



BARRETT HOLLISTER

1914-2004

Barrett (or Barry as we all knew him) Hollister has been a passionate and determined life-long laborer in the pursuit of global justice and peace through international law and the institutions that secure and make real those goals.

In Barry's passing, we, the current staff of the Quaker United Nations Office in New York, lose one of our most fervent champions. There is simply no one else who so internalized and exemplified the commitment of Friends to maintain a supportive presence at the United Nations. We who followed him in this work feel we owe our standing and credibility within the UN system to those, "giants" in our eyes, on whose shoulders we stand. Barry above all, in his term as Director of the QUNO in Geneva from 1954-56 and in New York from 1969-78, along with Kay who shared this work, embodied the characteristics of Quaker conciliation: quiet persistence; never assuming a door is closed until you've knocked on it repeatedly - then trying again later; and always assuming there is sufficient goodness in the human condition - even among diplomats on government business and bureaucrats with turf to defend - to press forward with the world's business.

While the archives of QUNO are brimful of records and reports detailing the steady river of quiet, off-the-record luncheons and teas at Quaker House, and briefings and diplomats conferences at Mohonk Mountain House organized by Barry and Kay, many of us believe his greatest work was done in the hallways of the UN building itself. Barry would sometimes lie in wait for particular diplomats to emerge from closed meetings to button-hole them for their thoughts even as he pushed the envelope in the direction he wanted them to go. The UN in those days was a smaller community than it is today and more open to the outside world with fewer barriers to direct contact with ambassadors and other high-ranking persons. Barry described catching the then British ambassador walking by their breakfast window at Quaker House one morning, and inviting him up for coffee. He came that day, and many mornings after that, uninvited, knowing there was an open door and trusting conversation. Many have heard Barry's seemingly verbatim recollections of conversations he had with diplomats so many years ago and marveled at his ability to relate his own experiences to those at hand.

The Mission Statement of the Quaker UN Offices states: 'The Quaker UN Office envisions a Spirit-led world in which peace and justice perpetually grow in concert. This world is in our midst whenever our hearts yearn for it, our minds imagine it, our hands shape it, and love makes it so'; Barry embodied this mission statement to his core. We on QUNO staff and Committee (on which Barry was so active until very recently) will deeply and dearly miss his presence and his steady support of our efforts as a continuation of his own.

Fondly and In Peace,

The Staff of QUNO