil Conservation Service in 1939. He was hired by mail and the Bushes moved to Berkeley. Harold passed the CPA exam two years later.

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For Healthier and Happier Lives

by Betsy Harrell

He commences many meetings with a string of jokes rather than banging a gavel as earlier chairs have done. Laughter ripples around the library. He aims to lighten the atmosphere before the Association buckles down to business.

Finally, John, the Chair—or Clerk, as he prefers to be titled after the manner of Quakers—brings the Apartment Residents' Association meeting to order. After asking approval of the previous month's minutes, he begins delivering remarks like: "Welcome to new resident so-and-so and will she please stand up?" or "There'll be a meeting on Tuesday to discuss our monthly fee raises." Next, John proceeds to call for reports by the following (and others): treasurer, cluster and board reps, heads of standing committees (Buildings & Grounds, Film, Fitness Center, Hospitality, Library, Program, and Sight & Sound), interest groups, and, near the end, executive director. In the midst of these commentaries, we discuss issues such as: what to do about residents'

desire and need for better transportation to off-campus affairs; how will we be affected by the City's plan to open up to the public the creek path adjacent to campus; and, to save paper, should we stop putting hardcopies of our minutes in residents' folders?

All 86 apartment residents are Association members; around half show up for these self-government assemblies. The Association's 14-member steering committee, the House Council, meets in sessions spaced between Association gatherings. Almost every year we debate the function of and necessity for the House Council, but

always it survives. According to Association bylaws and the Residents' Handbook, the Council is a forum for communication, discussion, finding solutions, and setting Association agendas.

Our community is divided into four clusters. Each elects two representatives who are responsible for reporting to the House Council any grassroots happenings and issues. When they report a concern, the Council discusses it and decides if the matter should go on the Association agenda. Although real power lies with Friends House administration and board, residents know that if we manage to speak with a timely, unified voice we can often wield influence over matters affecting our lives.

Elections happen in October. Our custom for producing candidates is that every resident is visited and invited to volunteer to run for office.

And so our leaders are ourselves—and since we're elderly, often forgetful, sometimes bumbling, and frequently inexperienced at leading

meetings, we make mistakes (like inadvertently skipping past agenda items). But a wonderful aspect of living at Friends House is that we're all in the same fix; furthermore, we consciously respect and act fond of each other—with the result that we either pay no mind to mistakes or else laugh them off in a kindly manner.

Though the above paragraphs may sound dry to an outsider, they describe the vital voice of our residents. Fortunately, early planners of our community believed that if we who live here partake in running our lives, we'll remain healthier and happier.



John Boles, Marion Cushman,
Joe Hammerquist, Betsy Harrell, John Hause, Jim Johnson,
Kay Kerriden, Margaret Lowery, Helen McStravick, Jeanne Overcashier,
Ruth Paine, Joan Panaro, Myfanwy Plank, Nancy Sackman,
Charlotte Smith, Frieda Tomlin

*Friends House —
Creating Sustainable
Community*

General Information

707-538-0152

*Monday through Friday
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM*

Jim Johnson
Executive Director
707-573-4501

Paddy Coreris
Director of Development
707-573-4508

Apartment Resident Services
707-573-4504

Health Care Unit
707-573-4517

Assisted Living Center
707-573-4523

Volunteer Services
707-538-0152

Board of Directors

Liz Baker • Ann Boone
Millie Burt • Suzanne Brown
Ed Flowers • Betsy Harrell
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Scott Smith • Susan Stanley
Tom Whiteman
Kale Williams (Clerk)



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Services for the Elderly**
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*A Nonprofit Quaker-Inspired
Continuing Care
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**Message from the Executive Director
Jim Johnson**

Beyond Unique

My theme is the uniqueness of Friends House, and I'll begin to count the ways. Out of about ninety Continuing Care Retirement Communities in California we are undoubtedly the smallest, though others do have one-story garden apartments. But here, residents can step out of their front or back door into the beautiful Northern California countryside. They can see the *Ceanothus* and *Manzanita*. There are plenty of native poppies, ubiquitous Anna's humming birds, American goldfinches, titmouses, mockingbirds, and crows. If one walks to the central green, our rock stream mirrors so many natural scenes in the dry valleys of this northern part of the state. I have not heard of another CCRC where the garter snakes like to come indoors, but I suppose I shouldn't ask what type of snakes come inside in Riverside County!



As ethnocentric as we are, the natural world just sets the stage for the unique people who live at Friends House. Every resident has had an interesting life, most are highly educated, led materially comfortable lives, weren't heavily involved in corporate America, and most knew at least one other person whom they liked enough to follow here. Some of our residents were jailed for opposing war or nuclear proliferation; some did alternative service in

WWII. Every one decided to spend some of their savings to move to our intentional community founded by unprogrammed Friends, and that puts us into another unique category on the left coast. There are no other unprogrammed Friends retirement communities west of Ohio. And even most of those in the East don't have the same degree of freedom regarding resident participation in governance that we have. Of course, almost all are quite a bit larger.

Friends House was one of the first California retirement communities that had two residents elected by their peers as voting members of the board. Pilgrim Place in Claremont has had residents as board members for forty years. Mt. San Antonio Gardens, also in eastern Los Angeles County, developed similar governance but later than Friends House did.

As this article goes to print, I understand that the Nominating Committee is considering amending the corporate by-laws to allow a resident, elected by her peers, to become Clerk of this Quaker-inspired board. This is really quite a radical notion. I know of no other CCRC in California with a resident Chair (Clerk in our case) of the board. Foxdale

Village in Pennsylvania and Broadmead in Maryland have or have had similar arrangements. But even counting Friends House, I'm only aware of three of over twenty Quaker retirement communities where a resident has become Clerk. I don't know for sure, but I believe this method of organization is unique to Friends and Friends-inspired communities. Feels like a good exercise in democracy.

Variety is the Spice of Life

by Betsy Harrell

Donna Scornavacca's ten-year association with Friends House reveals a woman of remarkably diverse talents. She was first hired as a gardener, having learned of the opening through her friend, Guy Littman, our former Finance Officer; his son was pals with her two boys. Recalling her time of tending our campus grounds, Donna mentions the many tiny lawns which have since vanished in favor of drought-resistant plantings, and she remembers raking lots of leaves. She misses tending the varied plant life on campus and seeing residents every workday.

When gardening became too physically taxing, Donna moved to a part-time position as Administrative Assistant in the Development Department, and has there remained. She helps the department director in myriad ways, like taking minutes and producing reports for meetings. She edits our in-house *Friday Newsletter* and *Employee's Newsletter*. She operates the laminating machine and is the Friends House notary public. She comments, "I have a weird job here—my



duties are so changeable. It continuously offers variety and challenge, and I like that."

However, Donna's principal endeavor has been maintaining the departmental database. This vital instrument contains information about our valued donors, potential contributors, prospective residents and others with interest in our little community. It's a link to the greater community; it categorizes, for example, those with connections to our skilled nursing facility.

It happened that when the department acquired this database system, eTapestry, Donna had to figure out how to become the expert in using it—a complex job entailing much trial and error. Yet she realizes that in approaching this task she already possessed considerable computer competency, had an affinity for manipulating the system, and now feels comfortable with its organization and management. The thousands of details it holds are pretty well cleaned up, through eliminating duplications, double-checking addresses, and the like. Twice a week Donna oversees two volunteers who assist with this database, which proved so challenging that she wrote them a simple

instruction manual.

The other half of Donna's work-life is a totally contrasting activity, consisting of running her own massage therapy business. This job is quite separate from Friends House except that most of her clients are from our community. She lugs the compact package of her massage table right into the lucky resident's cottage, turns on soothing background music, and sets to work with strong arms and unhurried hands.

In off-hours, gardening, biking, hiking, and walking her three sleek greyhounds bring pleasure. After a dog's life of racing, they were rescued by a concerned organization, cared for, and made available to Donna and her partner for adoption. The pets' former lives at the racetrack were hard, as they were considered disposable and treated disgracefully. Now seven and eight years old, "They're couch potatoes," Donna explains with her ready laugh. "They don't want to run—they're retired!"

"Resident Profile: Harold and Amy Bush" continued...

The war years interfered with career plans: Harold, of his own accord, was anti-war and became a conscientious objector. He was sent to a US Forest Service camp in Southern California, where his job included fighting forest fires. Amy found a job nearby at the International Institute, an organization concerned with new immigrants, and Harold was able to visit her often. After the war they returned to Berkeley and Harold went to work for a San Francisco CPA firm, where he stayed for 32 years and became a partner. Amy worked as a secretary in the UC Berkeley School of Public Health. They bought a house in the Berkeley hills overlooking Tilden Park, where they remained for 52 years and raised two daughters, Kathleen and Lisa. Kathleen is an Appellate Court attorney in San Diego. Lisa lives with her husband in Sebastopol and is a range management consultant.

Living in Berkeley opened up new pathways for both of them. They learned to love classical music and art; they looked for like-minded people in anti-war groups and joined the Berkeley Friends Meeting. The American Friends Service Committee was just starting up and Harold served on various committees, including the Finance and Executive Committees. Amy was involved in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom for the rest of her Berkeley years. Plant societies also drew her interest. In the 1980s, the Physicians for Social Responsibility opened an office in Berkeley, where Harold volunteered as finance officer for four years. Harold was also the Treasurer for the Pacific Horticultural Foundation.

Traveling also greatly enriched their lives — they made six trips to France, one trip to the Soviet Union, and especially enjoyed walking in the Alps.

Friends House Mission Statement

Provide quality
residential, social,
and health services
to seniors
emphasizing
independence,
group initiatives
and Quaker values
of integrity,
equality, peace,
community, and
simplicity.

Did You Know?

George Fox began preaching his religious ideas in 1647. And the address of Redwood Forest Meetinghouse, of which many Friends House residents are members, is 1647 Guerneville Rd. in Santa Rosa. Hmm...coincidence?

Book Donations

Friends House Library needs used books. Contact Harriett Gordon at 707-576-6606 or ffrybooks@yahoo.com.



Friends Association of
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Why Quaker?

The name, Quaker, for members of the Religious Society of Friends goes back more than 350 years. The followers of George Fox were variously known as *Children of Light* and *Friends of Truth*. Fox, once brought before a magistrate to answer for his radical and unorthodox religious views, warned the judge that even he must tremble and quake at the Word of the Lord. The judge asked Fox if he were a “quaker”? The name stuck. (About half of Friends House residents are Quaker.)



George Fox

Taken from
*The Quakers
or Our
Neighbors,
The Friends*
by William
J. Whalen

Pooled Income Fund

In 1994, the Board of Trustees of Friends Association of Services for the Elderly established a Pooled Income Fund, a type of mutual fund comprising gifts that are pooled and invested together. The Pooled Income Fund is an easy way to make a sustaining gift to Friends House while providing the donor with tax benefits and an income stream for life.

The Friends House Pooled Income Fund is a trust designed for the use of a large number of donors. It enables the donor, along with others, to pool in one trust, gifts of money or other acceptable property which could not otherwise be used to establish an individual trust for each donor's gift. Giving AND receiving become convenient and effective.

Income from the fund is distributed to both the fund's participants and named beneficiaries according to their share of the fund. If you are a donor to the fund, you, and/or the other income recipients you have chosen, receive quarterly payments for life. Upon your death, the value of the assets will be transferred to Friends House.

A donor's initial gift to the Friends House Pooled Income Fund must be an amount of \$5,000 or more and the income beneficiaries should be individuals more than 55 years of age, except in unusual circumstances.

Friends House is the Trustee of the Friends House Pooled Income Fund. To have experienced administration for the Fund, Friends House retained Robert L. Hobson, founder of Bank of America's Pooled Income Fund service and former National Director of Bank of America's Charitable Trust Services group. Robert and his son Michael provide administration for the Fund.

If you are interested in learning more about our Pooled Income Fund, please contact Paddy Coreris, Development Director, at 707-573-4508 or pcoreris@friendshouse.org.

Friends House is not engaged in rendering legal or tax advisory service. When considering planned gifts, the advice and assistance of an attorney or other professional advisor should be obtained.

Contact Paddy if you would like to have your name removed from our mailing list.