

Memorial Minute

Ronald Amooore Mossman, 1918 - 2003

RONALD MOSSMAN, a long standing and faithful member of the Religious Society of Friends, died on May 4, 2002 in Edmonton. A Memorial Meeting for Worship to celebrate his life was held on 9 May 2002.

Ron was an unassuming man, quiet and humble in his approach to life. He was born on 4 August 1918 in the small English Village of Henlow, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire. He attained university entrance requirements but because he was needed on the family farm he was unable to continue his education. While farming, he also engaged in many other activities. He mapped the walking trails in the Bedfordshire countryside, was a journalist with the Biggleswade Gazette, a weekly newspaper, and was active in the British Farmer's Union. A strong pacifist, Ron often said he was willing to die for his country but would not kill for it. He tried to serve as a conscientious objector during World War II, but his work in farming was seen as an essential service.

When he came to Canada in 1954, Ron first lived in Calgary. He later moved to Edmonton, where he was in business with a partner which continued until his retirement. Following his retirement, he and his wife Margo traveled a great deal and for the last few years spent winters in Madeira. Ron has one son and, in his later years, one of his greatest delights was to visit with his granddaughter.

It was Ron's faithfulness and dedication to the Religious Society of Friends that ensured its presence and growth in Edmonton. He kept the Society of Friends alive in our city during a time when there were few members or attenders other than he. During the early and middle 1960s he continued to hold Meetings for Worship in his home - sometimes being the only one present. Under his guidance the small Worship Group gradually increased in size, and by 1967 it became a Preparatory Meeting under the care of Calgary Monthly Meeting. At that time Ron became Clerk of the Meeting, holding that position until 1973.

While Ron was Clerk, the Meeting, in spite of its small size, was involved in a number of social concerns, such as assisting the Alexander Ross society, an organization of young Americans coming to Canada to avoid the Viet Nam war. The meeting also sent letters to government on behalf of a visiting Soviet professor seeking asylum status in Canada. Other letters were sent expressing concern about nuclear testing in the northern Pacific and later about capital punishment.

Ron, on behalf of the meeting, worked with Natives and the Native Friendship Society. He served on the Advisory Committee for the Indian-Eskimo Association. When concerns were brought to the meeting about the plight of young homeless women in Edmonton, this led to Ron becoming a leader in the community group that developed a shelter for homeless women. He later was chair of the management committee of the shelter.

In addition to his involvement with the Meeting, Ron worked with Amnesty International. He sang with the Richard Eaton Singers, the main amateur choir in Edmonton, and he was also was an avid letter writer to the Edmonton Journal.

Ron Mossman's concern for social justice issues and inequities in our society and his strong pacifism were based on and stemmed from his strong faith. His sense of the in-dwelling spirit of God in his life and in the lives of others, the inner light, meant that his was truly a faith leading to action - and he encouraged the Meeting as a whole in this way.

Perhaps the passage from Micah, chapter 6, verse 8, best reflects Ron Mossman's life:

*He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of thee,
but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. □*