

Memorial Minute for Ted Robinson

Written by Alexander Barnes

Ted Robinson, beloved member of and former Clerk of the Adelphi Monthly Meeting from 1997-1999 died at 75 of lymphoma, Eleventh month, 18th. 2001. "He listened with a keenness... quite rare. He also looked at people as though he saw inside, found depth below the surface ... Making conversation with Ted always became a special event." We will miss hearing his arresting voice, his big smile, the embrace of his warm, enveloping handshake, his considered views.

Ted was active in social justice issues serving as AFSC Middle Atlantic region director in the late 1960s and as a member of national board. He also served as a member of the board of the Friends Committee on National Legislation. In addition to his work with Quaker organizations, Ted was a coordinator in Baltimore of the Poor People's Campaign for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Montgomery County Rainbow Coalition. In the early 1970s he was assistant director and community relations specialist at the Middle Atlantic office of the Civil Rights Commission. Later he served as an administrator at the commission's national headquarters.

A Chicago native and long-term resident of Silver Spring, MD, Ted was a former military pilot and civilian flight instructor who, in the late 1980s, recorded oral histories of early African-American pilot's as a consultant to the National Air and Space Museum. He helped develop the Smithsonian's "Black Wings" exhibit and organized a traveling tour of this exhibit sponsored by the FAA. He also worked with volunteer organizations to introduce minority youth to opportunities in aviation and was active in the national organization of the famed Tuskegee airmen.

Ted received his Bachelor's degree from Goddard College in Vermont. He began his aviation career in 1943 when he joined the Army Air Force and trained as a B-25 pilot in Tuskegee, AL, during World War II. In the 1950s he was an aviation engineer in Ohio. In 1962 Ted joined the FAA as a research engineer based outside Atlantic City, and in 1966 he became a flight safety inspector in Philadelphia.

Ted interrupted his service to the FAA to work with Quaker organizations, but in 1973 Ted rejoined the FAA, retiring in 1992. Although "retired", he still found time to teach at the Flight Safety International training school in Wilmington, DE.

Ted is survived by his wife of 40 years, M. Jolee Robinson of Silver Spring; two children from his first marriage to Melissa C. Madison, Theodore W. Robinson Jr., Atlanta and Stanton Robinson of Chicago; three children from his second marriage, Dean Robinson of Schenectady NY, Ralph "Barry" Robinson of Newfield NY, and Catherine Hales of Far Rockaway, New York; eight grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren.