

In Memoriam, William Johnson

Minister Donald Rice:

Dear friends, we are here today to celebrate and salute William Johnson's highly successful completion of his most recent lifetime here on the planet Earth. We will quickly discard any bit of sadness we might feel because of his absence when we realize that death has not stopped him and, after a little rest, he will keep on forward.

Godspeed to you, William.

In Memoriam, given by Margaret Mitchell Jackson

William completed his task on January 6, 2012, on Twelfth Night.

His ashes are scattered on the coast outside Newcastle, a city in the north of England.

Our dear Teacher Robert said that Influence C attended William when he completed his role, and this is the most important thing, to have angels attending you before and after death.

William spent nearly 20 years in the School, and when he met the School, he was 60 years old.

When he William had his own group in Newcastle, he continually told them, "There is something missing." A chance meeting with a student in the school led to a prospective meeting, where he attended with his group. William was the only one to join. He became a student of the Edinburgh Center in 1992, and would drive the 5 hour round trip every Friday night to attend the meetings. He was an active member of the small Edinburgh Center and then afterwards, the London Center.

He travelled to Apollo over 20 times, made many friends, and helped many students. Sometimes he stayed for a year, other times for shorter visits, knowing how much he gained from his time at Apollo. His apartment in Newcastle was immaculate, his sincere following of his beloved Teacher's example, and he delighted in visits from students. Although he lived far from other students, he did not compromise himself between life and the school.

At Apollo, when it became known that he was an expert welder, a skill from his younger days in the Newcastle shipyards, it was not long before various projects would be waiting for him when he arrived. His yoga classes were popular, and his participation in many excursions at Apollo was another area where he gave his being and support. He contributed his practical skills to many projects, including helping to refine and improve the London Teaching House.

William never gave up learning. He was open to new understandings and new ways of being. He was willing to stop and listen and reflect on what he had received. He enjoyed sharing insights on the Work with other students.

His partner, Lynne, an unfailing, caring and loving companion, continually expressed her gratitude that, for so short a time, she could share so much of his life.

When William learned that he had terminal cancer and only a few months to live, he remained open and giving, accepting his play. He continued his lively connections to students, watching the live broadcasts of the meetings at Apollo, and enjoying visits from students in Scotland, London, and Apollo.

Gratitude was always first for him, for having met and joined the school.

A student shared a memorable moment with William. When both were cutting the hedge at the teaching house, at one point, as they worked, they saw each other through the hedge. William smiled and said, "You do know you're looking at an apprentice angel, don't you?"

Reading: Rebecca George

Yoga Sutra:

Peace may be reached by the even sending forth and control of breath.

Here again we may look for a double meaning:

First, that even and quiet breathing is a part of the victory over bodily restlessness;

and that the even and quiet tenor of life, without harsh or dissonant impulses, brings stillness to the heart.

Minister:

William's ashes are scattered. His eclectic group of friends is gathered here. May we open our hearts more fully to each other without reservation, in the way he did.

We have an idea that we shall all meet again after death but we don't know quite how that will work. Will we review our lifetimes? Will we recognize each other? We do not have the answers to those questions, but if you see a brilliant angel speeding about with a twinkle in his eye and acting a little bit the rascal...well, that might be William.

Thank-you dear friends, that concludes our ceremony.