

BIO/ Personal statement:

Anne Gordon Perry, artist, author/ researcher, has a Ph.D. in arts and humanities from the University of Texas, Dallas. She teaches composition, creative writing, and humanities at the Art Institute of Dallas. She is the primary author and editor of *Green Acre on the Piscataqua* (a book about Green Acre history) and has been involved in the arts for a number of years as a performer, presenter, and visual artist. A member of the Baha'i Faith for 34 years, Anne is concerned with issues of peace, equality, and justice and uses the arts to address these concerns.

Regarding her interest in Sarah Farmer, Anne writes / says:

"I first learned of Sarah Farmer from an article in *East-West Journal*, back in 1978. As soon as I heard of her, I knew that I had to go to Green Acre to learn more about her. When I first approached the Sarah Farmer Inn, my heart began beating more rapidly. I went to Green Acre for three weeks, but ended up staying in the area for four years, and since have returned many times. Something compelled me to probe the past, to try to understand Farmer's motivation for wanting to bring people together—particularly with a focus on international peace, race unity, and religious dialogue.

"In some ways, my background was similar to Farmer's. Her parents raised her with an unusual social consciousness. They helped slaves escape on the underground railroad. They knew people such as Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Julia Ward Howe. They placed issues of justice and peace before other concerns.

"My parents, in the racially segregated city of Little Rock, were active in the civil rights movement. My father marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma; my mother, on the school board and trying to integrate the school system, often spoke in black churches. I had an unusual upbringing—participating in marches and other protests against injustice and developing a strong commitment to promoting peace in the world.

"My interest in exploring aspects of Sarah Farmer's role at Green Acre in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and her connection with the Portsmouth Peace Treaty of 1905 relates to my desire to promote peace in the twenty-first century. Farmer knew and invited to Green Acre a staggering number of thinkers, writers, artists, and activists of her day, who gathered under her flag of peace with thoughts of solving complex world problems. I think she can still influence us in positive ways today.

"It is a bit daunting to talk about Farmer and, particularly, to represent her in the form of a monologue or historical reenactment. But she is an astonishing role model—someone all Americans should know about. Her story is interwoven with that of the peace treaty and of the beginnings of international diplomacy, interfaith dialogue, and the summer school movement. Her legacy remains—not just at and for Green Acre, but for the world."