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In Memoriam: Frederick H. Binford, M.A.

†† February 9, 1920  May 15, 1999††

by Perry A. Chapdelaine, Sr.
The Roger Wyburn-Mason and Jack M. Blount Foundation
for the Eradication of Rheumatoid Disease
aka The Arthritis Trust of America/
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One of my best friends and a business partner in house construction died May 15, 1999. He was also a board member, original founder of this foundation, and very loyal supporter of its goals. Frederick H. Binford fortunately did not suffer long, but he did suffer, leaving behind a large number of loyal friends, a loving twin sister, Mary Margaret Baily, a brother, Richard Binford, M.D. and ten nieces and nephews.

I met Fred at Stanford University one summer. As Senior Project Director of a National Science Foundation Computer Assisted Instruction program I had the task during that summer of visiting Stanford University and doing some work on development of automated drill instruction routines for arithmetic and higher mathematics. I was the only integrated faculty member in the mathematics department of two universities — University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University — during the terrible integration-battle years. One of these schools was “all White,” and the other was “all Black.” The National Science Foundation had bestowed the generous sum of nearly half a million dollars under my guidance at the “all Black” school, then called a “developing institution.”

Unfortunately my grant school erroneously did not see fit to pay my salary during my stay that summer at Stanford University, and I had no means of supporting my ten children and wife or of even getting back home to Nashville, Tennessee.

On describing my predicament to Mr. Frederick H. Binford, whom I'd just met, he spontaneously handed me the money for airfare home, saying, “Pay me back when you get the funds.”

Such was my friend Frederick H. Binford, M.A., a person who

What made Fred unique?

Fred was dedicated toward peace and rationality and especially toward helping folks. That was his whole life, his philosophy, his way of living, and his relationship with others.

His father was president of Guilford College, a Pennsylvania Quaker College. Inculcated at an early age to follow the peaceful, rational Quaker way, Fred was the positive living embodiment of a Quaker in modern times.

During World War II he was a conscientious objector and was based in a civilian public service camp in California.

He taught in two Quaker Boarding Schools, Friends Academy, Locust Valley, NY, George School, Newton, PA, Tennessee State University, Fisk University, and Woodstock School in India.

At Fisk University Fred taught physics, but it was during his sojourn teaching in India for several years where he probably picked up the microorganism that caused his death at age of 79.

Fred began to complain about tiredness several years ago. At first doctors diagnosed the problem as a borderline anemia. During this past year Fred was resting more, but never shirking his school duties, as he saw them, which usually meant spending endless hours helping individual students with their understanding of mathematics and physics. How he could spend so much time on such routine assistance was a situation to amaze all, but also was a tribute to his strong Quaker belief and need to help others.

Later Fred was diagnosed as having Myeloma Dysplasia, a condition where his bone marrow could no longer produce a sufficient quantity of mature red and white blood cells.

We all of us urged Fred to quit school last year for the purpose of seeking a solution to his problem, but Fred felt his students needed him, and so he hung on, taking from time to time blood transfusions to see him through.

During the first course of blood transfusions Fred felt great. His body was receiving fresh blood that could carry oxygen to his cells and enable his body to function properly.

Soon, though, his body began to exhibit serious symptoms of allergic reactions to other folks' blood.

His joints would swell up and ache, very much like Gouty Arthritis, a wrong diagnosis that was also provided Fred early during his sickness.

Well, the diagnosis was not entirely wrong because Fred had had some gout off and on for some years, Gouty Arthritis being caused by a mycoplasma, just as many other forms of arthritis are.

But this diagnoses completely overlooked the allergy response his body was having to other folks' blood, attributing his condition solely to Gouty Arthritis.

Fred's joints would become very painful, and he'd have to rest more and use a cane, also holding his joints away from objects that might very lightly touch them.

Within a number of days the swelling and pain would disappear and Fred, with much renewed energy, would be working even more hours to catch up with helping his students. During this short recovery period it would seem that Fred was his old self again.

Unfortunately, the use of other folks' red and white corpuscles would suddenly come to an end, and the fatigue would start all over again, as would the next blood transfusion. Within several days — usually — the swelling and joint pain would begin again, renewing the cycle. At one time Fred, who'd been very healthy throughout a long, useful life, commented that “Now I know how arthritics suffer, and more thoroughly understand why you set up The Arthritis

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By Christmas time of 1998 it became clear to Fred that extraordinary methods would be needed if he were to get well, and so we — JD Allen and I — spent Christmas together in Southern Minnesota attending an alternative medicine method that might have solved his problem, but did not. That Christmas vacation he reluctantly had to resign from teaching his beloved students.

One week Fred made the mistake of waiting too long for his next blood transfusion, whence I found him nearly comatose and had to call an ambulance. He never remembered the trip or what happened later, but the doctor gave him quite a few pints of blood, never once reaching the level where his blood count was high enough to sustain him.

We did two things for Fred at his request at this time: With the help of his twin sister, Mary Margaret Baily, who flew in from Pennsylvania, we transferred him to a nursing home of his choice, also giving away almost all of his possessions. We also began a series of blood and urine tests through an alternative medicine doctor who'd reported cures of two other people with identically the same condition as Fred's.

So far as we were able to determine, this is the only doctor who'd ever reported complete reversal of Myeloma Dysplasia. Of 107 patients in his study group all were improved or cured. Fifty percent of his patients were various forms of cancer, about 30% were chronic fatigue syndrome patients, and the remaining 20% were a mixed bag, including two conditions like Fred's.

The doctor used a proprietary substance which will be mentioned in an overlong article in forthcoming newsletters. What it does is stimulate the patient's natural killer cells to attack and win over various forms of foreign invaders, microorganisms. (See "Universal Oral Vaccine" -- Lay Version, <http://www.arthritistrust.org>.)

Fred's visit and teaching work in India had probably exposed him to some virus or microorganism that invaded his bone marrow and there began destroying the cells that produce white and red corpuscles. We say this because there are other reports of the same disease following visits to India.

Knowing Fred's dedication toward helping humanity, it's doubtful that he would have been persuaded not to go even had he been apprised of this fact beforehand!

We began Fred on heavy dosages of this nutritional supplement and it appeared that he was getting progressively better, but that was appearance only. When all the lab tests were back, our alternative medicine doctor concurred with the traditional medical practitioner in that too many bone marrow cells had been destroyed for Fred to recover. There just wasn't sufficient natural killer cells to stimulate. Had Fred been about 15 or 20 years younger, there was hope, but no more!

At the same time Fred's traditional medicine doctor refused to give more blood transfusions because of Fred's increasingly violent reaction to them.

I had the terrible duty of informing Fred about the negative laboratory findings and his certain prognosis, and it was then and there we discussed his final ending, both of us agreeing — as we usually did about most things — that it took far more courage to continue living under constant pain and crippling than it did to die. It was also then that I had an opportunity not given to many. I was able to tell him how much I'd always cared for his friendship and how sorry I was to see him pass away ahead of me. A selfish thought, I know!

Within a matter of days this wonderful man lost consciousness, and finally he "dropped his body," hopefully his spirit to be recycled into a new and fresh young body where — according to his personal belief and conviction — his persona, his soul, his beingness,

would be able to continue helping folks as they, too, followed their natural consequence of conception, birth, growth, decay and death!

In accordance with this wonderful man's wishes, we held no funeral, and his body was donated by his executor, our long-time friend and colleague, Win Myint, to Meharry Medical school.

Even in death Fred taught, striving always one on one to create a better world!