

Curtis Jones
Memorial Minute

Curtis Harvey Jones, born April 22, 1929, died two days after his 91st birthday, on April 24, 2020.

Curt's faith shaped his life. His Quaker roots were deep, extending back to England in the 17th century. Both sides of his family came to America at the time of William Penn. He was raised near Philadelphia and attended Friends Central School in Pennsylvania. As a young man he dug pit latrines for AFSC projects in Mexico and post-war Germany.

A lifelong conscientious objector, Curt refused induction into the military during the Korean War, which was raging when he completed his undergraduate studies at Harvard University. He was fortunate enough to perform his alternative service in Oslo, Norway, with one of the predecessor agencies of the US Agency for International Development.

By then, Curt had married Betty, who was to be his wife for the next 67 years. Together they had three children-- Barclay Jones Kopchak, Curtis Jones, Jr., and Stanley Jones. He is survived by Betty, all their children, five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Curt's first job was with Kaiser Aluminum, but he soon left to pursue graduate studies. He earned an MBA and a DBA from Harvard, after which he taught in its business school for a number of years. Then he became assistant director of the Peace Corps under its first director, Sargent Shriver. From there, the Nixon Administration recruited him to lead its effort to control inflation through wage and price controls.

Curt went back to the private sector by joining the large accounting firm of Arthur Young. The firm sent him to Plainview, TX to do consulting work for a meat-packing firm; soon its management offered him a job as Chief Financial Officer, which he accepted. When there was a merger shortly afterwards, he moved to Wichita, Kansas as CFO of the larger firm. Wichita was the family home for a number of years. Then a friend from the Harvard Business School who was running the firm of Eaton Vance offered him a chance to return to the Boston area, which he and Betty had loved. Curt was the CFO for Eaton Vance until his retirement at age 65.

Looking for a place to live out their retirement years, Curt and Betty heard about the Manor in Medford, Oregon. That, plus having a son in Oregon, led them to move to Medford in 1999. Curt immediately became active in South Mountain Friends Meeting, serving for many years on Finance Committee and as Treasurer. He was always a delightful addition to our conversations, hugging happily, telling us about his family, and wanting to hear about each of our lives.

Curt and Betty loved to travel and had the opportunity to visit many parts of the world. Betty recalled especially a trip to India, with all their children and grandchildren, which included a picnic on the backs of elephants.

Afflicted by dementia at 82, during his slow decline Curt maintained his personal warmth and his quiet sense of humor. He never ceased to live in the Light, which he shared graciously and generously with us all.