

Kate Hunter Memorial Minute

Kate Hunter was born 25 May 1940 in Berkeley, California to Henry David Aiken and Jean Scott Aiken. She died July 18, 2020 after 10 years living with cancer.

Early in Kate's life the family moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts where her father was a professor of philosophy at Harvard. After her parents divorced Kate and baby sister Perry moved to Portland, Oregon with their mother, and then, on Jean's remarriage to Paul Coughlin, to Seattle's Ballard neighborhood. This came in handy 25 years later when Jim and Kate met; Jim grew up in Ballard and loved that she also called Ballard home.

At Ballard High School Kate was on the debate team (and anyone who has discussed political issues with her will recognize that), was Queen of the May, and also women's long shot basketball champion. The basketball connection caught the interest of Pat Hunter, a player on the boys' team. In their first year at the University of Washington they were married and had a son, Christopher Michael Hunter in September 1960. Pat eventually left them to move to Portland.

Kate and Chris stayed in Seattle while Kate finished her teaching degree and took employment as a high school English teacher in Snohomish, Washington. She assigned Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath" and was reprimanded for it. "We only allow our children to read 'The Red Pony'." She left Snohomish and taught first at the Evergreen School for Gifted Children and then opened her own alternative school, "The Open Environment." It closed after a year and in 1968 Kate cashed in her small retirement account, packed Chris a pack and flew to Greece. Besides showing Chris the Acropolis and sleeping on many beaches, they met her sister Perry in Tunisia and the three of them hitchhiked across Algeria to Morocco.

Returning to the US in the Fall with no money she got a Head Start position in East Orange, New Jersey as a community organizer. When the school attempted to fire an old and beloved cook, Kate organized the mothers to resist. They saved the cook's job. The mother Kate groomed as leader soon

left welfare, went to college, graduated, got a Masters' degree and returned to East Orange as a regional Head Start director.

Now with enough money Kate returned to Seattle in 1970. She participated in the founding days of the Central Coop (now Madison Market) on Capitol Hill and worked at the coop restaurant "Soup and Salad" in the Pike Place Market. Encountering women fleeing abusive homes, she founded "Save Our Sisters" which consisted of Kate's phone number and a list of nearby homes willing to take in women fleeing domestic violence.

She became program director for the West Seattle YWCA infusing the programs with feminist ideas. But it was her refusal to serve heavily sugared cold cereal to the children that got her fired in 1975.

In the early 1970's Kate was also an active supporter of Group Health's Women's Caucus which succeeded in getting the cooperative to cover contraception and abortion for the first time.

In 1973 she met and fell in love with Jim Hauser, a social studies teacher in the Bellevue School District. After nine years of living together according to contracts they wrote themselves, Jim and Kate were married "after the manner of Friends" in 1982 and joined University Meeting of the Society of Friends.

Undeterred by her experience at the West Seattle YWCA, Kate became director of the University of Washington YWCA. Over those years the UW YWCA nurtured and spun off several important women's programs: Rape Relief, The Lesbian Resource Center; The NW Women's Law Center, an Abortion Referral Service; a Women in the Trades program, and a Gallery for women's art.

She earned a Masters' of Public Administration from Seattle University in 1982. After a long stint at the UW YWCA she became director of the Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program, a program which worked with juvenile offenders in King County. After a juvenile had been found guilty and before sentencing, the program offered the juvenile a chance for structured meetings with their victim(s) to work out a restitution agreement. If successful, the agreement would be presented to the judge who could order it

as the sentence. The recidivism rate for her program was much, much lower than for those sentenced in the standard way.

In 1989 Kate and Jim moved to Vashon and lived happily ever after.

During those 30 years on Vashon Kate helped with Vashon House Hold, Islanders for Peace (to oppose the US invasion of Iraq), helped with programming Sunrise Ridge as Granny's Attic moved out, worked to get CHI Franciscan to guarantee full reproductive rights when they took over the management of the clinic, and she helped serve dinners to the homeless.

In addition to everything listed above, Kate was also involved in Quaker activities. She worked for AFSC following the end of Vietnam war, touring high schools and showing the film "Hearts and Minds." She also served on the AFSC Regional Nominating Committee. In the 1990s Kate organized a gathering in Spokane bringing together programmed and un-programmed Friends to discuss common ground on peace and social concerns issues. At the Vashon Friends Worship Group Kate was the contact person for FCNL and served as Clerk a number of times. Kate was a member of Nina Sullivan's Care Committee, even after she had become less involved with VFWG and more with the Buddhist group on Vashon. She remained deeply attached to UFM as it was her first Quaker home.

Kate and Jim spent most summers cruising the Salish Sea in their sailboat and enjoyed traveling to other parts of the world as well.

She loved Vashon Island: she loved gardening, concerts in the park, theater and the arts, subscription farms, all children who skipped as they walked, the Halloween costume parade uptown, and Saturday Market. In her final hours she thanked this wonderful island community.

Kate leaves her husband Jim Hauser (he kept his name when they married); her son Christopher, siblings Chris Aiken, David Aiken, Scott Coughlin, Joan Patrick, Perry Reeve and Paola Tayvah, and two grandsons Nico Tobias and Clay Hunter Douglas.