

HAROLD E. SNYDER

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Harold Snyder began a career in education after graduating from Swarthmore College that eventually led him into all areas of the world community. As a post-graduate student in Leipzig he saw the rise of Hitler. In 1944, as the Director of Training for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency, he saw the start of international cooperation in the relief of suffering. From that point on his life became focused on bringing people together to learn from each other in a way that would bridge the walls of nationalism.

Harold and Betty Snyder traveled widely in the world. For two years they were in New Delhi, India, as Quaker international representatives providing a channel of communication between leaders and diplomats across the troubled borders of India and Pakistan. They hosted the first Quaker international seminars in Europe and West Africa. To his work as Director of the Washington Seminar Program of the American Friends Service Committee, Harold brought a wide spectrum of personal contacts in the international community of all races, religions, ideologies and regions. His ability to respond with humor, compassion, grace and knowledge enriched the lives of all, as was warmly acknowledged by five U.S. Senators on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the time of his retirement, 1972, after 21 years in this generous service.

In addition to his world-wide associations, he, along with Betty and their two daughters, Anadel and Merida, brought life and strength to the Friends Meeting of Washington. As an Overseer, his qualities of patience, caring and encouragement helped bring people together and broadened our vision.

And, along with his involvement in the Meeting, Yearly Meeting and other Quaker agencies, he gave unstintingly to a variety of educational, cultural and social organizations, including the United Nations Association, Great Books Discussions, the International Student House, U.S. - China Friendship and the Asia Society.

Although Harold modestly referred to all this as his "search for truth," his life clearly reflected the Quaker ideal described by Rufus Jones:

It has always been a Quaker ideal that a person in contact with divine forces can be a vital organ in the world of that spiritual dynamic, which will in the long run - the run is often very long - overcome the world and make truth prevail.