

IN LOVING MEMORY OF



Joseph Hoffer Blatchford

JUNE 7, 1934 - OCTOBER 7, 2020

Memorial Service

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2020
2:00 PM - 3:30PM EST

Joseph Gawlers & Sons
5130 Wisconsin Ave NW
Washington D.C.

Order of Service

Musical Prelude

“Poinciana” by Ahmad Jamal

Welcome

Nick Blatchford

Reading

Andrea Blatchford

*Selection from “Letter on Reflection”
by Edward Kimball*

Reflections

Allan Ryskind

Keith Miceli

Jerry Brady

Michael Schlein

Art Spiegel

Anwar McQueen

Beatrice Ballance

Eulogy

Terry Holcombe

Closing Remarks

Nick Blatchford

Antonia Blatchford

Winifred Blatchford

Obituary

JOSEPH HOFFER BLATCHFORD | June 7, 1934 - October 7, 2020

On October 7, 2020, our father, Joseph Hoffer Blatchford, passed away peacefully. We, his three children, Andrea, Nicholas, and Antonia, and our mother Winnie, were by his side.

There are many things that our dad may be publicly remembered for: his international development work as the founder of Accion, his service as Director of the Peace Corps, and his professional life as an attorney. As his children, there are countless things we appreciate and miss: his unwavering love and support; exposing us to all kinds of music, cultures, and sports; and encouraging us to cultivate our individual identities. Perhaps most of all the family dance parties in the living room, with our dad as the deejay playing samba, R&B, jazz, disco, rock and roll, Motown, opera, and musical soundtracks.

He was a great dancer and a great man, full of love, life, and rhythm. Our dad Joe was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to George and Zoe (Hoffer) Blatchford. His family moved to Los Angeles when he was ten years old. After high school, Joe earned a tennis scholarship to UCLA, where he became Captain of the Bruins 1956 National Championship team. Joe graduated with a major in Political Science, and then traveled to Europe to play in various tennis tours and compete in Wimbledon.

He was later inducted into the UCLA Tennis Hall of Fame. Although Joe was a great athlete, he put aside his tennis career and used his education and love of music and sports to make a difference in the world. While attending law school at the University of California, Berkeley, he raised private funds and organized a series of goodwill tennis and jazz tours throughout Latin America. He traveled to 30 cities, where he met with local youth to build friendships he believed would foster mutual understanding and lead to political and social change.

After returning from Latin America in 1959, Joe met Eugene Burdick, co-author of *The Ugly American*. Inspired by his criticism of foreign policy, and by William James' essay "The Moral Equivalent of War," Joe began to conceptualize a non-governmental volunteer "Youth Force" dedicated to international service. After a second trip to Latin America in 1960, Joe enlisted the help of his Berkeley Law friends Jerry Brady and Gary Glenn to develop and promote the program, with Burdick as a consultant. In 1961, Joe formally founded ACCIÓN International (now called Accion), a grassroots community development initiative in 22 barrios in Venezuela. He secured support from foundations, corporations, and individuals in Latin America and the US to fund the program.

Joe's philosophy departed from foreign aid approaches that imposed external solutions. He believed the work began by listening carefully to the needs identified by local communities and working alongside them to develop and implement results. Joe recruited Accion's volunteers from college campuses, and they provided technical support and assistance to enable local residents to establish schools and build water systems and health centers. Lasting change, they believed, would result from giving communities the tools they needed to help themselves.

Joe wrote, "We believe that the collective initiative of hundreds of such communities can bring progress without bloodshed, and champion the most revolutionary idea of all - the dignity of the individual human being."

Among the first class of Accion volunteers was Winifred Anne Marich, a UCLA graduate with a degree in Spanish determined to make a difference. When Winnie arrived in Venezuela, Joe was impressed by her ability to connect with local community members and lead development projects in the communities she served.

Joe described Winnie as "formidable" and after four years he offered her a position with Accion's new program in Brazil. Joe and Winnie moved to Rio, where they worked all day, danced all night on the beach and at the discotheques, and fell in love. They married in 1967 and enjoyed 52 years of love and partnership.

Throughout the 1960s, Joe expanded Accion with a headquarters in New York and programs in Brazil and Peru. His vision and the foundation he built positioned Accion to become an early pioneer in microfinance. Accion now has a network of programs and partners across Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, India, the United States, and beyond. Six months after Joe founded Accion in 1961, Sargent Shriver launched the Peace Corps.

In 1969, at the age of 34, Joe was appointed Director. Under his leadership, the Peace Corps diversified its applicant pool by focusing recruitment efforts at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and reaching out to union members, skilled workers, farmers, mid-career and retired volunteers, and families. He also developed a program to combine academic credit with international and domestic service to advance students' education and career goals. Joe was creative and free spirited. In 1970, the Peace Corps Volunteer magazine observed that Joe rode a motorcycle to work, did impressions of famous people, and had a "great nostalgia for San Francisco and its 'beat period' . . . [He had] a unique office, but one gets

the impression he would rather be out in the field.” In 1972, The New York Times observed that Joe was a “complex man” who “puzzled his critics.” He was an “idealist and pragmatist . . . unquenchable optimist and realist.”

We certainly knew him as such, and there were moments when the general public caught glimpses of this as well, such as when he appeared on the Mike Douglas show alongside Chuck Berry at the invitation of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, who hosted the program for a week in February 1972.

In describing his philosophy of service and cross cultural understanding, he said, “We simply present ourselves as people. We have great faith that...if we stay in a town or village overseas and really remain there, we become acculturated to them, and they to us, and we start working together, ...the cultural barriers start breaking down, and in the long run that’s maybe the way we’re going to find world peace.”

After leading the Peace Corps, Joe went on to serve as Deputy Undersecretary at the Department of Commerce and then spent the rest of his career as an international trade lawyer, representing various foreign governments, industries, and chambers of commerce. Joe was co-founder of Caribbean/Latin American Action, and helped negotiate the passage of various trade agreements.

Dad, you were a humanitarian, a patient listener, a creative and independent thinker, and a true original. We are so proud of your leadership and service, the imprint you left on the world, your decency and kindness, your intellectual curiosity, and your open-mindedness. You showed us the world, taught us to think for ourselves, passed on your love of sports, and instilled in us a deep appreciation of all kinds of music and cultures.

You were the best husband, father, brother, coach, and maestro a family could wish for. Joe is survived by his wife of 52 years, Winifred; his daughters Andrea and Antonia; his son Nicholas (Taryn Brown) and granddaughter Elliette Ann Blatchford; Anwar McQueen (Nanea McGuigan) and Zoe Kaulana McQueen; his sisters Beatrice Ballance and Barbara Winslow; his niece Ann Winslow; and his nephews James Winslow, Joseph Winslow, and Justin Mutone.

He also left behind many loyal and loving friends from throughout his life who were engaged, warmed, inspired, and deeply affected by his person and his presence.